

Reproduced by kind permission of Evensford Productions Limited and
Pollinger Limited. Copyright © Evensford Productions Limited, 1943.

Farmer and Business Man

Glory Hill Farm (2nd Year). By Clifton Reynolds. (Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.)

By **H. E. BATES**

The author of this spirited little book is a business man. This automatically seems to indicate that he should never have been a farmer. He also paints: which automatically seems to indicate he should never have been a business man. Among other things he has, for a business man, and for a farmer if it comes to that, unorthodox views on politics. He admires Russia: not simply the Russia of Stalin-grad, now universally admired, but the pre-war Russia, struggling to plan and planning to struggle: a country popular only with the unpopular few. He also writes well; he has a dry wit, a nice appreciation of landscape, and, above all, the invaluable gift of remaining unsurprised by the vexatious surprises of bureaucracy, nature, and the English climate. He seems to be, by his own confession, a bad farmer. But he is articulate: which I take to be at least as important as being a good farmer but a dumb ox.

* * *

In fact, an intelligent person. Farming, in its present state of wanting something but not quite knowing what it is, could do with more people like him. For he farms on the mixed, rather sloppy lines on which thousands of medium-sized English farms are run: a few cows, a milk-round, wheat, oats, potatoes, eggs, ducks and geese, pigs and piglets, swedes and hay—the principle being, apparently, that what you lose on the piglets you make up on the milk-round. You see him struggling to reconcile this haphazard, traditional and uncertain way of life with the

principles that have made his own business so successful that he can, apparently, safely spare a few thousand pounds of capital to experiment with a hundred acres in Buckinghamshire.

He is, in fact, typical of thousands of small English farmers: at the mercy of markets, politicians, forms, licences, the weather, and that English reluctance to change which we so readily accept as a virtue. I like his book, indeed precisely because it recognises these facts; because it discusses them intelligently; because, unlike the average farmer, who so often knows best, he does not profess to know at all; because he is ignorant and wants to learn; because he is big enough to say "Why not?" and take the consequences. Farmers may not learn much from this excellent little book about the art of farming; but they can learn much about the thing on which their future more and more depends—the art of being articulate.

Letters to the Editor

Continued from Page 4

For France

Sir,—To-day I came on this dedication of the Memoirs of Maximilien de Béthune, duc de Sully, the faithful servant of Henry of Navarre—"Dédiés à la France à tous les bons soldats et tous peuples françois." And it seemed that those words might well be remembered to-day, alike by Fighting France and by French North