BOOK REVIEW

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN CONTINENTAL EUROPE DURING THE 1914–18 WAR AND THE RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD


THIS contribution from the League of Nations contains much information of interest and value to all who are thinking of the restoration of Europe's agricultural production at the close of the war. It is pointed out that it required seven years for the continent of Europe to regain its pre-war food production level after World War I. The world food situation at the close of the present war will undoubtedly be much more complex, although the means to cope with the problem will be better organized.

Data are presented on production, trade, and consumption of major foodstuffs in the regions most affected by the first World War, for the war and early postwar periods. In the light of these data, the reasons for the drastic decline in agricultural production and its slow recovery are analyzed. The work is one of a series of studies which the League of Nations is devoting to a consideration of the lessons to be learned from the past which may prove of value as policies for the postwar world are formulated. It surveys the changes of agricultural production by regions, countries, and provincial districts, and examines the various factors responsible for these changes.

It also presents a broad summary of the trends of production and consumption during the whole inter-war period. There are comparisons of the production and trade of Europe with those of the British Isles and Russia, treated as regions apart from continental Europe, and with North America and a group of cereal-exporting countries of the Southern Hemisphere, the two latter regions being considered as sources from which Europe could cover her import requirements. The basic data are graphically presented by means of detailed tables and map diagrams.

In conclusion, a comparison is made of the situation at the end of the fourth year of the present war with that at the same point in the previous war which indicates that the need for initial relief from overseas and for assistance in reconstruction will be greater and more urgent than before.—J. D. LUCKETT.