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**POLITICS
AND
THE LAND**

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**POLITICS
AND
THE LAND**

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PREFACE

PERHAPS an excuse is needed for the publication of yet another book on agricultural policy, or, at all events, an explanation of how it comes to be written.

The author is a landowner on a small scale, both by purchase and by inheritance, and farmed part of his land for eight years. He is also a Fellow of a Cambridge College, who, in the intervals of teaching and of University and College administration, has made some study both of economics and of agricultural science. Of late years as a member of the Lawes Agricultural Trust and of the Council of the Royal Agricultural Society, he has had the advantage of association with many leaders in both the theory and the practice of agriculture, but of course he alone is responsible for the contents of this book.

The present work is founded on articles dealing with the Economics of Agriculture published in the *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society*, vol. LXXXV, 1924, and in the *Economic Journal* for December 1925 and March 1926. In view of the public interest now taken in the past and future of English land, and of the prospect of our system of land tenure becoming an active political question, the author was asked to expand those articles and adapt them to a wider circle of readers. He wishes to thank all those who have helped in the preparation of the book—in particular the landowners, bursars of Colleges and land agents who have put their rent books at his disposal; Mr J. A. Venn for reading the proof-

sheets, and Miss Christine Elliott for secretarial assistance.

Many books, reports and articles have appeared within the last few years dealing with the state of agriculture and the future of the land. It may perhaps be found useful to have the chief results of recent enquiry brought together in a convenient form, with a critical account of the many proposals which have been made for rural reconstruction and development.

In spite of all the discussion which has taken place, there still seems to be no general understanding of the economic conditions which determine the methods of British farming, of the causes which produce agricultural prosperity or adversity, or of their bearing on agricultural politics.

For his own satisfaction, the author has spent much time and trouble in an attempt to understand these conditions and causes. In the hope that the facts and inferences which have helped him may be useful to others, he has set them forth in the following pages.

CAMBRIDGE

20th December 1926

THE LAND

*They talk about the land—the land
So patient and so old,
So old when man first scarred it and
So young when all is told:*

*The little fields that airmen see,
Faint patch-work on the downs,
The long-forgotten husbandry
That fed the British towns;*

*And fading lines upon the chalk,
Look! trace them even now—
The open strip, the grassy baulk,
Cut by the Saxon plough;*

*West-country bank and winding lane,
From waste and wood compact,
Square Midland fields that tell so plain
Of an Enclosure Act;*

*The running brook, the Doomsday mill,
The Church tower firm and grey,
The Tudor cottages that still
Are children's homes to-day;*

*The land our Northern sires laid out
In Hams and Ings and Tuns,
That bred the Crecy archers stout
And manned Lord Nelson's guns;*

*The land of those of vision true,
With knowledge quick to arm,
Who from the old drew forth the new
And taught the world to farm;*

*The land we love with hearts aflame,
High hearts in joy or sorrow,
Through every change is still the same—
So fear not change to-morrow!*

C. D.-W.

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