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Go East for a Farm

A STUDY OF
RURAL MIGRATION

E. LORRAIN SMITH

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
1932

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
AMEN HOUSE, E.C. 4
LONDON EDINBURGH GLASGOW
LEIPZIG NEW YORK TORONTO
MELBOURNE CAPE TOWN BOMBAY
CALCUTTA MADRAS SHANGHAI
HUMPHREY MILFORD
PUBLISHER TO THE
UNIVERSITY

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

NOTE

IT is common knowledge that in certain parts of England the indigenous farming stock has experienced considerable dilution by the influx of settlers from other parts. The movement is connected in people's minds usually with the migration of Scottish farmers into Essex, and, to a lesser extent, into other of the south-eastern counties, during the great agricultural depression which set in with the 'eighties of last century. Those whose memories carry them back to that time will recall the appearance, in considerable numbers, of applicants from over the Border for farms, vacant and sometimes derelict, situated mainly on the heavy soils traditionally given up to corn-growing, and rendered unprofitable under the progressive decline in prices which wrought such havoc in all the arable farming districts.

It is known, too, though less commonly, that there was a similar movement at that time of farmers coming, most of them, from the south-western counties into the south-midland, southern, and south-eastern counties of England. These migrants, however, had names and used a speech less strange than those of the men from over the Border, and so they were more quickly assimilated by the districts of their adoption. In fact, many farmers who pass to-day in certain regions as representative of the old local yeomen families are, in truth, removed by no more than one generation from long lines of Somerset or Devon ancestors. In some of the predominantly arable farming localities, the farming population of the nineteenth century underwent a hundred per cent. change in its personnel during the last two decades, as any one can prove by reference to local directories.

The study of all these migratory movements, which has been summarized in the pages that follow, makes it quite clear that they were unknown in the self-sufficient days of English farming; they are associated, definitely, with the organization of farming for profit, and with those parts of England in which this was carried to its furthest extent. The 'fifties, 'sixties, and 'seventies of last century witnessed the climax of the prosperity of arable farmers

in England. The great demand for food from an ever-increasing industrial population, coupled with progress in the application of science to the business of food production, gave a stimulus to plough-farming such as it has never had, before or since, and over the eastern half of England the organization of mixed farming, founded on corn-growing on a capitalist basis, was pretty well complete. The self-sufficient farmer of the peasant type had largely disappeared. Corn-growing for the market was not for him; to be effective, it called for large-scale operations by capitalist employers of hired labour.

The profits of the system were large, and for a full generation life for the farmers concerned was good. That the system failed when opposed to the flood of prairie-grown corn and falling prices is a matter of history. This study shows that its collapse was the opportunity of some amongst the smaller farmers of the other half of Britain, who resembled rather the peasant type, and who depended more on thew and sinew than on command of capital. Some of them began to move away from their congested valleys, where live-stock farming, more profitable than corn-growing, predominated, and where the lack of alternative occupations tended to produce a land hunger. They turned, naturally, to the regions of capitalist corn-growing, where rents were tumbling as fast as prices, making the land look cheap to these frugal, hard-working farmers from the west of Scotland, from the Welsh marches, and from the south-western corner of England.

The migration which began then has never since ceased, and, as the author's title suggests, it has always been one way; there is no return. In times of agricultural depression the movement flares up, to subside again when times are better, but it has never stopped. The displacement of the capitalist and his hired workers by the working farmer and his sons is always going on. Not all of them, of course, are migrants, for coupled with the movement from outside there is a continual insurgence of local family-farmers, and even of farm labourers, into the ranks of capitalist organization.

In short, it is the circumstances of their lives, the personal participation of the farmers and their families in all the hard manual work of farming, rather than anything about the locality in which

they have their origin that explains this migration. Such a class does not exist in sufficient numbers in the districts most affected by recurrent periods of depression, and it is this which has led to the movement rather than to any superiority of technical skill or character in the small farmers of the west as contrasted with those of the east. But allowance must be made, of course, for the fact that their systems of farming, based rather on live stock than on corn, stood up better when the agricultural index number began to fall.

What is the conclusion to be drawn? Is there something inherent in farming to mark it out from all other national industries as being incapable of permanent large-scale organization? Have the joint-stock principle, the use of labour-aiding machinery, and the application of scientific management no place in agriculture? Must farming remain a peasant industry? Or is it that the attempts at large-scale operations have never been carried far enough in agriculture, where even to-day there is still no opening for the man with brains, energy, and technical knowledge unless these are supported by capital to invest in the business?

The investigation of the migration of farmers embodied in the following report was the work of Mr. E. Lorrain Smith, M.A. Edin., and was undertaken by him with the aid of a Research Scholarship in Agricultural Economics awarded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in the year 1929. A fuller account of the survey, embodying the statistical evidence, was presented as a thesis for the research degree of B.Litt. in the University of Oxford, and it was awarded the Research Medal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England in 1931. Most of the work had to be carried out by personal inquiry in the districts from and to which the migrations have taken place, and its success is due to the collaboration of farmers, National Farmers' Union officials, County Agricultural staffs, the Agricultural Organizers attached to the Edinburgh and East of Scotland Agricultural College, and other country dwellers, who alone could supply the essential information. The thanks of the Agricultural Economics Research Institute are offered very cordially to them all.

Particularly is it desired to acknowledge the help of Mr. J. D. Gill, Secretary of the Essex Branch of the National Farmers' Union, and Mr. R. Jones, Secretary of the Welsh Society in Rugby, both of whom went to much trouble to procure special information concerning movements in their districts.

The author desires also to thank Dr. Mary T. Rankin, of Edinburgh University, and Mr. J. P. Maxton, one of his colleagues at the Agricultural Economics Research Institute, for much help given him in the compilation of his report.

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OXFORD.

October, 1932.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

ECONOMIC utilities, things which can be bought and sold, can be either moved about the world to the person who wants them, or they are fixed and immovable and the person who wants them must move to them. The utility of situation is one of the latter kind, and it exists in all industries. Between one industry and another, the rate at which it is valued varies considerably, but in all industries it commands some value. In those that are carried on under the competitive system, producers compete for it and move to appropriate it. Movements of producers from place to place must, therefore, be a normal phenomenon.

Agriculture, however, is unique in that though the land affords to the farmer a situation which, as in the case of a suburban farm, may be a utility of considerable value, it is also a productive force, or raw material which is not within his power to move. It must be used where it lies, and, therefore, since its quality varies from place to place, and since agriculture is carried on under the competitive system, the competition of farmers necessitates their moving from one place to another.

In the manufacturing industries there is wide scope for the producers to change their plant to meet new developments and new inventions. In agriculture the scope is nothing like so wide, and the farmer is more often compelled to give up one farm and to take another in order to improve his productive capacity. The manufacturer, dissatisfied with the productive force he employs, will probably decide to re-equip his factory; he gives the order and the new methods and machines are installed. The farmer cannot, however, change a heavy soil into a medium loam, nor poor grass land into the equivalent of a rich Leicestershire pasture. He can do something to mitigate the disadvantages of his land, but the limit of his improvements comes quickly, and if he wishes for better materials with which to work, he must move to another farm.

The special circumstances of agriculture which create the need for movement may be outlined.

The main cause of movements, as suggested by agricultural economists, is the competition of the most efficient farmers for the most efficient land. Farms vary both in quality and in size. By the

competition for land there is an adjustment of efficiency among producers to the quality of land, the best farmers ultimately moving to the best farms and the worst moving, or being moved, to the worst. And secondly, there is an adjustment of capacity of farmers to the quantity of land, each farmer taking the size of farm that he can manage best. This is discussed by Dr. H. C. Taylor:

‘The farmers who are qualitatively more efficient find greater opportunity for the employment of their superior skill and knowledge upon the more productive than upon the less productive land. The farmers who possess a relatively high degree of qualitative efficiency can win a larger return from land of any grade than can their less efficient competitors, but this extra product due to superior ability is greater on the more productive than on the less productive land, and for this reason the more efficient farmers compete only for the more productive land, and are willing to pay more for it than the less efficient farmers can afford to pay. The qualitatively less efficient farmers go on competing for the less productive land until marginal farmers are shifted to marginal land.

‘When each farmer has taken the land for which his degree of efficiency enables him to compete to the best advantage, the marginal farmer will be found on the marginal land, the average farmer on the average land, and the most efficient farmer upon the most productive land.’¹

This argument cannot be accepted as anything more than a general principle underlying the movement of farmers, for in practice other forces are at work tending to obscure it. It is not unusual to find that as only first-class farmers can make certain types of land profitable, so they are encouraged to go on working farms which by ordinary standards are poor farms because for them there is less competition, and the combination of cheap land with the farmer’s exceptional skill enables them to farm more profitably than they could on more favoured, and, therefore, dearer land.

There is more weight in the general principle when applied to the quantity of land. Farmers, whose efficiency in management is larger than their farms, are impelled, as they build up capital, to seek scope for their abilities. Movement is thereby occasioned because the size of the farm is usually difficult to alter. It is a feature of the industry that its business units are very inelastic.

¹ *Agricultural Economics*, chap. ix, pp. 165-70.

Unless uncultivated land is being taken in, or cultivated land is being abandoned, which in an old country does not often happen, a farmer cannot change the size of his farm. Farms in an old country are not laid out with spare land round them, so that a new wing to the business can be added if required. The farmer who wants a smaller or a larger farm generally finds that he can more easily get what he wants by moving to a farm ready-made to suit him than by trying to adapt his present farm.

The adjustment of efficiency to the quantity of land is not the only cause of movements from one size of farm to another. Social causes may operate, and it is quite common to find successful farmers retiring to small farms which give them an interest in their retiring years.

The ambition of the progressive farmers to obtain better or larger farms may be accepted as the main cause of movements of farmers. But there are others. The farmer cannot, as a rule, live apart from his business—his business and his home coincide. In the majority of industries the home is in one place, the business in another; and, where this is the arrangement, the producer is tied to his business for so many hours in the week and for the rest of the time he can live, within limits, wherever he pleases. The farmer, on the other hand, is tied to his business always.

In the second place, the farmer is not originally offered a free choice in the selection of his business; he cannot either buy or rent whatever he chooses. He may be fortunate in being able originally to take a first-class farm on very favourable terms; he is much more likely to be compelled to put up with an inferior farm, in which case he will surely intend to move when a better farm becomes available.

