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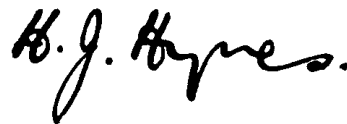
Editorial.

TRAINING THE EX-SERVICE MAN.

It is well known that land settlement schemes in this country following World War I were by no means uniformly successful, and not least among the factors responsible for so many of the failures at that time was the lack of experience in agriculture amongst many of the soldier settlers. Having regard to that unfortunate experience in our agricultural history, and the fact that upon termination of World War II there would most likely be many servicemen eager to engage in primary production, the Commonwealth Government, in 1945, gave consideration to plans for developing a comprehensive rural training scheme, and sought the agreement of the States to implement on its behalf the final proposals. Accordingly, arrangements were made for providing training of three groups—those lacking both training and experience, those who had some experience in agriculture but required a refresher course, and those who required the agricultural college type of training. In New South Wales the plan came into operation some twelve months ago, the total number trained and now receiving training under the scheme in one form or another amounting to approximately 226.

But the integral part of the Commonwealth's plans for rural training of ex-service personnel was the development of a curriculum to include lectures on (a) farming as a business, (b) farming as a science, (c) farming as a practical art, and (d) farming as a way of life. Specialists in various States were invited to write a lecture course under one or other of these headings, and it was no small compliment to the New South Wales Department of Agriculture that the invitation was extended to this Division to prepare a course of some forty lectures on "Farm Management and Elementary Agricultural Economics." These fall into the category of "Farming as a Business," and, after many months of what amount to almost a pioneering job, in-so-far as relating the course to Australian conditions was concerned, the lectures were completed at the end of 1946. The principal burden was borne by Messrs. R. B. McMillan and K. O. Campbell, of the Economics Branch, and the volume of 230 closely roneoed pages amounts to condensed treatment of most phases of this all-important subject.

Events of the last twenty or thirty years have served to emphasise again and again that farming is something more than a way of life—it is a business; and the course of lectures now available will fill a useful role in training ex-service personnel, and others interested in rural pursuits, for the course provides that knowledge without which a man could never become a really good farmer. The lectures will eventually be available in printed form—and then most likely for others than those participating in the present Rural Training Scheme.



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