

EXTRACTS.

Where Farming Pays and Why?*

We do not know who Mr. W. Meakin may be, but what he says in this pamphlet is that *farming pays in Denmark* and the reason why it pays there is three-fold:—The Danish farmer is educated as a farmer; he has a land tenure system which gives security to the occupier, so that he is encouraged to do his best; and last, and we should say from the burden of what is written in the pamphlet, he believes in co-operative methods and practises them. Mr. Meakin admits that some maintain that co-operation in itself would have done little for Danish farmers had not 80 per cent. of them been occupying owners and not tenants. What is certain is that, could the land of England be cultivated in the intensive fashion which prevails in Denmark, the agricultural population of England would be increased by nearly 50 per cent.

Denmark is a country of small holders. Its total population is about 3,500,000—less than the population of Scotland. In the country there are 189,600 farms. Of these only 400 exceed 600 acres; 1000 are from 300 acres to 600 in area; 4,000 are from 150 to 300 acres; and 22,500 are from 75 to 150 acres. By far the largest number are from 12 to 25 acres, and from 36 to 75 acres. Of the former there are 42,000 and of the latter 43,300. Between these there are 25,400 the extent of which is from 25 to 36 acres. Of what might be called allotments rather than farms there are 27,700 varying in extent from 4 to 8 acres, and 23,300 whose area varies from 8 to 12 acres. It is said that there are very few persons employed on the land by others who do not themselves occupy one of the smaller-sized holdings.

The argument of the pamphlet is that were British farmers to adopt the co-operative methods of Denmark they could make British agriculture flourish. It may be so, but let us not forget that nearly 40 per cent. of the population of Denmark are supported directly by agriculture. The landholding class in Denmark can dictate the national policy. The secret of the success of the co-operative methods in Denmark is that the Danish farmer has to find his principal market outside of his own country; he is an exporter, and his experience as such has taught him that he can be most successful

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in that line when he studies his customers. He caters for his customers, and he has found by experience that he can only command markets when he can put upon them standardised products. It is a mistake to suppose that co-operative methods have been superimposed upon the Danish farmer, he adopted co-operative methods because he found that unless he did things on the big scale, with uniformity in quality, he could not command a market for his goods. The Danish farmer, Mr. Meakin tells us, has applied the co-operative principle to every activity—to production, distribution, purchasing, stock improvement, insurance, finance, and banking. The State did not pass Acts of Parliament making it easy for the small farmers of Denmark to co-operate; the small farmers of Denmark themselves began to produce and distribute on co-operative lines, and “the help of the State is limited to generous aid for education and research, grants to stock-breeding societies, and the use of the State railways for service rather than for profit.”

Mr. Meakin describes in successive chapters how one finds a prosperous farming community in Denmark in spite of the fact that the cost of living there in 1923 was 104 per cent. above pre-war standard. The people are heavily taxed, yet they are able to bear their burdens without losing their cheerfulness. Wages of agricultural workers are from 30s to 35s per week, but there are comparatively few whole-time agricultural workers. There are relatively few very rich people in the country; wealth, like education, is widely diffused. In spite of post-war conditions and trade depression one-fifth of the total State income is spent on schools, universities, agricultural education, and research, and grants to agricultural institutions other than those of an educational character. This expenditure on the part of the State is in addition to expenditure by local authorities on education. In Great Britain every penny spent on education is grudged, and about eight times the amount is spent on alcoholic liquor that is spent on education. We can learn a good deal from Denmark.

Extracted from *THE SCOTTISH FARMER*.

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Some Hints on Milking.

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In the operation of milking, relations between the cow and the milker must be harmonious if the best results are to be obtained.