In the third place, it was observed by Adam Smith that "The Nature of Agriculture, indeed, does not admit of so many subdivisions of labour, nor of so complete a separation of one business from another as manufacturers. It is impossible to separate so entirely the business of the grazier from that of the corn farmer as the trade of the carpenter is commonly separated from that of the smith."¹ Since his day the industry has become more specialized, but the various branches are still much less sharply divided one from another than in the majority of industries, and notably in the manufacturing industries. It is still possible in some cases for farmers to change from one branch to another.

¹ *Wealth of Nations*, Bk. I, chap. i.

This feature of the industry may occasion movements. The farmer who may wish to change his system may be compelled to change his land, since only a limited kind of produce can be profitably raised from any given class of land.

While there are forces impelling farmers in a competitive system to move from farm to farm, there are also certain forces operating in the opposite direction which require brief reference. The social motive of a pleasant home may operate as a factor against moving from a farm which, from the business point of view, is less profitable. Also, by shifting from one farm to another the farmer loses one valuable possession in his knowledge of the idiosyncrasies of his farm and his understanding of how to humour them. For this he can receive no compensation, since it can only be acquired by experience and cannot be transferred. The best farmers possess a greater measure of this knowledge than men less efficient, and it must act, therefore, as a special check upon their movements, for by leaving a farm they have more to lose. Similarly, farmers on land which is especially difficult to handle, but which may yield well if it is treated rightly, acquire by experience special knowledge of great value which must tend to check their movements.

Causes of movement are to some extent facilitated by the landlord and tenant system which still covers nearly two-thirds of agriculture in this country. By this system the landlord supplies the fixed capital and the tenant the circulating capital. The very names of their respective contributions imply that the tenant is merely a transitory episode in the history of a farm. In comparison with the trouble of selling a farm, a tenant can with reasonable facility dispose of his stock, crops, and equipment, or take at least part of them with him elsewhere.

Legislation enforcing compensation to the tenant for permanent and unexhausted improvements has made the throwing up of tenancies easier still, and has increased the facility of farmers moving from one farm to another. On the other hand, it should be remembered that one of the main objects of the Agricultural Holdings Acts was to give security of tenure to tenants by forcing owners to pay compensation. The legislation, therefore, may have acted in both directions; but it is possible that the heavy taxation of recent years which has reduced the landlords' capital may have tended to make them reluctant to lose tenants to whom they must pay considerable sums in compensation. Their interest is increasingly to

keep their tenants, and their influence may operate to check movements that would normally take place. A landlord may consent to a tenant's demand for reduction in rent through fear of losing him at a time when capital is short, rather than involve himself in the expense of compensation and the possible demands for repairs and improvements by a new tenant.

The general facts, however, still remain true, that the landlord and tenant system, developed as it is in this country by the Agricultural Holdings Acts, facilitates movement among farmers. There is infinitely less risk of financial loss to the farmer in moving from one tenanted farm to another than there is in selling one farm to buy another. The farmer-owner who wishes to sell must himself take the risk of an unfavourable market at the time of selling. The tenant, on the other hand, throws the burden of an unfavourable demand for the farm he is relinquishing upon the landlord.

On a rising market for farms, farmers are reluctant to sell their present farms, because if they wish to continue farming, they must buy elsewhere on the rising market. On a falling market they hesitate to sell because their own capital is involved in the reduction of demand for farms. In a settled country, therefore, there is greater inertia in the movement of farmers under a system of occupying ownership than under a landlord and tenant system.

It has been shown that movements of farmers are a normal phenomenon in the industry, and that they are facilitated by the landlord and tenant system. It is correct, therefore, to speak of this as a 'normal movement', one that is an inherent part of the life of the industry, going on continuously and in all parts of the country, and caused simply by the nature of the industry and the system in which it exists. There is, however, a type of movement in agriculture which has attracted considerable attention, which merits special study—the movement which has been given the significant title of 'migration'.

It is difficult to draw a hard and fast line between normal movement and migration. Both are actuated by a desire to improve economic status, which can only be done by moving from one farm to another. The difference between them is one of degree. But, in general, the distinction is based upon the fact that, as a result of the differences of farming systems imposed by local conditions and customs, any normal movement from farm to farm may be

expected to take place within regions more or less determined by similar geographical and social conditions. Migration, on the other hand, adventures outside the boundaries of such regions. It is a movement from one region to another which, from an agricultural point of view, is virtually a foreign land.

Here, then, is a particular phase of movement among farmers which presents special features. Normal movement is natural to the industry, especially when facilitated by the landlord and tenant system, but migration appears to arise from different causes, which impel numbers of a naturally conservative community, engaged in an essentially conservative type of industry, to move to new and unfamiliar regions.

The following chapters deal with some aspects of this migration movement. They endeavour to provide evidence of migrations: to show the direction in which they have taken place: to examine the comparative industrial and social conditions of the regions where migrations have originated and of the regions to which they have gone: to sift the motives which have actuated many of the individual migrants in making the change in their conditions, and to examine the social and economic principles underlying the movement.

Chapter II

EVIDENCE OF MIGRATION

THE year 1880 provides a starting-point for this study of migration. British farming, after many years of prosperity, was forced at this time to make adjustments to the new conditions of depression brought about by the overseas development in wheat growing and by the fall in prices. From 1880 a new period in agricultural history begins.

Migration took place on a considerable scale at this period: there is no evidence that it was going on to any extent before. The movement would appear to be, therefore, connected with the depression.

The subject first received attention in agricultural literature in the reports of the Assistant Commissioners to the Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression which sat in 1893. Several Commissioners report a considerable migration of farmers to the South Midlands of England from the South-west of England and from Scotland. The attraction seemed to be the cheaper land. Mr. Aubrey Spencer, who reported 'a remarkable immigration of Scotch and Cornish farmers' into Hertfordshire, writes: 'these farmers are no doubt attracted to Herts. by the low rents that prevail there as compared with their own parts of the country, and by the advantages that are offered by the proximity of London. A Scotch farmer to whom I talked complained of the Scotch system of letting farms by tenders, which he considered had the effect of unduly enhancing rents. The greater competition for farms in Scotland, he said, drove many Scotsmen southwards'.¹

The immigrants differed from the natives in their standard of living, in their capacity for 'hard graft' and in their system of farming. 'They and their families', writes Mr. Wilson Fox, who reported on Suffolk, 'work immensely hard. The Scotch women certainly undertake work which no Suffolk woman would dream of doing', such as mucking out byres and pig pens which not even the female labourers would stoop to do. And the men 'practically take the position of working foremen or bailiffs, being up in the morning when their men arrive and occupied with work connected with the farm after they leave at night'.²

With regard to their system, the immigrants were mostly stock

¹ *Assistant Commissioner's Report on the Vale of Aylesbury and Hertfordshire*, p. 14 (C. 7691), 1895.

² *Assistant Commissioner's Report on Suffolk*, pp. 66-72 (C. 7755), 1895.

and dairy farmers, and they replaced with these systems the native corn growing. A number of the Scots immigrants had brought with them their herds of Ayrshire cows.

As to the success attending their efforts, the Assistant Commissioners are not all agreed, some of them doubting if the immigrants had managed to succeed better than the natives.

'A large proportion of the Devonshire incomers are dairymen', writes Mr. Hunter Pringle, 'and do not till to any great extent. Wherever this has been the system, the strangers appear to be doing as well as their neighbours, but no evidence was forthcoming to justify me in concluding that they had done one whit better than Bedford or Northampton men working on the same lines.'¹

On the other hand, Mr. Aubrey Spencer writes: 'Speaking generally I should say that the Scotch and Cornish settlers have fared better than the native Hertfordshire farmers inasmuch as they have been more ready to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances affecting agriculture, and by their thriftiness and personal hard work have succeeded in cutting down the outgoings on the farm. That Hertfordshire farmers have lately been inclined to follow the system of the settlers is evidence that it is better adapted to the present circumstances of agriculture than the methods formerly in vogue.'²

There has been no other national survey of agricultural conditions on the same scale since the work of the Assistant Commissioners of the Royal Commission, and, apart from occasional references in agricultural literature, there has been no subsequent examination of the cause or progress or success of migration. This Report is the outcome of an investigation, undertaken in 1930, to examine these matters. Information was collected by correspondence with the County Agricultural Organizers in England and Wales and by an extensive tour of eighteen counties of England. The purpose of the tour was to interview immigrant farmers in the various counties, to discuss the motives and experience of the change which they or their fathers had made. Altogether, about three hundred immigrants were interviewed in the counties of Oxford, Berks., Gloucester, Hereford, Somerset, Dorset, Buckingham, Warwick, Leicester, Northampton, Hampshire, East and West Sussex, Hertford, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cumber-

¹ *Assistant Commissioner's Report on Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire*, p. 43 (C. 7842), 1895.

² *Op cit.*, p. 14.

land. These constitute, of course, only a sample of the immigrants in these counties, but the investigation provided adequate evidence to justify the following general statement.

Since the year 1880 right up to the present time considerable migration has taken place (1) from the South-western counties of England, Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset, and to a lesser extent from Dorset, to the Southern, Eastern, and Midland counties; (2) from Wales, especially South Wales, to the West Midlands and Midlands of England; (3) from the North-western counties of England, Cumberland, Westmorland, Lancashire, and to a lesser extent from Cheshire, to the Southern, Eastern, and Midland counties; (4) from the South-western counties of Scotland to the Southern, Eastern, and Midland counties. Lesser migrations to the same districts have also taken place from other counties in the Lowlands of Scotland, Perth, Stirling, Fife, Midlothian, and from the North-east of England, Northumberland, Durham, and Yorkshire. For the last fifty years, therefore, the direction of the migrations has been mainly from the North-west to South-east and from West to East. The counties from which and to which the migrations have taken place may be tabulated.

<i>Emigration Counties.</i>	<i>Immigration Counties.</i>
Cumberland	Leicester
Westmorland	Northampton
Northumberland	Warwick
Durham	Oxford
Lancashire	Berkshire
Yorkshire	Buckingham
Cheshire	Gloucester
Somerset	Hertford
Devon	Essex
Cornwall	Suffolk
Dorset	Norfolk
Cardigan	Surrey
Carmarthen	Sussex
Glamorgan	Hampshire
Merioneth	
Ayr	
Bute	
Dumbarton	
Dumfries	
Kirkcudbright	
Lanark	
Renfrew	
Wigtown	
Stirling	

A small amount of migration from the South of Ireland to the Midlands of England has taken place since the rebellion. This movement was caused by political disturbance, not by economic forces. The Irish immigrants moved to gain peace and security, just as the Flemish weavers in the sixteenth century moved to the Eastern counties of England. The sword of Alva in the sixteenth century has a parallel in the Irish gunmen of the twentieth century.

