

beauties of Nature—Mrs. Gaskell's "Thomas Holbrook". The general reader will enjoy the book as much as the agriculturist.

Mr. Lamin's book is altogether different in character. It is written for farmers by a farmer, though its scope is a good deal wider than the title indicates. He also is well over eighty years old; he writes clearly and he has a good story to tell. The son of a farmer, he worked on his father's farm near Nottingham until he was twenty-four, when his father set him up as a butcher. But the call of the land was too strong, and after five years he took the farm next to his father's: a poor, run-out sandy stretch, its soil liable to be blown away in a high wind, washed away in high rain, or scorched on a hot day. It had been unlet for nineteen years. He struggled on for five or six years, then came across Mr. R. H. Elliot's book describing the system followed at Clifton Park. This book made a great stir in its day, and it is still useful now: Messrs. Faber and Faber have, in fact, re-issued it. Like other agriculturists of his time, Mr. Elliot did not think the sub-soil on his land was adequately treated, and in his seeds mixture he included some deep-rooting plants that would open it up. The idea appealed very much to Mr. Lamin, and he thought that if he could get enough fibrous root material into the surface and the subsoil of his farm he would not only fix the soil but so enrich it in humus that he would greatly increase its productiveness. So he evolved a seeds mixture on Elliot's lines including cocksfoot, meadow fescue, rough-stalked meadow grass; Montgomery red, Aberystwyth white and Kentish white clovers; chicory, burnet, yarrow and sheep's parsley. This was left down for four years and each year gave excellent crops, finally leaving the soil enriched with a good turf and a mass of deep roots that not only stopped the loss by blowing away and washing, but also made an admirable foundation for the succeeding crops: oats, potatoes, silage crops, etc. He would not, however, include rye grass in his mixtures.

Mr. Lamin used artificial fertilizers liberally, and has some rather scathing things to say about those who claim that they are ineffective or even harmful.

The book contains a great number of practical details of considerable agronomic interest and not easily accessible elsewhere, and it records an achievement of which Mr. Lamin may well be proud.

E. JOHN RUSSELL.

THE COUNTRY TOWN

Country Towns in the Future England

A Report of the Conference representing Local Authorities, Arts and Amenities Organizations and Members of the Town and Country Planning Association on the 23rd of October, 1943. Edited by Stanley Baron. Pp. 140. (London: Faber and Faber, 1944.) 8s. 6d. net.

THE main title of this book is somewhat of a misnomer. The book is a straightforward report of a conference held in the autumn of 1943 under the auspices of the Town and Country Planning Association, at which representatives of some ten per cent of the smaller towns of England were told how to plan to get more industry and better amenities into their boroughs. Short speeches were made by representatives of five of the towns themselves: a health resort (Malvern), a garrison town (Richmond,

Yorks), an agricultural centre (Wisbech), a 'one-industry' weaving town (Haslingden) and a moribund ancient borough (Brackley). Conditions were very different, but all advocated the same solution—new light industries.

It was left for Prof. Ashby, in opening a discussion, to make much the most important contribution to the conference and to this book. He carefully analysed the reforms that the small country towns must undertake before they can become attractive habitats for the staffs of decentralized industry. He also reminded the conference that in the last resort the economic welfare of the country town is dependent on the well-being of its surrounding agricultural and village communities. The primary requirements of a country town are: suitable facilities for marketing agricultural produce; adequate transport arrangements for goods and passengers; a full range of supply services in agricultural requirements; a choice of banking services; a full range of supply of retail shopping facilities; a choice of good repair and maintenance garages; an adequate supply of cafés and restaurants; an adequate supply of hotels, as well as of public houses; at least one good cinema; and provision for technical education. The smallest town able to provide these requirements in full would have at least 7,000 inhabitants, and more often 10,000.

The course of action that should be followed by country towns which wish to attract industry was outlined by Mr. R. L. Reiss, deputy chairman of Welwyn Garden City, and Mr. T. A. L. Paton. They put forward the following desiderata: grouping of factories to spread costs of public utility services; good road communications; building sites at least 200 ft. deep and 100 ft. wide, the building line set back 25 ft. from a 50-ft. road; railway sidings for a few larger factories, which must have sites at least 700 ft. deep; single-story factories built to rent, each with a 40-ft. frontage and depths varying from 65 ft. to 100 ft.; building to cover only 20 per cent of the total area of the industrial estate when fully developed in order to leave sufficient elasticity for necessary expansions and avoid the creation of a factory slum. Pre-war development costs were £800–£2,000 an acre before the first brick of a factory was laid.

The third session was devoted to amenities and was addressed by Miss Glasgow, secretary of the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts. She said that places of about 30,000 population should be able to support a theatre seating 700–800, a concert hall, a library, an exhibition gallery and several cinemas. In towns of some 20,000, the theatre would probably also have to serve as a concert hall and public meeting place, and might well have an exhibition gallery as an annexe. With less than 10,000 people, townships could only support a community centre; this should not consist of one elaborately equipped hall, but of a group of smallish rooms to form a library, an art room, a little theatre and a music room.

In the book these constructive suggestions are surrounded by much general discussion, but the whole makes interesting reading, and (together with the National Council of Social Service report "Dispersal") is a useful corrective to the view that the re-location of industry can be settled by engineers, based on the suitability of each site from considerations of raw materials, transport and markets.

J. TYRWHITT.