

the remaining seats. The whole matter could have been arranged, with a twentieth of the fuss, by merely moving nine Turks from one end of the carriage to the other.

'Good?' asked the commandant proudly, after we were seated.

'Magnificent!' I replied, while we tried hard not to let our self-control be blown over by gusts of laughter.

'Then *au revoir*, my friend.'

'Adieu, mister the commandant.'

He strutted down the platform; and we passed from Alukeeshla to whatever weird experiences might be waiting for us elsewhere.

This chapter is but an amplification

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of an inscription signed by H—— and myself before we left our mud home. When passing toward Alukeeshla from the station, take the second turning to the right beyond the gendarmerie, then the first to the left, and pick out the fifth house in a row of buildings that stare at you from the bottom of a blind alley. Enter it and climb some rickety stairs to the back room on the first floor, overlooking a yard, and you may still find these words on one of the walls:

'In memory of some bad days and good yarns, spent and told in this dirty room of this verminous hut in this God-forsaken village. To hell with the Turks!'

SONG

BY ROBERT HILLIER

OVER the hills and away,
Softly a voice in the morning
Out of a dew-clean sky
Charms the heart to the journey,
Out of the tree, the clouds,
An influence softly falling;
Yours is the voice, ah, yours are the
golden notes,
Pleasantly calling.

Faint yet clear in the ear
A voice in the house that holds us:
Stay, stay in Paradise,
Here are love and contentment.
Out of this roof, these walls,
An influence softly calling;
Yours is the voice, ah, yours are the
golden notes.
Pleasantly calling.

Land and Water

ECONOMICS, TRADE, AND FINANCE

THE PROBLEMS OF ENGLISH FARMERS

IN the condition and prospects of British agriculture the most disquieting and uncertain feature is the labor situation. It is sometimes urged that, if prices are allowed to rise, farmers will be willing and able to pay whatever wages can be reasonably demanded. But this process cannot continue indefinitely. It cannot be the true remedy. If the prices of the bare necessities of life rise with every advance in wages the agricultural laborer is no better off. His additional income is absorbed in the additional cost of living. He remains where he was. And, so far as workers are concerned, the rise in wages must be all round. It is incredible that agricultural laborers can receive a higher scale of wages, based on a rise in the price of food, unless the rest of the industrial community also receive pecuniary compensation for having to pay double the former price for necessities of life. The ever-expanding circle is completed in its most vicious form.

On the other hand, a substantial improvement on the pre-war position of agricultural laborers is imperatively needed. Long overdue, it must be real and not nominal. The standard of living must be raised, and a margin of income over necessary expenditure must somehow be provided. From 1901 onward agricultural wages had been gradually creeping up. The advance was continuous. But it was extremely slow and cautious, following at more or less lengthy intervals the correspondingly slight and gradual advances in agricultural prices. At the

outbreak of war agricultural wages in some parts of England and Wales were disgracefully low. Laborers' wives achieved miracles of management, even if, as was the case, their whole income was not expressed in the weekly cash payments. Young men were with difficulty retained on the land. The most intelligent and enterprising were lost. Though the numbers employed had risen slightly in 1911, as compared with 1901, farms were generally undermanned. Laborers accepted these conditions without articulate complaint. But their silence was not contentment. It rather expressed their sense of powerlessness and the apathy which it breeds.

The outbreak of war found agriculture with the unenviable reputation of a sweated industry, its labor underpaid and insufficient. The years 1915 and 1916 were agriculturally prosperous. Costs of the materials of production had increased more slowly than prices of produce. Some advance in wages was undoubtedly conceded. But it was not proportionate to the increased profits of farming. Methods of enforcing the payment of higher wages began to be discussed; trade unions prepared to finance a movement among agricultural laborers; in the midst of a great war, when every pound of food was vital, the risk of a protracted disturbance of the industry could not be lightly faced. The change of feeling on the subject is illustrated by the reports of the Milner and Selborne Commissions in 1915 and 1916 respectively. The Milner Commission rejected the minimum wage, on the ground that the shortage of labor would place the remedy in the hands