The volume of the migrations has not been estimated, for an accurate survey of the kingdom has not been undertaken and it is unwise to rely too much upon impressions. The immigrants are inclined to exaggerate their numbers and the natives to underestimate them, but the evidence, so far as it goes, would indicate that the numbers of immigrants in certain counties are not inconsiderable.

The native farmers in the immigration counties who made way for the immigrants have either left the industry or emigrated to farms abroad. In some counties a certain amount of double movement has occurred, both a migration from and an immigration to. One case in point is Cumberland, from which farmers have migrated south, and to which farmers have migrated from the South-west of Scotland; another is Somerset from which farmers have emigrated east and north and to which farmers have migrated from North Devon. It is not known if, in these cases, the invasion and the exodus equal one another. In Somerset the exodus is almost certainly considerably larger than the invasion. With respect to the other counties, however, there is no evidence of the native farmers migrating to other districts: they have simply disappeared, leaving no trace.

The counties which the immigrant farmers have left, on the other hand, seem to have been badly overcrowded. No land was left vacant by their going. On the contrary, the emigration merely had the effect of easing, to some extent, the land hunger. John Spiers, who reported in 1895 on the depression in the South-west of Scotland, writes: 'Ayrshire, especially, seems a veritable congested district which rears twice as many farmers as there are farms for. This superfluity of numbers keeps up an excessive and unnatural competition at home and has had a material effect on the rental of the other three counties (i.e. Wigtown, Kirkcudbright, and Dumfries) and several of those of the East of Scotland and

South of England.'¹ This condition, as will appear later, was common in many of the emigration counties.

The migration of Scots into the county of Essex has received so much publicity for many years that this county was chosen for an attempt at statistical measurement of the amount of migration in one area. A census of the immigrant farmers was taken by districts of the county branch of the National Farmers' Union.² The forms were not completed for all districts, but figures were obtained for 197 districts out of 295, that is, for two-thirds of the number into which the county is divided. The districts included probably contain over half the total number of farmers in Essex.³

Of the 1,946 farmers covered by the census, 433, or 22 per cent., were immigrants, and the information concerning them is summarized in Table I (p. 20).

The Table gives a clear impression of the continuous flow of immigrants into the county. The totals for each period along the bottom of the Table show that approximately the same number came into the county in the last ten years as in the decades 1880-90 and 1891-1900. The movement also went on during the first twenty years of the century, but not to quite the same extent, especially in the decade which included the war years. These twenty years were years of rising prices and relatively prosperous farming.

The migration from Scotland to the county was greater in the last decade than in either of the periods 1880-90 or 1891-1900. It was comparatively small in the decade 1911-20. The greatest periods of migration, however, from the South-west of England were the first two decades shown in the Table. The last two decades have witnessed a much smaller movement. The group of counties

¹ *Assistant Commissioner's Report on the Counties of Ayr, Wigtown, Kirkcudbright, and Dumfries*, p. 5 (C. 7625), 1895.

² The census was made possible by the help of the Essex Branch of the National Farmers' Union. Forms were sent to the district representatives of the National Farmers' Union asking them to state (1) the total number of farmers in their district; (2) the names of the immigrant farmers; (3) their place of origin; (4) their year of settlement; (5) the type of farming they practised. An immigrant was defined as a farmer or his son now farming in Essex who had moved to the county from some other part of England, or from Wales, Scotland, or Ireland.

³ The total number of farmers in Essex cannot be ascertained accurately. In the agricultural statistics for 1929 the total number of holdings over 50 acres in Essex was given as 3,655. If, therefore, we reckon the total number of farmers as about 3,500, the 1,946 included in the census are 53 per cent. of this estimated total.

Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Cheshire accounted for a considerable migration—mainly from Lancashire—from 1891 to 1900, which continued to a less extent up to 1920, since when it has been almost non-existent.

Table I

COUNTY OF ORIGIN OF 433 IMMIGRANT FARMERS IN
ESSEX GROUPED ACCORDING TO DATE OF MIGRATION

		1880- 90.	1891- 1900.	1901- 10.	1911- 20.	1921- 30.	Year of Settlement not ascer- tained.	Total.
ENGLAND	South-west	33	32	11	18	19	6	119
	North	3	—	4	4	7	1	19
	Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire	5	20	23	15	14	3	80
	Midlands and Welsh Border Counties	3	2	5	1	8	2	21
	Others	—	1	5	5	6	—	17
WALES		2	2	—	—	2	1	7
SCOTLAND		33	34	26	16	43	18	170
Total		79	91	74	59	99	31	433

These three main areas account for 85 per cent. of the migration into Essex from 1880-1930. The largest movement was from Scotland, which has supplied 37 per cent. of the total immigrants. The majority of these were from Ayrshire and the South-west. Forty-two of the 156 immigrants from Scotland gave Ayrshire as their native county and 24 others came from counties in the South-west of Scotland. There were 34 who gave other counties in Scotland, while 70 were returned as from Scotland, without specifying which county. A proportion of these may reasonably be expected to have come from the South-west.

Twenty-nine per cent. of the total immigrants came from the South-west of England. Of the 119 immigrants which this percentage represents, 47 were from Devon, 41 from Cornwall, 25 from Somerset, 3 from Dorset, and the remaining 3 from the South-west—county unspecified.

Thirteen per cent. of the total immigrants into the county came

from the group of counties Lancashire, Cheshire, and Yorkshire. Of the 80 immigrants from these counties, 57 came from Lancashire, 14 from Yorkshire, and 9 from Cheshire.

Only 15 per cent. of the immigrants came from districts other than these three. The migration from Wales is practically non-existent in the districts of the county covered by the inquiry.

This special inquiry seems to emphasize the features of migration which have been noted already from general information. The migration has been as marked in the last decade as in the two decades covered by the depression of the nineteenth century. The decline of migration from 1901 to 1920 is a feature introduced by this special inquiry. In these twenty years of farming prosperity the decline would have been much more marked if the influx of Lancashire farmers had not occurred to offset the decided decline from Scotland and the South-west of England.

The other feature emphasized is that the movement is mainly from the South-west of Scotland and the South-west of England. The counties of the North of England, Cumberland, Westmorland, Northumberland, and Durham do not seem to have contributed so largely to the migration into Essex as they did to other areas. The small amount of migration from Wales is not so surprising, when it is borne in mind that the impression gained from the general inquiry was that the Welsh migration was mainly to the Midland grazing counties.

The immigration of Welsh farmers into the grazing area round Rugby is almost as marked as the immigration of Scots into Essex. The secretary of the Welsh Society in Rugby, Mr. R. Jones, gave 54 as the number of Welsh in an area in which, he said, 'a rectangle 20 miles long by about 6 wide covers all the farms. The axis of the long side of the rectangle runs North and South and lies a mile or so to the East of Rugby.' A rough estimate based on this information would indicate that the Welsh immigrants must constitute about one-fifth of all the farmers in the area defined.

Chapter III

COMPARATIVE CONDITIONS IN THE EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION AREAS

SOME comparison of the general features of the agricultural development in the emigration and immigration areas may be made. In physical features alone they present a distinct contrast.

The areas lie each in one of the two main divisions into which, from the point of view of orographical structure, Great Britain is divided, namely, 'the Lower Lands, or English Plain, mainly in the East but branching Westward through Gloucestershire and Cheshire, and the Higher Lands in the North and West, the dividing line running from Exmouth in the South northwards to the Severn estuary and thence in a bold curve to the Humber'.¹ The immigration areas are all included in the Eastern division, where the land is mostly 'champion', flat and low lying, with few hills, and those few rarely rising above 500 feet; the emigration areas are in the West and North where, with the exception of the Cheshire Plain, it is hilly and broken. Speaking generally, therefore, the migrations have taken place from the hills to the plains.

With the hills naturally go large tracts of poor pasture. A considerable percentage of the total agricultural land in all the emigration counties, with the exception of Cheshire, is rough grazing, amounting, in some of the counties in the South-west of Scotland and in Wales, to over half, while in the immigration counties almost all the land is under crops and grass.

A similar difference is found in the rainfall. In the immigration areas the rainfall varies from 20-30 in.; in the emigration, it rises from 30 in. upwards, reaching in parts of the Welsh Highlands and Cumberland to over 100 in. For arable cultivation the 30-in. line of rainfall is the critical one, and this closely follows the line dividing the English Plain from the Higher Lands. Thus, the emigration areas incline more to pastoral farming, the immigration more to arable. The former are engaged chiefly in stock-rearing and dairying, the latter chiefly in cropping and stock feeding.

The most significant of the differences between the two areas is the size of farms. An examination of statistics relating to the size of farms shows that all four of the important migrations have taken

¹ *Essays in Regional Geography*. Edited by Alan G. Ogilvie, chap. i.

place from areas of small farms to areas of large; a correlation between the course taken by these migrations and the sizes of farms can be traced.

The measurement of the size of farms by acreage is not, of course, the sole indication. Other factors, such as capital invested, labour employed, &c., influence size in the general sense. Statistical measurements of farms by capital are not, however, available.

One rough measure, which is of special interest for this study of migration, can be obtained from the figures of the Population Census. By using the data of persons engaged in agriculture as given in the Census, it is possible to attempt a differentiation between counties which are mainly composed of capitalist farmers, and those mainly composed of family farmers. By capitalist farmer is meant one who depends for the most part on wage-paid labour for the farm work, and by family farmer, one who depends on the services of his family.

The data of the Population Census enable the calculation to be made, by counties, of the proportion which 'sons, daughters, and other relatives assisting in the work of the farm' bear to the total number of persons employed on farms. According to the Census of 1921 for England and Wales, the number of 'relatives assisting' was 95,473, and the total number of persons employed was 708,284.¹ The percentage of 'relatives assisting' to the total employed was, therefore, 13·5 per cent., and in Table II (p. 24) is given the comparative figures in each of the emigration and immigration counties.

The contrast is sufficiently striking to require very little comment. Only four of the counties classed as emigration counties have a percentage of 'relatives assisting' below 13·5 per cent.—the average for England and Wales. Three of these are on the East Coast, the other being Dorset. On the other hand, not one of the counties classed as immigration counties come up to the percentage for the country. With the exception of Leicester, Nottingham, and Warwick, none of them exceed 10 per cent.

If this measurement can be taken as a reliable guide, there is a clear distinction between the two areas, the emigration area being predominantly an area of family farms, the immigration area being one of capitalist farms.

