



SOIL

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T. B. MAR

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BY

T. B. MARSON

“The worth of a State, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it. A State which dwarfs its men will find that with small men no great thing can really be accomplished.”—*John Stuart Mill.*

*Distributed by*

OLIVER & BOYD

TWEEDDALE COURT, EDINBURGH

FIRST PUBLISHED - - 1947

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN FOR THE AUTHOR BY  
ROBERT CUNNINGHAM & SONS LTD.,  
LONGBANK WORKS, ALVA

## FOREWORD

How happy is his low degree,  
How rich, in humble poverty, is he  
Who leads a quiet country life;  
Discharged of business, void of strife,  
And from the griping scrivener free.  
Thus, ere the seeds of vice were sown,  
Liv'd men in better ages born,  
Who ploughed, with oxen of their own  
Their small paternal field of corn.

JOHN DRYDEN.

At a time when we are building, or attempting to build, a new World on the ruins of our pre-war compromise with Life, every effort should be made to induce the General Public, and particularly the urban sections of that Public, to take a real interest in the Agricultural Policy of the Country, and by so doing, to help produce saner, economically sounder, conditions than those of recent years.

In view of past experience it is to-day too readily assumed that these Islands are incapable of producing their own Food Supplies, though in the present state of the World a time might come when failure in this respect would mean Famine to the inhabitants.

Great stress is laid upon restarting Export Trade, and the advisability of taking a wide view, and regarding Europe, and even the World, as one unit. Those who hold these views place British Agriculture in a subsidiary position, maintaining that such crops as cannot be grown here with profit must be, and can better be, obtained from overseas. This Policy, be it remembered, has failed in the past, and has led to the depopulation and im-

poverishment of our own countryside. History, as Mr. Belloc remarks, adds a third dimension to experience. The present can only be assessed, the future prepared for, in the light of the past. In examining the present condition of Agriculture in this country and considering remedial action for the future, it is inevitable that thought should be given to the character and methods of those great Agriculturalists of the not so distant past to whose foresight and courageous initiative we owe what is best in present day farming. This will explain what may otherwise appear to be unwarrantable digressions—we have much to learn from their work and methods, much that can be applied in putting post-war agriculture on a sounder basis.

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