It is necessary in this connexion to separate Scotland from England and Wales, for the figures do not appear to be strictly

¹ Persons employed include labourers, foremen, bailiffs, and shepherds.

comparable. For some reason or other the percentage of 'relatives assisting' to total persons employed in Scotland is much lower than in England, being in 1921, 4.0 per cent. in Scotland as compared with 13.5 per cent. in England and Wales. This obviously cannot be taken as indicating a greater degree of capitalist farming in Scotland as compared with England and Wales, and the reason most likely lies in a different interpretation by Scottish farmers of the term 'relatives assisting'.

Table II

PERCENTAGE OF 'RELATIVES ASSISTING' TO TOTAL
NUMBER OF EMPLOYED PERSONS

Average for England and Wales: 13.5 per cent.

<i>Emigration Counties.</i>		<i>Immigration Counties.</i>	
	%		%
<i>North of England:</i>		<i>Midlands:</i>	
Cumberland	29.1	Leicester	13.2
Westmorland	33.2	Northampton	8.5
Northumberland	10.8	Warwick	10.7
Durham	8.3		
<i>Yorks., Lancs., and Cheshire:</i>		<i>Southern Midlands:</i>	
Yorkshire, N. Riding	20.9	Gloucester	12.4
" W. Riding	20.9	Oxford	7.9
" E. Riding	10.1	Berks.	5.2
Lancashire	23.6	Bucks.	8.9
Cheshire	17.3		
<i>South West:</i>		<i>Eastern Counties:</i>	
Devon	21.9	Herts.	4.6
Cornwall	24.7	Essex	4.7
Dorset	11.1	Suffolk, East	5.9
Somerset	16.7	" West	5.4
		Norfolk	6.1
<i>Wales:</i>		<i>Southern Counties:</i>	
Cardigan	37.3	Surrey	5.8
Carmarthen	44.8	Sussex, East	8.7
Merioneth	35.2	" West	6.7
Glamorgan	28.1	Hampshire	8.5

A marked discrepancy occurs between the Scottish figures of the 1911 census and that for 1921. In 1911 the number of 'sons, daughters, and other relatives assisting' was 27,301. In 1921 it was 8,487, a decrease of 18,814. There was, also, between the two census reports, an increase of 3,344 in the number of farm servants and an increase of 1,300 in the number of farmers.

The *Agricultural Output of Scotland*, published in 1925, comments upon this anomaly, and, without giving any explanation, concludes that in 1921 many farmer's sons, &c., were included in the category of farm servants instead of in that specially provided for them.

Leaving out for obvious reasons the crofting counties of Argyll, Caithness, Inverness, Orkney, Ross and Cromarty, Shetland, and Sutherland, the percentage of 'relatives assisting' to the total number of persons employed is found to be 3.99. Table III gives the percentage of 'relatives assisting' to total persons employed¹ in the counties of Scotland.

Table III

PERCENTAGE OF 'RELATIVES ASSISTING' TO TOTAL
NUMBER OF EMPLOYED PERSONS

Average for Scotland: 4.0 per cent.

	%		%
<i>South-west:</i>		<i>Mid Lowlands:</i>	
Ayr	4.8	Clackmannan	5.2
Bute	8.0	Kinross	10.0
Dumbarton	4.1	Stirling	5.9
Dumfries	4.8	West Lothian	4.0
Kirkcudbright	3.5	<i>South-east:</i>	
Lanark	6.3	Midlothian	2.0
Renfrew	6.4	East Lothian	1.0
Wigtown	7.9	Peebles	0.9
<i>North-east:</i>		Selkirk	1.8
Aberdeen	4.9	Roxburgh	0.8
Banff	5.6	Berwick	0.8
Moray	5.7		
Nairn	7.0		
<i>East:</i>			
Forfar	2.5		
Fife	2.2		
Kincardine	3.6		
Perth	2.9		

The Table indicates that the low percentage of relatives assisting is general throughout the country, but contrasts between certain divisions of the country stand out. In the South-west division of Scotland the family farming character of the area is shown clearly, as only one county, Kirkcudbright, is below the average for the whole country. The North-east counties of Aberdeen, Banff,

¹ Persons employed includes farm servants, grieves, and shepherds.

Moray, and Nairn, and the Midland counties of Stirling, Clackmannan, and Kinross, are all above the average. These are the areas of family farms. In sharp contrast are the Eastern counties of Kincardine, Angus, Fife, and Perth, and the South-eastern counties of the Lothians, Peebles, Selkirk, Roxburgh, and Berwick, all of which have a percentage of 'relatives assisting' lower than the average, and are areas of capitalist farms.

So far as previous evidence shows, the emigration of Scots farmers to England was mainly from the South-west and Stirling, and to a lesser extent from the North-east.

Chapter IV

INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES IN MIGRATION

THE migrations seem to have begun spontaneously. There does not appear to have been any organized encouragement as there was with emigration to new lands in Canada and elsewhere.

The agricultural papers of the 'eighties and 'nineties in England, Wales, and Scotland contained many advertisements of vacant farms in the immigration counties, which were the principal means by which the immigrants were informed of the favourable opportunities. Mr. Primrose McConnell, in a paper to the *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society*, in 1891, entitled 'Experience of a Scotsman on Essex Clays', in which he describes the migration from Scotland to Essex, writes: 'About eight or ten years ago reports and advertisements of vacant farms in the South of England appeared in the papers—notably in the *North British Agriculturist*—land actually going begging for tenants; so we turned our eyes Southwards. First one or two came, and finding the taste good, sent back a satisfactory report to their friends behind. When these latter came, they in their turn sent for other friends, until now the country is overrun with us.'

As the migration increased not only did the attractions become generally known, but the very number of the settlers was itself an attraction, for the later immigrants could settle among friends. They could be settled in the new districts by their friends. Cases are known of Welsh immigrants in the Midlands who earn commission from their friends in Wales by taking farms for them. Once a migration had been established for some time, it was possible for a tradition to spring up. As America became the El Dorado of the Irish peasant, so a district in this country may have, for the farmers in another part, shone with the light of fair prospects. In the South-west of Scotland a tradition of this kind has found its way into a saying that a farmer should 'go West for a wife and East for a farm'.

When the first batch of immigrants in a district had proved themselves to be satisfactory tenants, some attempt may have been made by the landlords and land agents to fetch more up. The case of a land agent in Devon, who also managed land in the Midlands, and had persuaded Devon farmers to migrate there, was

mentioned, but this has not been substantiated. Mr. John Orr, however, in his survey of Oxfordshire, confirms this evidence with respect to the Chiltern district. 'More striking', he writes, 'than the changes in cultivation and live stock have been the movements among the farmers. If a somewhat narrow tradition can be relied on, wave after wave of migration has swept over this district. In earlier periods, farmers are said to have come from Wiltshire, and then from Somerset. They have come from Devonshire recently in greatest numbers, while some have moved across the river from Berkshire. These have taken the leading part in developing the milk business. About thirty-eight years ago farmers began to come from Devonshire, and certain land agents, recognizing their aptitude for introducing and working the new system, have continued to go to that county for tenants as often as farms have been vacant.'¹

Similar efforts by landlords in other parts were also mentioned, but these also have not been substantiated. There is, of course, no doubt that landlords who could neither let their farms to the natives, nor make them pay under their own management (which is the position in which many landlords in these districts found themselves), would be eager to find reliable tenants to take the farms off their hands. That they made some effort to facilitate these migrations is not at all unlikely.

The greatest attraction which was mentioned by all the immigrants from all districts was that farms were cheaper, easier to get, and bigger. The majority moved from higher to lower rented land. In many cases the difference in rent was very large, immigrants having moved from land rented at 30s. an acre to land rented at 10s. or 5s. an acre, or even less. A concrete example may be quoted, of special interest since it is taken from recent times. An immigrant from Cumberland in 1929 left a farm of 160 acres rented at 32s. an acre, and went to a farm in Suffolk of 800 acres rented at 3s. 6d. an acre. He admitted that the land was not so good, but it was by no means worthless, and he was sure that, had the farm been in Cumberland, it would have fetched a much higher rent. In the 'eighties and 'nineties many of the immigrants took over farms that had nearly gone derelict. A story is told, which may not be out of place as illustrating the difference between the cost of land in the different districts and the force of the economic pull which this exerted, of a Scots farmer who moved to Essex at this time, and took a farm

¹ *Agriculture in Oxfordshire*, p. 5.

rent-free for the first three years and thereafter at a rent of 5s. per acre. He and his family worked exceedingly hard, and by the end of the first year had done so well that his wife remarked, 'Eh! man, this is the first year that we have had no rent to pay, and the first year that we have had money to pay a rent with.'

Some of the immigrants, however, the Scots farmers who have settled in South Bucks., for example, and the Welsh farmers in Herefordshire, moved from lower rented to higher rented land, but in their opinion the land was really cheaper at the higher rent.

Farms, it was also said, were much easier to get and especially easy in the 'eighties and 'nineties. In the Midland, Eastern, and Southern counties of England, many farms at this time were without tenants, and it was an attraction to the immigrant that they could be taken easily and without waste of time, while in the four Western districts there was not a farm to be had.

Both the comparative cheapness and ease of access to the land in the immigration areas indicate a greater amount of competition for farms in the areas from which the immigrant farmers came. The Devonshire farmers expressed it, 'Farmers are thicker down there; more men are after farms'. Mr. McConnell confirms the keenness of the demand for land in the South-west of Scotland. He states that the depression has fallen less heavily on the dairy districts in the Western counties of Scotland than on the Eastern counties. In the case of the dairy districts, he says, 'Much of the work is done by the farmer and his family, especially in the smaller holdings, and there has been tremendous competition for every vacant farm. This of course raised the rent, and even now there are so many would-be tenants that the one who is, unfortunately, the successful competitor for a vacant holding, has offered a rent which means a ceaseless struggle to enable him to make ends meet.'

In the other emigration districts, except in the clay soils and marshes of Somerset, the assistant commissioners, both in the Richmond Commission and in the Commission in the 'nineties, report that the demand for land had been well maintained, especially the demand for small farms. The reductions in rent had not been large, and in many cases there had been no reduction at all.

The bigger size of the farms was also clearly an attraction as giving more scope; there was 'more run for the same money', which allowed them to extend their business. It was noticeable

¹ *Journal of Royal Agricultural Society*, 1891.

that this attraction appealed especially to the immigrants from the South-west of England, and among these, particularly to the Cornishmen, one of whom said that the farms in Cornwall were mostly so small that an enterprising man must emigrate to the districts of larger farms if he wanted to improve his position, and all of them laying special stress upon it. But it appealed strongly to all four groups.

No migration appears to have occurred from areas of large farms to areas of small. There has been some migration, it is true, from Northumberland and Durham to Leicestershire and Gloucestershire, both of which counties show a slightly higher proportion of family farmers, as measured by the percentage of relatives assisting, but this movement was not sufficiently marked to disprove the general statement.

The demand for larger farms among the immigrant farmers did not always proceed from their personal ambition to climb higher up the 'agricultural ladder', but was often the result of a need to find more employment for a growing family. A number of the immigrants stated that they wanted a large farm because their family was out-growing the employment the home farm could give.

Many immigrants claimed that the farm buildings were better and the farm-houses pleasanter to live in, and that this had been an attraction. It is reasonable to suppose that a landlord's outlay of capital on houses on his farms is determined by the kind of demand which he caters for, being much less for that of a family farmer than for that of a capitalist, each of whom has a different standard of comfort, and, for the most part, a different social position. The farm-houses were said to be pleasanter to live in because they were better, and because it is not the custom in the Midlands, South, and East of England for the labourer to live in, as is common in the four Western districts. The farmer's wife is thus saved a great deal of work, cooking for, and, to some extent, keeping an eye on the hired members of her household.

With regard to the buildings, however, the attraction, it was often said, was that they were better, more conveniently laid out, and in a better state of repair. It is probably true that, in the districts from which the immigrants came, if the demand for land was so strong that farms would let well even with bad buildings, the landlords were not compelled by a falling off in the demand for farms to attend properly to the buildings. Further, the landlord

may be willing and able to afford to spend more in supplying the house and steading of a capitalist farmer, as he rents usually a larger acreage and so the expenditure per acre is proportionately less.

Immigrants from all districts expressed the view that the markets were better, giving them a better price for their produce, and nearer, so that there was a saving in transport. The majority were producing milk, and milk was the produce for which the market superiority seemed to be greatest: it was the thing most frequently spoken about. Some of the immigrants from outlying districts said that before this migration they had produced a little milk, as much as they could sell, but chiefly butter and cheese. They had moved to populous districts where there was a good demand for milk, and had taken to milk production entirely, which had been to their advantage, as it gave a better return and was less exacting work. To quote Mr. McConnell's paper again—"The proximity to London, however, and the superior handiness of the new milk trade, has made us all take to this style of working. Most of us have come here to escape the drudgery of cheese or butter dairies, such as are the rule in South-west Scotland, and many would prefer to have sheep and cattle with no cows at all; so that if we must have a dairy, it will be on the easiest system,' i.e. milk production. The necessity of having a dairy was, it might be thought, the profitableness of that system of farming, and yet Mr. McConnell writes: 'It is doubtful if, of recent years, dairying pays better than other forms of farming, but when people have been accustomed to it, like it, and have the necessary technical skill, they do well to adopt it, even in a new and untried country.'

The superiority of the markets extended to other produce as well as milk. The Welsh immigrants in the Midlands believed that they obtained a better price for stock; the Scots immigrants in the Eastern counties, Norfolk, and Suffolk, stated that they obtained a better price for corn; and the Scots immigrants in South Bucks. and Hertfordshire stated that they obtained a better price for potatoes and market-garden produce. In addition, there was the advantage of being nearer to their markets.

The attraction of superior markets was not mentioned in a few localities only, but appealed generally to the immigrants in all the districts investigated. Nor, generally speaking, was it confined to a particular period of time, to the earlier years of the migrations, for example, rather than to the later. The immigrants who had

come from the South-west of England thought that the superiority of the markets in the South, Midlands, and East was much less marked nowadays than it used to be. They said that all markets in the South-west had improved, but especially the markets for 'smalls' (i.e. dairy produce, poultry, eggs, fruit, vegetables), owing to the increased popularity of the district with holiday-makers. The immigrants from other districts, however, thought that the markets where they had settled were still superior to their home markets, and some of these were new-comers, within the last two or three years.

To illustrate how the value of land may change with a change in the market for produce and so occasion migration, an interesting case, supplied by a Welsh immigrant to Herefordshire, may be quoted. He had moved, in 1912, from an upland farm in Radnorshire to a lowland farm in Herefordshire because the demand for mutton had changed from large joints to small. His farm in Radnorshire had been well suited to breeding sheep and fattening stores, but it would not fatten young stock. He had moved to richer land, and an easier climate which allowed him to produce for the changed demand. His opinion was that this change in the demand had lowered the value of his farm in Radnorshire and raised the value of the farm which he had taken in Herefordshire, and thus made it worth his while to move; and he believed that a number of farmers had been influenced by the same change.

Other attractions were mentioned of a more general character. Many of the immigrants from the South-west of Scotland, and several from North Devon, who had left cold, exposed farms, found an attraction in the superior climate of the districts in which they had settled. The spring was earlier and the summer longer, and the harvest weather more reliable. This attraction was partly economic in character and partly social, appealing to them partly through their purses and partly through the pleasantness of their working lives. Of its three advantages, the last seemed to be the most appreciated. The Scots immigrants repeatedly emphasized the advantage and the pleasantness of being able to go on steadily with their work and get the harvest in without labouring in rushes between the wet spells, as they had been compelled to do at home. A comparison of the rainfall in the South-west of Scotland with that in the Midlands, East, and South of England very clearly supports this evidence.

The climate, moreover, allowed them to grow a greater variety of crops. Three crops, oats, turnips, and grass, were said by some of them to have been their limit at home. They admitted that they could not grow these so well in the kindlier climate of the South and East of England, but they could harvest their oats and hay much better, and they could grow any of the other corn and green crops they chose; so the net result was in their favour, and, it seemed from the evidence given, most in favour of the Scots who had settled in the Eastern counties.

Conflicting evidence on the climatic advantages of the Southern counties was given by the Cumberland farmers. They appreciated the more reliable harvest weather, but set against this that in Cumberland 'you were more sure of your crop'. The county rarely suffered from drought; and whether it were better usually to experience difficulty in winning your crop and occasionally to lose it, or usually to be able to gather it with ease and occasionally to have no crop to gather, was a nice point.

A few of the early immigrants from Scotland and from the North of England mentioned the attraction that the labour was cheaper, but their evidence on this point was not satisfactory, for they qualified their statement by saying that it was not so efficient, and they seemed to doubt that it was really cheaper. One or two of them said that the work could be got out of the less efficient native labourers if you were prepared to work with them and set the pace, in which case the labour was really cheaper. But the attraction of cheaper labour was only mentioned by the early immigrants in the 'eighties and 'nineties, and only by a few of them.

The Welsh immigrants to Herefordshire and to the Midlands spoke about the greater social amenities that had attracted them. Most of them came from the upland farms where they had been compelled to spend a lonely existence. Even had there been no other attractions in England, even had the land not been cheaper and the farms no larger, they thought that the attraction of a more full and varied social life, and a greater measure of the conveniences of civilization, would have drawn many farmers. A few immigrants from Cornwall and North Devon also mentioned the same attraction. Migration caused for this reason resembles the drift of the labourers to the towns.

The immigrants from Lancashire in the 'eighties and 'nineties, and a few of the immigrants from North Devon in the same period,

found an attraction where they had settled in not being troubled with game and sporting landlords. In their home districts, they said, the landlords were most inconsiderate of the farmers in placing this sport before the farmers' interest. Large quantities of game and rabbits were reared which damaged their crops, and the landlords were careless of their concerns in their shoots, tramping over their crops, and leaving gates open, &c. A frequent source of trouble and annoyance also came from the gamekeepers, who were for ever suspecting and accusing them of keeping poaching dogs. The whole thing was a source of friction. The Lancashire immigrants attributed it chiefly to the fact that many of the landlords were cotton capitalists, who had bought estates for the sport and knew nothing about farming and cared less. In the districts where they had settled, they did not suffer from this trouble nearly so much, either because the landlords in the Midlands, South, and East of England were more agriculturally minded, or because they were too eager to let their farms and keep the tenants they had to risk quarrelling with them. This attraction was not mentioned, however, by the recent immigrants.

Such, then, were the various attractions which were generally expressed by the immigrant farmers as the main reasons why they had deserted their native counties. In each individual case the urge to move was probably derived from a mixture of many motives and attractions. Some of those attributes mentioned above of their adopted districts were perhaps only discovered after settlement and did not really play a large part in the taking of the initial step. The main issue would seem to be—as it was most generally and most strongly expressed—that farms were cheaper, easier of access, and bigger. In nearly every case there was a confident belief that the migration was a step onwards in economic progress.

The success of the immigrant farmers was attributed by the men themselves to one or more of four main reasons. First, many had introduced to the district a new system of farming which was more profitable in the circumstances of the time. Second, they had worked harder or worked to better purpose. Third, they had observed a more economical standard of living. And, fourth, they were in the main superior farmers in the combined technical and business sense. Many immigrants attributed their success in some measure to all of these reasons, but they can be examined separately.

It has been seen that in several localities a number of the immi-

grants introduced, or took the lead in developing, a new system of farming, viz. grazing and milk production, in contrast to the native system of corn and stock. Not all the immigrants have made this change, but the majority certainly have. Coming from stock-raising and dairying districts, the majority have continued with their own systems of farming. They have taken arable farms formerly cropped for corn, laid them down to grass and put on a dairy. The migration to the Midlands, South, and East of England has, therefore, brought about in these districts an extension of grazing and milk production.

The opportunity of practising these systems, of, as it were, exploiting an undeveloped or partially developed region, was not spoken of by the immigrants as one of the things that had attracted them. Nevertheless, it may be suggested that it was a real attraction though it may not have appealed to them in this light. Many of the immigrants came with the intention of farming with their own system and not copying the natives. Mr. McConnell writes, 'One of the greatest changes in the system of farming brought about by the incomers has been the general turning to dairying. It was not of course entirely unknown before, but it was a single farmer here and there who followed it, while the great majority of incomers—being already dairymen—have kept on at it. Many, indeed, as they were leaving farms in Scotland simply transported the whole of their live and dead stock to the South, hiring a special train for the purpose, and starting a fully-equipped herd of cows at the very first.' The immigrants from the South-west of England stated that the terms on which they had taken farms included the conversion of buildings for dairy purposes: they would not take farms in which they could not produce milk. And the immigrants from the North-west of England said that in the South of England they had introduced grass sheep; before they came the only sheep in the district were hurdle sheep. The land had looked to them good stock land, and they came with the intention of grazing it.

The circumstances of the times were certainly favourable to the expansion of dairy farming, and unfavourable to the native system of cereal growing. There were many reasons why it was easier for the immigrant farmer to introduce the dairy-farming system to these cereal-growing areas than it was for the native farmer to change to it.

The native farmers had, in the first place, to come to a decision

that the change was necessary. They did not realize, at first, that the depression was not merely a passing phase. The bad seasons of 1879 and 1881 created hardship and obscured the more permanent causes of depression. The implications of the falling price level and the opening up of virgin lands abroad were imperfectly understood. During the time which elapsed before these facts were borne in upon them, their capital was seriously depleted by successive losses, and became insufficient to enable them to make radical changes in their system of farming. The evidence of Wilson-Fox regarding the difficulties confronting the farmers in Bedford, Huntingdon, and Northamptonshire in changing their system of farming probably has wide application. He quotes the opinion of a large land agent in Northamptonshire who wrote: 'I observe a decided inclination to drop the old corn-growing system and take to a new one, but lack of capital prevents many. Farmers about here are not grass farmers and I altogether approve of demonstrative farms to illustrate and instruct farmers in the management of grass land and the laying down of certain classes of soil.' He adds his own opinion: 'It is shortness of capital more than any other cause that prevents many of the tenants in Bedford, Huntingdon, and Northamptonshire from curtailing the acreage under losing crops.'¹

Then, in addition to the lack of capital and the lack of experience in laying the land down to grass, another obstacle was the lack of knowledge and experience with stock, particularly with dairy cows. And with this lack of knowledge and experience went a dislike of dairy cows. It was a common opinion among farmers that corn farming is a more interesting and less arduous occupation than dairy farming, and that it had a superior social standing. The dairy-farming immigrants in many of the counties visited could remember that their reception by the natives was not at first enthusiastically friendly; they were spoken of contemptuously as 'cow keepers'. The natives not only could not afford to buy cows, not only were inexperienced in managing them, but did not want them.

Finally, there was the difficulty, supposing that these other difficulties were overcome, of persuading their landlords to expend capital in adapting the buildings and laying on water. There is evidence to show that the landlords as a class did not realize the

¹ *Assistant Commissioner's Report on Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, and Northamptonshire*, p. 43 (C. 7842), 1895.

extent of their tenants' losses until they were forced by the numerous throwing up of tenancies, and did not readily come forward to take their share of the depression. The new tenants were often able to get terms that had been refused to the old tenants. In the adjustment of rents to changes of fortune in the industry, a lag almost always intervenes, and in this case the brunt of the lag was borne by the natives. In the second report of the Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression in 1896 it was stated that 'much evidence had been given to show that, though new tenants may have been able to get the land at a rent more nearly at its economic value, the old tenant has not been able to get a fair reduction'. This was undoubtedly one cause of the immigrants' success on the farms where the native farmers had failed.

The landlords were, moreover, sometimes prejudiced against the new system. Mr. McConnell writes: 'Unfortunately some of the proprietors of the district have formed the idea that cows impoverish land, and refuse to let their farms to dairymen, and this in spite of all the evidence that has been made public on the matter respecting the small amount of fertility removed in milk and the large amount returned in the cake and meal. One large farm in this neighbourhood was refused to a Scotsman for this reason, and it is at present being farmed by a bailiff.'

The more favourable conditions for the dairy business as compared with cereal growing did not entirely end with the passing of the depression at the end of the century. The system based upon cereal growing recovered some of its prosperity, it is true, during the first decade of the present century, but its two main products, wheat and beef, have been, except for the war years, continually subject to world conditions and the competition of the new countries, whereas milk—the liquid supply—has enjoyed a freedom from imported supplies. Wheat and beef, further, have not catered for an increasing demand to the same extent as milk. While, therefore, the distinctly better prospects attaching to milk production in the counties round London (as compared with cereal growing) which existed at the height of the depression in the 'eighties and 'nineties, may not have been sustained up to the present time, yet the conditions have always appeared to be rather more favourable, in view of the freedom from the vagaries of world conditions and the production for an expanding trade. This factor in the success of the immigrant farmer in stock management has probably,

therefore, been maintained, even if to a smaller degree than in the early days when the system of dairy farming was not only unfamiliar but distasteful to the native farmers and landowners.

It was not, however, everywhere that a change of system had been made. A large number of immigrant farmers adopted the native system and cropped the land much as it was cropped before, and they appear to have been as successful as the other immigrants. The importance of the new system must not be exaggerated. With regard to Essex, where the change of system was more marked than in many districts, Mr. McConnell writes: 'Dairying has thus become quite a feature of the district, and where six or eight years ago only one or two persons were engaged in it, there is now a dozen. But it is only a feature and the rest of the farming goes pretty much as usual. With us on this farm, there is quite as much capital invested in sheep and bullocks as in milch cows, while there is always a large amount of meadow hay and "mixture" for sale.' The success of migrations cannot therefore be explained simply as the result of a decline in corn farming, and an extension of stock and dairy farming. Part of the explanation this undoubtedly is, possibly the most important part, but it is not the complete explanation.

The difference which the immigrant farmers noticed between themselves and the native farmers was in the manual labour which they expended on their farms. They were 'working farmers', while the natives were 'collar-and-tie' farmers. They spent more time in the fields and with the stock than the native farmers, and they utilized the labour of their families. There is in this a difference of attitude which appears to have formed a striking contrast between the immigrant and the native farmers in the early days of migration. The immigrants came from districts where farmers were accustomed to depend mainly upon their own manual labour, and the duties of management occupied a minor place in the farmer's time. In other words, the duties of manager, foreman, and worker were not differentiated in his scheme of operation. There were no class distinctions which made it undignified for him or his family to work with his labourers in the fields and cowsheds, when the duties of manager were not sufficiently onerous to take up all of his time.

The native farmers in the period of depression, it would seem, made a sharp distinction between the duties and responsibility of management and the manual work. They were unaccustomed to

share in the manual labour, and the time which was not necessary for managerial duties was occupied with leisurely and gentlemanly pursuits. The prosperity of farming prior to the depression justified the freedom from manual toil, and a large amount of leisure from the duties of management.

The depression brought about a change of circumstances, and the immigrant farmers of the early periods, at least, attributed a part of their success to the fact that, while the native farmers found it difficult to undertake part of the manual work, and to sacrifice the leisure to which they were accustomed, they themselves, the immigrants, had been accustomed to it all their lives.

Very much the same thing is implied when the immigrant farmers spoke about their more economical standard of living. 'The Devon farmers live close and never spend a bob', was the description given by one of the Devon immigrants in Oxfordshire. This hard economical manner of life was contrasted with the expensive style kept up by the native farmers—'driving about in carriages and pairs, hunting three days a week, card parties, and top hats, and cigars'. Very likely the style of the native farmers has been exaggerated; it is a theme that lends itself to exaggeration; but all the same, it contains some element of truth.

For twenty-five years before the depression in the 'eighties, British farming passed through 'the golden age' of agricultural prosperity, in which the most favoured class were the corn farmers who were farming on a comparatively large scale and producing a speculative, but, as the times then were, a very profitable crop. During this golden period their standards were raised and became adjusted, as did the organization of their farms, to wheat selling at 60s. per quarter. Then, suddenly, passing to a period of severe depression, with wheat at 30s. per quarter, they were called upon either to retrench, which naturally many of them could not easily do, or to try to readjust their business to meet the changed conditions, and still maintain their standard of living.

Similar elevation of the standards of the corn farmers took place during the prosperous period of the Napoleonic wars, and similar difficulty and hardship in submitting to the depression was experienced after 1815. Cobbett disapproved (and, therefore, very strongly expressed his disapproval) of the increased luxury among the capitalist farmers of the times. 'The English farmer has of late years', he says, 'become a totally different character. A fox hunting

horse; polished boots; a spanking trot to market; a "get out of the way or by G-d I'll ride over you" to every poor devil upon the road; wine at his dinner; a servant (and sometimes in livery) to wait at his table; a painted lady for a wife; sons aping the young squires and lords; a house crammed up with sofas, pianos and all sorts of fooleries.'

Farmers in the four Western districts, and to a lesser extent in the North-east of England and the South-east of Scotland, had not been subjected to the same temptations, partly because they were farming on a smaller scale, and partly because their systems of farming were not so lucrative. They had not been so comfortably off that they could afford to begin to take things more easily, and spend money on amusements and luxuries. And, moreover, even the big men amongst them, who perhaps could have afforded to cut a fine figure, had not been disposed to do so, because the social standards of their districts were not so high. Thrift is by no means simply the result of necessity. Mr. Wilson Fox, discussing the question whether the small or the large farmer in Cumberland was doing best in the depression, writes that: 'When considering the relative position of the large and small farmers, it must be borne in mind that generally speaking the difference in their social position is not sharply defined as is frequently the case in the Southern Counties where the gentleman farmer is frequently to be found. . . . The farmer who gets on to a large farm in Cumberland makes but little difference in his mode of life so far as his work is concerned, though he can bring up his family better and can keep a better table, but in some cases this is done more on account of the hired men than of the family.'

This description could be applied to all of the four Western districts. Where the family and working farmers predominate, and the agricultural classes are not rigidly stratified, expensive appearances do not need to be kept up. In the new areas in which they settled, the immigrant farmers continued to follow the customs and habits of their upbringing, and although they must have felt the scorn of their new neighbours, they could afford to go their own way.

The claim made by the immigrants that they were technically more progressive than the native farmers was confirmed by several of the county Agricultural Organizers, who found them more eager

¹ *Assistant Commissioner's Report on Cumberland*, p. 36 (C. 7915), 1895.

for advice and more ready to accept new ideas. It had been noticed in many districts that the Scots immigrants used more artificial manures than the native farmers.

One county Organizer gave his opinion that the Scots were long sighted in their investment of capital, more so than the native farmers. If a project was put to them which involved a comparatively heavy initial outlay but which promised a profitable return, they took it up, whereas the native farmers were more cautious.

Mr. McConnell mentions several points of difference between the farming of the Scots immigrants and that of the natives of Essex in which he thought that the immigrants were superior. They avoided bare fallowing by their use of long leys, which he regarded as a much more effective method of killing weeds and of keeping the land in good heart, while at the same time it enabled them to reduce the number of men and of horses. Secondly, they used more modern implements, and more efficient methods of cultivation. 'We cannot help thinking', he writes, 'that our English neighbours literally waste the labour of men and horses from the laborious way of doing their work and the clumsy machines with which they do it.'

A further point in the efficiency of the immigrants was in the management of their labour. They used less hired labour by putting more personal and family labour into the farm, but they also claimed through being 'working farmers' to get more labour out of the men they did employ. The Spanish proverb that the best manure is the master's foot expresses their experiences nicely. According to the immigrants, the natives were accustomed to leave most of the management to the bailiff or foreman; they did not stay with the men to see that every one worked diligently, much less to work with them and set the pace. It was said, also, that the native farmers very often lacked practical experience in manual work. Not having been brought up as the sons of working farmers, they had not had to work on the farms as labourers, and they did not in consequence know intimately the minute details of their business. If the work was going slowly, for example, they could never be quite sure whether the story they were told in explanation was a true one or an invention. Too much depended on the bailiff and too little on the master.

On the other hand, the accusation of the native farmers was that these immigrants obtained their economy of labour not merely

by doing hard manual work themselves, nor by getting better work from their labourers, but by putting less into the land. They laid land down to grass and sacrificed ploughmen and horses. They neglected hedges and ditches and hand-weeding, and did without the cleaning and cultivation value of fallowing. This, however, is an aspect upon which some method of measurement is necessary in order to justify conclusions, and no such measurements were made. The Scots immigrants, especially, would not admit that they were letting down the fertility of the land. They would also contest that there is a special virtue in employing more men than the system of farming requires. On the other hand, they would probably argue that they could not afford what were some of the luxuries of farming—sleek horses, show stock, fields and hedges, buildings and yards, trimmed up to the neatness of a formal garden. There was a difference of standard. The immigrant farmers set the standard of good farming for themselves—to keep the land in good heart, to keep the equipment in serviceable order, and above all, to make their business pay. If the native farmers had a higher standard of elegance and a different conception of good farming, that was their own affair, so long as they could afford it.

Chapter V

A SCOTTISH PARALLEL

IN addition to the migrations in England, the migration that has occurred since 1880 to the South-eastern counties of Scotland has been studied. It appears that a considerable number of farmers from the South-western counties—Ayrshire, Lanark, Renfrew, Dumbarton, and Stirling—have migrated to the South-eastern and Eastern counties—Perth, Angus, Fife, Midlothian, East Lothian, Berwick, Roxburgh, and Selkirk. The investigation has been mainly confined to the counties of Midlothian and East Lothian, but to get a general view of the movement over a wide area, the county Agricultural Organizers attached to the Edinburgh and East of Scotland College of Agriculture, whose areas include the counties of Perth, Fife, Midlothian, East Lothian, Berwick, Roxburgh, and Selkirk, have been consulted, and a few of the immigrant farmers in Perth, Fife, and Berwick have been interviewed.

The migration closely resembles the migration from the same area to England, but it shows some special features. The difference noticed between the four Western districts and the Midlands, South, and East of England in the type of farm organization is also found between the South-west and South-east of Scotland, the latter being a capitalist farming area. There is also a similar difference in the system of farming, but this is less marked, for in the 'eighties stock was, as it still is, a more important part of the farming in the South-east of Scotland than in the Midlands, South, and East of England. The main features of the migration are the same—stock and dairy farmers, who, in their standards and notions, are nearer to the family and working type of farmer than to the capitalist, have moved to an arable district, capitalistically organized, and taken the place of the capitalists, managing to succeed partly by introducing a new system, partly by farming more efficiently and reducing their costs, and partly by observing a more sparing standard of life.

Its volume has not been ascertained. It is safe to say, however, that it has taken place on a fairly large scale, for at least fifty West of Scotland farmers have settled in East Lothian alone. It is probable that this county has received the largest number of immigrants. In general, the migration seems to have taken place in largest

amount to the counties of Midlothian, East Lothian, and Fife; in smaller amount to the Border counties. As with the migration in England, it seems to have begun about the year 1880; and it still continues.

It has been shown that there was some migration to England from the South-eastern counties of Scotland. Here, therefore, is another district in which a double movement has occurred. A statistical estimate of the amount of migration has not been undertaken, but a strong impression was gained that the exodus from this district to England was very much smaller than the invasion of West of Scotland farmers.

Thirty-four immigrants in Midlothian and East Lothian (or their sons when the father no longer survived), five in Berwickshire, four in Fife, and five in Perth have been interviewed. Their year of settlement ranges from 1879 to 1927. Nine of the immigrants came from Ayrshire, ten from Lanark, eight from Glasgow, five from Dumbarton, five from Renfrew, one from Bute, and one from Angus.

The attractions to the immigrant farmers are four in number: bigger farms; better land; better climate; and the opportunity to take a cropping farm and be rid of dairying, which is the system that the majority of the immigrants were practising before they came.

To avoid repetition, the cause and effect of this migration need not be studied in such detail. Some of the evidence is new; for the most part it confirms what has been discovered already.

In the migration to Perth, Berwick, and the Lothians, a marked tendency is apparent for the farmers to move to a better quality of land. Most of the immigrants have moved from lower to higher rented land; in some cases the difference is very large, as much as 25s. per acre; yet, in spite of its high rent, the land was, they thought, really cheaper than the land they had left. In relation to the total cost of cultivating it, it gave a better return. These migrations may illustrate, therefore, the adjustment of efficiency among farmers to quality of land.

In the migration to Fife, the tendency, so far as the information goes, is not shown. A lot of the land in Fife is of a poor quality; and the immigrants were attracted to it by the low rents which made it cheaper than the land they had left.

Nothing need be said about the attraction of the larger farms and

of the superior climate, the South-east of Scotland being similar to England in these respects. It was noticeable that a number of the immigrants in the Lothians had occupied more than one holding before they made this move, as if their resources had gradually increased until the move became possible.

A novel attraction is found in the desire to take a cropping farm—to have ‘a splash in a cropping farm’, as was commonly said, and be rid of ‘the slavish life’ of dairying. The change of system appealed to them because it was more speculative, and because it was easier and more interesting work. Part of the advantage is, therefore, material, the opportunity afforded of securing a better return on their capital and labour, even if the risks be also greater; and part is social or immaterial. It will be remembered that Mr. McConnell, speaking for himself and for his countrymen in Essex, thought that most of the immigrants would have preferred to do without cows; and that part of the explanation of the Ayrshire migration South was the desire to be free from the drudgery of cheese and butter dairies, so that if they must have a dairy it was to be on the easiest terms, that is, milk production. On some of the farms in the Lothians, Berwick, and Perth even these terms are unnecessary, the land paying as well as it can under systems of mixed farming—or so the immigrants believe, and they are attracted to the farms in consequence.

A corollary of this attraction might seem to be that the immigrants have not introduced a new system as they have elsewhere. This, however, is only partly true. There has been undoubtedly less extension of dairying and grazing than in some parts of England, but there has been some extension, and this is largely the work of the immigrants. Several of the immigrants are producing milk on farms which had no dairy before.

The less change is due to the less need. A great deal of the land in the Lothians and Berwick, and a smaller amount in Perth, stands as high as any land in the country above the margin of cultivation. When, therefore, the margin contracts, owing to the competition of foreign producers with greater natural advantages, as it has since 1880, throwing the worst land out of cultivation and forcing an adaptation of system on the land that is slightly better, the farming on land of excellent quality is left more or less unchanged. For on this land the farmer is meeting competition, at any rate as regards the quality of his natural resources, on equal terms.

In Fife the attraction of a change of system was not mentioned, and in this county the extension of dairying has taken place in greater amount. The majority of immigrants are reported to have adopted systems of arable dairying.

Another factor in determining the system to be practised is the market facilities. Each of the four counties, Perth, Midlothian, East Lothian, and Berwick, has one fair-sized or large market to supply, but, apart from that, only small local markets, whereas Fife, especially the South-western area, has a number of industrial markets and all along the coast a number of popular seaside resorts. As well, therefore, as the less need in the four former counties, there is probably less scope for milk production.

In East Lothian, in a small district by the sea, the immigrants have introduced one important change—the growing of early potatoes. The originator of this change, however, was not attracted to the county by the opportunity he foresaw of exploiting an undeveloped region; the discovery was made after he came. His success induced, or acted as an added inducement to, other West of Scotland farmers, skilled in this branch of farming, to migrate East and follow his example. But the area covered by the crop is not a large one, and comparatively few farmers are concerned in the change.

Speaking generally, the immigrants to all the South-eastern counties seem to have been more akin to the capitalist type of farmer than to the prevailing type of farmer in the districts in which they were brought up, or to many of their countrymen who have migrated to England. They have settled on large farms where they employ a considerable labour staff. In Perth, the Lothians, and Berwick the quality of the land is high and it is highly rented. It is evident, therefore, that to take and stock these large and highly rented arable farms, the immigrants must have possessed a considerable supply of capital. In Fife quite the same argument does not apply, but the immigrants are reported to be men of substantial capital.

Yet the immigrants are not, or were not when they came, capitalistic in their standards and notions. The explanation of their success is similar to that given by all the immigrants from the four Western districts—that they 'wrought' harder than the natives, working as well as managing; that they lived less expensively; and that they farmed more efficiently.

Accounts of the easy and liberal life led by the natives in the South-east of Scotland were given, similar to those given of the native farmers in the capitalist areas in England. They seem to have shared much the same experience. In 'the golden age' their standards of life were raised and they became accustomed to take things easily and to leave much of the direction of their business to the grieve. When the depression came in the late 'seventies, the retrenchment in their personal expenditure and the reorganization of their business which were necessary, proved for many of them too difficult, so that some of them were compelled to leave the industry and others preferred to do so.

The immigrants, on the other hand, were brought up on small farms where they worked and lived as farm servants. Even if they were comparatively prosperous—for the capital they required to enable them to migrate East must have been accumulated somehow—their profits were not spent, in Cobbett's phrase, 'in pianos and sofas and all sorts of fooleries', but were put by with the hope of ultimate advancement. In their economy, 'every penny was a prisoner'; there was no broadening of their standards, nor relaxing of effort.

Their claim of superior efficiency was a general one, and the same as that made by those who migrated to England. They attended more to their business, and by working in the fields themselves got more work out of their men, and farmed more in accordance with the times—that is to say, avoiding expensive methods of high farming that were no longer justified, the hand-weeding and over-cultivation, and by paying strict, almost ruthless, attention to the financial side of every operation, and doing nothing because it was stylish and made the land look nice.

It must not be forgotten that farming is an art as well as a business. Possibly when its business aspect becomes to the farmer, as on occasions it does become, a little less harassing, he tends to pay too much attention to the art. Like the literary artist who is freed from the necessity of pot-boiling, he enjoys himself polishing his work, which in the business sense may be unnecessary and a waste of time. A long spell of this freedom may over develop his artistic side, and artists are notoriously bad business men, or may render him in his style of farming conservative, so that when the business aspect again prominently presents its displeasing features, he is reluctant to confront it. This, at least, was the theme of the

explanation given of the inferiority in business efficiency of the natives of the South-east to that of the immigrants. The immigrants had never been allowed by their circumstances, or had never allowed themselves, to treat lightly the business aspect. Effectiveness in farming, not style, was what they set themselves to attain.

Chapter VI

CONCLUSIONS

THE attractions which persuaded the immigrant farmers to move and the factors which have contributed to their success have been examined. In this concluding chapter the causes of the difference between the emigration and immigration areas must be discovered. These will be found to be partly social and partly economic in character.

In the emigration areas, it appears, there has been a pressure of farming population upon the available supply of land, and either the farming system or the social standards have bred a type of working farmer who has been able to succeed in districts where, in hard times, the native farmers have experienced difficulty.

The excess of farmers in the emigration areas was stated to arise in two ways: (1) farmers had larger families; (2) more sons of farmers went in for farming than in the capitalist areas.

It is impossible to gauge the truth of the first. The rural birth-rate is no measure of the size of farmers' families, since other classes are included in it. There is, of course, the theory of an authority like Alfred Marshall that 'on the whole, it seems proved that the birth-rate is generally lower among the well-to-do than among those who make little expensive provision for the future for themselves and their families, and who live an active life, and that fecundity is diminished by luxurious habits of living';¹ but the difference in standard of living between the farmers of the West and those of the East is not so great as to justify the application of a theory which applies only to extremes. There is also the further belief that to a working farmer a family is a labour asset, while to others it is an expense. Attendance at the village school leaves time for odd jobs on the farm, especially at harvest. But the case that family and working farmers have larger families is not proved, and individual impressions on such matters are not dependable.

On the second point, however, that more sons of working farmers go in for farming, several interesting theories arise. Immigrant farmers from the South-west attribute it to the fact that there were fewer alternative occupations in their home counties than were to be found 'up country'. In Devon and Cornwall there are fewer

¹ *Principles*, Bk. IV, chap. iv, p. 185, 6th edition.

towns and industries than in the South, Midlands, and East of England, and, it was said, a young man brought up on a farm is less tempted to leave the land. He sees less of the glitter of the town and is less discontented to continue 'working for ha'pence in the cold'; and also, so it was said, it is not so easy for him to find town or industrial employment. Possibly the remoteness of the district does to some extent check the drift to the towns, but it may be doubted if, in modern days, with cheap and rapid transport and the penetration of the country by urban ideas, it is responsible for much. Remoteness cannot be the cause of young men resigning themselves to following farming in Lancashire or Ayrshire, nor was it said to be. Here, and in Wales and in Cumberland, the explanation given was that the son of the family farmer receives a different education from that of the son of the capitalist, an education which is more technical and less general. This, which was also given as a secondary explanation in the South-west of England, seems much more adequate.

The son of the family farmer by the time he has reached an independent age is eminently qualified for farming, but usually ill-qualified for other skilled occupations. He has received comparatively little general education, while he has served a more or less compulsory apprenticeship in farming which has made him a skilled worker. The prospects of farming on a small farm, similar to his home, which, to begin with, is probably all that he can hope for, may not please him, but the alternatives may be worse. A bailiff's job or something of the kind is possible, but it is an overstocked line and there are not many openings. Outside farming he must become an unskilled worker, earning an unskilled worker's wage.

In farming, moreover, he can obtain help from home in setting up independently. His parents may not be able to do very much for him in other occupations: they are able to do a great deal for him in farming. They can give him advice which is the advice of experts; and they can give him material goods in the way of stock and implements. The father's name is good for credit with auctioneers and the landlord.

The son of the capitalist farmer, on the other hand, has not usually been brought up in circumstances that have given him such a marked vocational bent. He has received more general education and less technical training in farming. His parents can

do more to start him outside farming, more jobs are open to him, and so he can turn more easily in other directions.

Furthermore, it was pointed out by the immigrants that the land in their home counties was more accessible than in the capitalist areas, and so, apart from their inclinations, more farmers' sons were able to take farms, and not only farmers' sons but agricultural labourers and persons of their class. The 'agricultural ladder' is not so steep in these four Western districts as it is in the Midlands, South, and East of England. The immigrants from Cornwall, North Devon, Somerset, Wales, especially the South of Wales, Lancashire, and Cumberland repeatedly spoke about 'small men rising into big ones', and their keen competition for the land. Where this rising enterprise seemed to be most common was in Cornwall, North Devon, the Cheddar Vale in Somerset, and Cumberland. It was not so common in the South-west of Scotland. A few immigrants mentioned examples of it through 'the bower system', which is a form of *métayage* in which a man without the capital to stock a farm hires cows from a capitalist farmer and works a dairy, but it was commonly agreed that the labourers rarely rose to the position of farmers, or made a success of it when they did. In Cornwall, the competition for small farms was not confined to the agricultural classes. A number of the immigrants stated that Cornish miners who had made money abroad retired to their home county and bought or rented small bits of land.

The easier access to the land in the four Western districts was due to the larger number of small farms and also to the systems of farming practised, namely, dairying and stock rearing, poultry, fruit, and vegetables, suitable to the small business which the arable systems of the Midlands, South, and East are not. The fact that labourers can rise and are rising to independence on the land is an encouragement for others to follow their example. Land hunger is possibly a contagious appetite. A competitive influence is spread by ambition. The rare progress upwards of a labourer which happens in all counties may call forth nothing more than wonder and can be explained away by calling him a remarkable man. When, however, such advancement occurs not infrequently, other members of the class begin to look to themselves.

It appears, therefore, that the strong desire for access to land, the supply of small farms and the type of farming practised all combine to inspire these Western districts with ambition of

advancement. The small farm is looked upon as the first step in the ladder which leads up to bigger farms and may ultimately carry the farmer to other parts of the country where the opportunities of expansion are greater.

There is a further important point of difference between the emigration and the immigration areas. In the family farming of the Western districts, the demand for land, it may be suggested, is less elastic than in the capitalist farming of the immigration areas, and the degree of intensity to which the competition may rise is, therefore, higher.

It is very much easier for the capitalist farmer to abandon farming than for the family farmer because of his larger capital resources. The possession of a few thousands of capital does two things for him. It enables him, if the industry is sinking into depression, to retire for a time and live on his capital. He can wait for improvement and come in again at the sign of change. Secondly, it gives a ready access to other occupations because it is a qualification universally welcome.

The family farmer, possessing only a small supply of capital, has neither of these advantages. He cannot live the life of a rentier, but must be earning. If he leaves the land it is imperative that he should get another job immediately. And, in seeking another job, he has nothing to recommend him, and is likely to receive nothing but the wages of an unskilled worker. In comparison with this, the hard, badly rewarded work on his small farm may be better. It is, therefore, economically prudent for him to continue after the capitalist is justified in giving up.

These are the economic considerations that affect the two types of farmer respectively, but their various dispositions must be considered also. In hard conditions the family farmer probably has greater powers of endurance than the capitalist, because he finds them less irksome. As with powers of endurance of any kind, he has acquired them over a long period of training. He never enjoys the easy circumstances of the capitalist in periods of prosperity because his small business fluctuates less than the capitalist business. In good times it makes less, in bad times it loses less simply because of its smaller size. Therefore, the family farmer lives a life evenly hard, without the pleasure of spending, but also, without the pain of retrenchment. He is trained to survive a harder struggle. The migrations were frequently explained by the difference in

economic environment between the two areas; and a resemblance was pointed out to the common occurrence in many parts of the world of the displacement of the softer races of the plains by the harder, more virile mountain breeds. It was freely admitted by the Scots immigrants that they tended to lose, after a time, some of their capacity for hard work and their sparing standard of life. It was not so easy to maintain the pace in the less invigorating climate of Southern England; there was also less need to do so. And the temptations to expand their standards and indulge themselves more liberally were much greater where, in the first place, this was possible, and, in the second place, where it was the custom of the country. They were grimly amused in reflecting that, after a time, they, in their turn, might be displaced by their tougher countrymen from home.

As a conclusion and summary of this study the nature of migration in the light of economic theory, or what may be called the economic theory of migration, may briefly be considered.

Economically migration represents the law of substitution operating as a result of the shifting of the margin between different uses of land, and consequently, also, of the shifting of the margin as between the different amounts of the other productive agents applied to land, labour, and capital. It is necessarily connected, therefore, with a disturbance in the conditions of the industry brought about either by a depression of a certain use of land, or, conversely, by a boom. Reverting to the historical evidence, it has been seen that there is no record that migration took place before the 'eighties and 'nineties of the last century when the severe depression in arable farming set in. An important distinction between the normal movement and migration now becomes clear.

The normal movement is merely the result of the unceasing changes in the fortunes of individual farmers, and takes place in the ordinary course of the competitive system. It shows no tendency to go in a particular direction, but goes freely in any direction. The migration, on the other hand, is caused by a change in the marginal relation between types of farming which leads to the substitution of one type for another. Types of farming, mainly for reasons of soil and climate, tend to be separated into districts, and migration, therefore, does show a tendency to go in a particular direction: it is from one district to another. It follows that in the

migration there is no reverse movement. While the normal movement may take place just as easily from *A* to *B* as from *B* to *A*, the migration takes place only from *A* to *B*, or possibly, also, to *C*, *D*, &c.

The migration is a substitution of (1) pastoral for arable farming, and (2) of more labour for capital, and also of one kind of labour for another—the labour of the working farmer and his family for the managerial labour of the ‘collar and tie’ farmer and his paid staff; and this, which is the social aspect of the substitution, is of special importance as it involves the substitution of one kind of experience and type of life for another.

Migration takes the form of an overflow from the family farm districts to the marginal arable districts through the rise in the rents of the former and the fall in the latter, and the opportunity thus afforded to the successful family farmers for advancement.

In districts where the farming is sufficiently mixed to allow of a shifting of emphasis both of (1) type of product and (2) different amounts of labour and capital, or where it is sufficiently above the arable margin, no great change takes place. Therefore, migration to a district which requires no more than this change of emphasis will not greatly change the nature of the farming previously practised. The migration of West of Scotland farmers to East Lothian is a case in point; so also with the migration of Welsh farmers to the grazing districts in the Midlands of England.

Under these conditions the pressure of new entrants into farming is from the labour side rather than from the capital. The severe competition in the family-farm districts thus created makes it more profitable for the successful family-farmers to move—a reason in itself why the movement should be from the smaller to the larger farm. Were it the other way about—from the larger to the smaller—it would indicate pressure from the capitalist entrants forcing the less successful farmers as capitalists to move.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, OXFORD
BY JOHN JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY