

Ebenezer Howard

***GARDEN
CITIES of
To-Morrow***

**edited with a preface by
F.J. OSBORN**

**Introductory essay by
LEWIS MUMFORD**

John C. LIVENGOOD

Fall '72

GARDEN CITIES OF TO-MORROW

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by

EBENEZER HOWARD

Edited, with a Preface, by

F. J. OSBORN

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LEWIS MUMFORD



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Foreword to this Edition

Since the 1946 edition of this book there have been great advances in planning thought, legislation and practice. The two prefaces of that date, now reprinted without revision (except for a change in the footnote on page 13), must therefore be read, along with Howard's text of 1898, in historical perspective. It is possible in this edition to add only the following brief note on what has happened since 1946.

Under the New Towns Act of that year about twenty new towns, essentially conforming to Howard's Garden City definition, have been founded in Great Britain. Those now nearing completion have proved remarkably successful as places to live in and efficient centres of modern industry. Moreover, taken together they more than pay their way as national investments. They have aroused intense interest throughout the world as demonstrations of the practicability of the relief of congestion in overgrown cities by some planned dispersal of people and workplaces to new towns beyond reserved green belts, thereby permitting central renewal on more spacious and humane standards.

Town planning has become a major governmental function, and is broadening out to regional and national planning. Among the many problems it faces is that of the control or guidance of the location of industry, and of office businesses, in order to bring about a healthier, more pleasant, and more efficient distribution of people and their activities in town and country. The fear of a declining population mentioned in Lewis Mumford's preface has been replaced by the prospect of an embarrassingly rapid increase, which magnifies the necessity for new towns. Indeed this, and almost all the other changes in society and thought since 1898, confirm the validity of Howard's thesis.

The book list in the 1946 edition remains of value for those interested in the early history of the Garden City movement.

A few of the older books have now been replaced by a selection from the copious flow of recent publications that will help to bring the reader up to date. Some of these contain more ample bibliographies.

January, 1965.

F. J. O.

Preface by F. J. Osborn

Ebenezer Howard's book was first published in 1898 as *To-morrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, and re-issued with slight revisions in 1902 under the title *Garden Cities of To-morrow*. The present edition follows the 1902 text, except that I have reinstated from the 1898 edition a few of Howard's quotations from other writers that seem to me to have new interest to-day. The diagrams I have included in their 1902 form. Though their style seems antiquated by contrast with the living freshness of Howard's writing, they are an integral part of the book, and having been drawn by Howard himself they tell us something of his practical yet non-technical constructiveness and his gifts of popular persuasion.

The history of the book and its effects is full of paradoxes. It endowed all modern languages with a new term (*Garden City*, *Cité-Jardin*, *Gartenstadt*, *Cuidad-jardín*, *Tuinstad*), and though this term was given a most precise meaning by Howard, everywhere it has been used persistently in a sense entirely different from, indeed opposed to, the author's definition.

Again, the book holds a unique place in town planning literature, is cited in all planning bibliographies, stands on the shelves of the more important libraries, and is alluded to in most books on planning; yet most of the popular writers on planning do not seem to have read it—or if they have read it, to remember what it says.

Further, the book led to two experiments in town-founding which by imitation, and imitation of imitation, have had immeasurable influence on practical urban development throughout the world. Parallel with but largely independently of these developments, the book set going ideas which, after a long interval, have transformed the scientific and political outlook on town structure and town growth. Yet no book of significance has enjoyed less academic notice or prestige. With the exception of Alfred Marshall and Charles Gide no economist of the first

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rank has, until the last few years, seriously entertained Howard's central idea that the size of towns is a proper subject of conscious control. Of the recognized formative writers on town planning only Sir Raymond Unwin fully understood that idea; and it is a subsidiary paradox that, as Mr. Lewis Mumford says, Unwin's life-work (after his part in the planning of the First Garden City at Letchworth) did in fact crystallize the pattern of the universal suburban developments of which, as a disciple of Howard, he disapproved in principle. As to the sociologists, it has taken them forty years of data-collecting and subtle analysis to arrive at the stage of focusing on the size of geographical community units as a major factor in social organization, all of them (except Patrick Geddes and Mr. Mumford) studiously ignoring Howard's work in the process.

The reason for this academic neglect is not far to seek. Howard did not seem a 'scientific' writer; his book avoids technical terminology, displays no great learning, contains little historical or demographic documentation. Neither did it become a best-seller exercising that massive effect on popular attitudes which students of social affairs are reluctantly compelled to respect. Yet it is surprising to me that so few trained thinkers detected that Howard possessed extraordinary intuition and judgment; that he had descried and fastened upon a neglected problem of major social importance; and that in his chosen field he had a shrewd instinct for discriminating the permanently significant from the ephemeral in the ideas of his time. It is not to be denied that in this book he made far-reaching assumptions which a cautious student would not immediately accept, and that he made no attempt to substantiate them by a parade of authorities and statistics. But his assumptions were in fact almost wholly right, because they were based on a wide sympathy with the habits and desires of common people. It was by unselfconscious common sense and humane understanding, rather than by systematic fact-finding and analysis, that Howard got to the heart of the urban problem.

Though it is the special problem of city structure to which the book is addressed, and upon which its contribution is of historic importance, a reader of to-day cannot but be interested in what it implies as to changes in the political background. Seeing

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that nearly half a century has passed since Howard wrote, it is astonishing how pertinent his thought is to our current controversies. He foresaw the vast extension of municipal enterprise. But unlike the numerous community-theorists who preceded him, he did not project this principle to infinity. He was as much concerned for free enterprise as for social control; and his experimental attitude and tentative suggestions as to the boundary between the two, as to devolution of democratic control, and as to the sphere of voluntary co-operation, are relevant to our present situation. More remarkable still, his conception of town planning as team-work and as a fluid process ('this plan, or if the reader be pleased so to term it, this absence of plan'), is just the conception we are now arriving at after decades of narrow ideas of planning and even narrower resistances to planning. The book contains many such flashes of foresight. But when it appeared, it seems to have struck the conservative-minded as merely fantastic, and idealists of the political Left as disrespectful to their over-simplified panaceas. Even some of the realistic reformers of the Fabian Society dismissed Howard's scheme as futile and impracticable.¹

Thus it came about that the influence of this book on the wider world of thought was not direct, but through the results of its impact on the minds of a handful of energetic and capable men who experimented in practical town development. The lesser things these men did were copied in detail all over the world. Their greater achievement, which derived from Howard's proposals, was never more than dimly understood. The meaning

¹ 'His plans would have been in time if they had been submitted to the Romans when they conquered Britain. They set about laying-out cities, and our forefathers have dwelt in them to this day. Now Mr. Howard proposes to pull them all down and substitute garden cities, each duly built according to pretty coloured plans, nicely designed with a ruler and compass. The author has read many learned and interesting writers, and the extracts he makes from their books are like plums in the unpalatable dough of his Utopian scheming. We have got to make the best of our existing cities, and proposals for building new ones are about as useful as would be arrangements for protection against visits from Mr. Wells's Martians.'—*Fabian News* Dec. 1898.

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and the vital importance of the Garden City idea became obscured, almost lost, in the process.

Yet for a year or two after the publication of *To-morrow* the project of building new manufacturing towns in the long-settled land of Britain attracted immense popular interest. Howard lectured on the subject all over the country, and in 1899, having collected a number of enthusiasts, he formed the Garden City Association. By 1901 he was reinforced by the adherence of the late Ralph Neville, K.C. (afterwards Mr. Justice Neville) who became chairman of the Association and brought much practical wisdom to its campaign, the late Thomas Adams (afterwards the well-known consultant town planner) who became secretary, and an able and influential group of manufacturers and men prominent in public life. General scepticism prevailed as to whether a project so novel and daring could be translated into fact; but the group proved to have the standing, the ability and the idealism to do it. A Pioneer Company was registered, and in 1903, after much investigation, a rural site of 3,818 acres was purchased by private treaty in Hertfordshire, thirty-five miles from central London, and the First Garden City of Letchworth was initiated.

The story of the establishment of Letchworth has been told elsewhere,¹ and I will not repeat it here. The judgment of the able group of business men who started the town was nowhere better shown than in their choice of the then unknown architects Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker to prepare the town plan. Unwin, a man of great technical ability, immediately grasped the significance of Howard's ideas, and like Howard himself he was alert to the emerging social forces and popular aspirations that were to transform housing and factory design in the next generation. Later, as the draftsman of the Tudor-Walters Housing Report (1918), he was to establish the modern house-and-garden standard that characterized the vast British building effort of the inter-war years. There were anticipations of that standard at Bournville and elsewhere; but Letchworth played the most conspicuous part in demonstrating its popularity. The foundation of Garden City Associations in many

¹ The best account is in C. B. Purdom's *Building of Satellite Towns* (1949).

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other countries, and of the International Garden City Association (afterwards the International Housing and Town Planning Federation), with Howard as its President, gave Letchworth world-wide fame; the town became the Mecca of housing and planning reformers from every country; and it was not the fault of its founders that experts concentrated more and more interest on the Letchworth housing standard and the minutiae of its layout, and less and less on the larger idea it was built to illustrate.

For Letchworth was, and remains, a faithful fulfilment of Howard's essential ideas. It has to-day a wide range of prosperous industries, it is a town of homes and gardens with ample open spaces and a spirited community life, virtually all its people find their employment locally, it is girdled by an inviolate agricultural belt, and the principles of single ownership, limited profit, and the earmarking of any surplus revenue for the benefit of the town have been fully maintained. The permitted maximum dividend on the share capital has been declared for many years, though some arrears from the early stages of construction remain to be paid off¹. Commercially the venture has been as successful as a first essay in a new field could have been expected to be. From the wider standpoint of national finance it is a triumphantly economic proposition—the housing subsidies per head it has had from the state being negligible by comparison with those poured out for intensive development in the older cities. Its health record is better than that of any other industrial town except the Second Garden City at Welwyn. As a proof of the practicability of establishing an entirely new detached industrial community on a virgin site, Letchworth's success is unquestionable. Of no less importance is its demonstration of the technique of organic town planning under the system of unified estate ownership and leasehold, and the compatibility of that system with the freedom of industrial and business enterprises and the democratic conduct of a town's affairs.

Of Welwyn Garden City, which was the result of Howard's personal initiative in 1919, I need say little. Its contribution to

¹ Arrears were paid in 1946; in 1956 the dividend limit was abandoned, but under the Letchworth Garden City Corporation Act of 1962 the estate became public property in 1963.

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Garden City history is that it carried further than Letchworth the technique of civic design and architectural harmony, and in the organization of its shopping centre and factory area it conducted interesting experiments which merit careful study by all who are concerned with the economics of large-scale development. Being nearer London than Letchworth, it has a more appreciable proportion of residents who travel daily in to the Metropolis, but at least 85 per cent of its working population find their employment in the town, which has a wide variety of industries and some large commercial office businesses—a class of enterprise now found to be more susceptible of dispersal than has been hitherto supposed.¹

The establishment of Letchworth did not lead to the widespread foundation of new towns on the same principle, anticipated by Howard in Chapter XII of this book. It is worth while to ponder on this. Since 1898 the population of Great Britain has increased by eleven millions, and the number of its dwellings by four to five millions. It is certain that new factories and community buildings have been built in like proportions. In other words, we have added to our stock of buildings in that period the equivalent of at least 300 towns on Howard's formula. Yet we have only two garden cities, with a combined population of less than 40,000.

Where have these extra millions of people and dwellings been placed in the meantime? Mostly in the vastly expanded suburbs of our cities. Greater London alone—the continuously built-up Metropolitan area—has added two and a quarter millions to its population since Howard wrote his book. There has been some reduction of the numbers living in the central wards of the cities, due to the migration of better-off families to the suburbs. But this has not reduced congestion much, if at all, because business premises in the centres have very greatly expanded, and have encroached on land formerly occupied by dwellings. Owing to the decline in the birth-rate, families have become smaller; the number of families, or households, per acre of the central residential districts, in British cities, has probably increased rather than diminished. In many American cities, on

¹ See *Dispersal*: an Enquiry made by the National Council of Social Service (1944).

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the other hand, the suburban migration has resulted in the virtual abandonment of extensive inner areas.

The publication of Howard's book was coincident with the first experiments in electric traction, of which he saw the possibilities, and with the beginnings of the petrol or gasoline motor, which he does not mention. These new forms of transport, which could have been used to bring about the pattern of 'Social Cities' he described, were used instead to facilitate the sprawling of suburbs, a type of urban growth wasteful from the economic standpoint and disadvantageous socially. Coupled with the rise of real incomes, rapid transport has enabled the people moving out from the centres to find the open residential surroundings they desired. But they and the numerous immigrants from rural areas have obtained these surroundings at the expense of long and costly daily journeys to and from work. Local community life has been weakened or destroyed, and access to the country made more difficult for the large numbers of residents still left in city centres.

There has certainly been much 'decentralization' of industry in the period; but industrial firms, seeking space, light and cheap land, have with few exceptions settled themselves in or near the suburban fringes of the larger population centres, for reasons that show little imaginative foresight but are easily understandable. On the other hand commercial and service businesses, which have grown far more rapidly than manufacturing industry, have for reasons equally understandable and uninspired, expanded enormously in the city centres, their skyscrapers and monumental blocks accounting for most of the rebuilding that has occurred in these centres and of the increase of employment therein. Relatively little rebuilding of dwellings has been done in the inner parts of cities; some bad slum areas have been cleared, a proportion of their displaced occupiers rehoused at great public expense in tenement flats, and old middle-class houses sub-divided for citizens who lack the means, the time or the enterprise to make the 'happy journey' to the suburbs.

By tacit co-operation (conspiracy is an unfair word for so mentally supine a process) public policy has supported private enterprise, in business location, transport, and building, in fos-

tering this form of city development. Any attempt to break from it by one of the participating agencies would have seemed risky or impracticable. A change of the direction of growth would certainly have needed some degree of co-ordination, but such a change was never even seriously entertained. This is the story of British city development from the beginning of this century to 1939; it is also, with the modification that the greater use of rapid transport and the higher national standard of living intensified the suburban exodus to the point of creating derelict central districts despite continued commercial expansion therein, the story of American city development. It is a story which obviously falsifies Howard's hopes. But it does not discredit his proposals. On the contrary, it is now becoming evident that if we had had the wisdom to follow those proposals, infinite injury to urban society might have been avoided.

History is not predetermined. Chance enters into events without doubt, but human will and human morality and intelligence no less. Admittedly there may be said to be an element of chance in the presence or absence of noble and resolute will on the part of adequate men in the right place at a critical time. But I cannot help thinking that if the inspiration and initiative of Howard, and the public spirit and planning genius of Unwin, had been reciprocated by courageous statesmanship on the part of one or two leaders in Whitehall or London County Hall between 1900 and 1929, this record would have been entirely different.

If Howard's ideas are now coming into their own, after forty years of neglect and unwise urban development, it is because individual men have absorbed them, passed them on, and related them to the changing scene. The Garden City Association took its part in the advocacy of public town planning, and when this administrative technique came to Britain with John Burns's Act of 1909, it was renamed the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association. In 1941, when planning technique had advanced to the stage of potentially controlling the national pattern of urban and rural lay-out, it became the Town and Country Planning Association. At one time, to Howard's personal distress, the Association was nearly swept into acceptance of the suburban flood as inevitable; but it has never been with-

out a solid core of champions of the true Garden City principle. Among the leaders of the Association who upheld the essential idea when developmental fashion was against it, I mention (without disrespect to many others) the names of the late Herbert Warren, Mr. G. Montagu Harris, Mr. G. L. Pepler, Dr. Norman Macfadyen, Mr. C. B. Purdom, the Earl of Lytton, Lord Harmsworth, and Capt. R. L. Reiss. It was largely the persistence of the Association when the urban development of the inter-war years and the housing policy of the Government had intensified the nineteenth-century trend, that led to the appointment of the Barlow Royal Commission, and it was the evidence of the Association to that Commission that set the note of its Majority and Minority Reports. Serious national consideration of the principles first implied in Howard's book really only began with the publication of the Barlow Report in 1940 and the attention drawn to the possibility of the replanning of obsolete city areas by the German air-raids of 1940 and 1941.

Since then the evolution of public opinion on the subject has been prodigiously rapid. The Association founded by Howard seized the opportunity for public education in the larger issues. Economists, sociologists and public administrators woke up to the subject. And in 1944 the Government formally accepted the principles of decongestion of congested cities, of the dispersal of their 'overspill' of industry and population to new centres of life and work, and of the reservation of wide stretches of the countryside to form green belts separating towns—in short, the pattern of urban and rural development foreshadowed by Howard in his chapter on 'Social Cities'. At the time of writing, the Town and Country Planning Act 1944, the first piece of legislation definitely based on the principles of large-scale development under unified ownerships and of more open replanning and provision for relocation of displaced people and businesses in organic communities, has just been passed; and a nation-wide discussion is in progress as to the local application of those principles and as to the further legislation necessary to overcome the outstanding difficulties.¹

¹ Since this Preface was written the Greater London Plan 1944 and the Regional Plan for Manchester have been published. The former

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It is of interest to note that every one of the components of Howard's Garden City proposal has had in recent years its band of devotees, though many of them have ignored Howard and his movement and the devotees of the other components. Thus we have had in Britain a highly influential movement for the preservation of the agricultural countryside against ribbons of dwelling houses along main roads and scattered buildings in pleasant places. Another powerful movement specialized on the demand for playing fields and open spaces. Another attended to the need for local facilities for community life and popularized in Britain the theory, familiar for many years in America, of the 'neighbourhood unit'. Another concentrated on the aesthetic aspects of development, and agitated for architectural control of individual buildings and streets and groups of buildings. Others devoted themselves to better housing standards, tree planting, the control of advertisements, smoke abatement, rural rehabilitation, and the beautification of roads. The building of industrial 'trading estates' as a means of encouraging the settlement of factories in areas where industrial employment was desired, was undertaken by Government agencies. Each of these admirable causes has made a deep but separate impression on public opinion, and in the last few years their advocates have drawn closer together. Now that a synthesis is being attained, to what does it come? Precisely to the principles of development so lucidly expounded in this book, and exemplified in the two Garden Cities which Howard founded.

Let me now say a few words about Ebenezer Howard's life and personality. Born in 1850 at 62 Fore Street in the City of London, he was the son of a small shopkeeper and had no special advantages of class or education. At fifteen he became a clerk, drifting from one insignificant job to another till he was twenty-one, when he went to America with two friends, his intention to settle on the land there being due to the influence of a farmer uncle. He took up 160 acres of state is the first fully worked-out plan for a metropolitan region embodying the Garden City principle. The Manchester Plan is notable for being based on a careful assessment of the amount of dispersal needed to bring down actual housing density to a proper standard.

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land in Howard County, Nebraska, joined with his two associates in building a shanty, planted maize, potatoes, cucumbers and water-melons, and, not being temperamentally a farmer, was a dismal failure at the job. For a short time he hired himself to the one man of the three who proved able to make good on the land, but within a year he went to Chicago and resumed office employment. While a London clerk he had learned shorthand, and in Chicago, working for a firm of shorthand writers, he became an expert reporter for the courts and the press. Returning to England in 1876, he joined Gurneys, the official Parliamentary reporters, and after one unlucky attempt at a private partnership he settled down to working for Gurneys and other firms in the same business for the rest of his days. His life was always one of hard work and little income; his interest was never seriously in his own economic prosperity but was divided between mechanical invention and the movement which he created and which made him famous.

Once or twice between 1876 and 1898 he revisited America, in connection with his inventions and the introduction of the Remington typewriter to England. His inventions must I think have brought him less money than their development cost him, but they were a large part of his life, and almost always he had a small workshop somewhere in which a mechanic was working on his ideas. When obsessed with one of these ideas, he would persist with it in defiance of all advice from his friends as to its commercial prospects, and in this is one clue to his character.

In 1879 he married Elizabeth Ann Bills, daughter of a countryman-innkeeper of Nuneaton—a lady of distinguished personality, possessing high intelligence and taste and a deep love of the countryside. They had three daughters and a son, and nine grandchildren. Despite perpetual economic stringency the family life was a united and happy one. Mrs. Howard died in 1904, just when the building of Letchworth was beginning, but there is no doubt that her complementary interests and wise counsel were of much assistance to Howard in the development of his ideas and the writing of his book. In the short period between its publication and her death she was, by all reports, next to himself the most effective missionary for his proposals.

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In his spare time the young Howard moved in earnest circles of Nonconformist churchmen and less orthodox religious enthusiasts, circles overlapping with others of mild reformists, who in those days were largely concerned with the land question. Henry George's Single Tax, Land Nationalization, and many other proposals relating land ownership and land values to the problems of poverty and urban squalor, were the mental food of such groups. No doubt Howard's movements between London and America, his experiences when reporting, and his business relationships, gave him a good background knowledge of affairs. His reading was not extensive, but he had a sharp eye for anything floating around that had relevance to his special interest.

Creative work always arises by the synthesis in one man's mind of material from otherwise unrelated sources, and it would be misleading to trace Howard's distinctive ideas to any single influence. If any one book may be said to have 'triggered off' the charge accumulating in Howard's mind, it was Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, the American edition of which aroused his enthusiasm in 1888 and which he was instrumental in having published in England. To a sceptical and sophisticated student of to-day that book seems a very mechanistic and politically immature Utopia, but it played a larger part than is commonly recognized in the inspiration of the rising British working-class movement. Its two basic assumptions—that technological advance could emancipate men from degrading toil, and that men are inherently co-operative and equalitarian—were the essence of Howard's own optimistic outlook, in which there was no proletarian resentment or class-bitterness, and not a trace of nostalgic anti-urbanism, anti-industrialism, or back-to-the-landism.

Let it be admitted that it is evidence of a certain innocence of political theory and inexperience in affairs that Howard should, in his own words, have 'swallowed whole' Bellamy's vision of the communistic Boston of A.D. 2000. He was in good company in this; more than one member of the British Cabinet may yet tell us in their memoirs that in their blissful youth they did the same. Howard proceeded to qualify the Bostonian's Utopia with great rapidity. Under the impact of the book the concep-

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tion of an ideal town came to him as essentially a 'socialist community'. From the first it was to have a belt of rural land associated with it, every industry, including agriculture, being carried on collectively, as in Bellamy's dream, for the good of all. But at once Howard (perhaps remembering Nebraska) saw the difficulty of municipal agriculture, and this led to the thought: Why not leave agriculture to private enterprise on publicly owned land, so that any increments of value could be secured? He then extended this principle to the factories, shops and other businesses, and thus evolved, from an initially theoretical impulse, an entirely workable set-up. He did not derive the idea of the limitation of the size of the town, or of the permanent rural belt, from *Looking Backward*, because it is not expressed in that book—though Bellamy did come very near the same arrangement of town and country in his sequel *Equality*. Approximations to the Green-Belt principle can be traced back far into history, the most distinct formulation being in More's *Utopia*; but the route by which it reached Howard's mind is uncertain. It is beginning to stand out as one of the most important ingredients of the Garden City conception. But the conception as it finally emerged was Howard's own. It was, in his own words, 'a unique combination of proposals', including not only a clearer and more quantitative formulation of a desirable relationship between the industrial town and the agricultural background than any previous writer had produced, but also a well-worked-out machinery for a practical approach to the formulated pattern.

Howard—let me emphasize this—was not a political theorist, not a dreamer, but an inventor. The inventor proceeds by first conceiving an idea of a possible new product or instrument, next by evolving a design on paper with patient thought for the adaptation of the structure to the conditions it has to fulfil, and finally by experimentation with models to test the design in practice. Here in the text and diagrams of this book we have the paper-work of Howard's invention, and the completeness and judgment with which he worked out a problem involving extremely complex social and economic factors is none the less remarkable because he made his drawings and specification so simple. When it came to the experimental stage the designs had

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of course to be further developed and modified, but they proved to be fundamentally sound.

Of Howard's life story there is little more that I need tell. He went to live in his First Garden City in 1905, was a director of the estate company throughout, and took an active part in the public, social and religious life of the town. He transferred to his Second Garden City in 1921, and remained there till his death in 1928. As President of the International Housing and Town Planning Federation he became known and honoured all over the world. In 1927 he was knighted. He married again in 1907, and his second wife survived him till 1941.

Memorials to Ebenezer Howard exist in the form of a Children's Paddling Pool in Howard's Park, Letchworth, and a simple brick monument in Howardsgate (the central street named after him) at Welwyn Garden City. An annual Howard Memorial Lecture is delivered at Letchworth. The Howard Memorial Medal, for distinguished contributions to the development and advancement of the Garden City idea, has so far been awarded (by the Town and Country Planning Association) to the late Sir Raymond Unwin, F.R.I.B.A., Mr. Barry Parker, F.R.I.B.A., Professor Sir Patrick Abercrombie, F.R.I.B.A., Dr. Norman Macfadyen, M.B., and Professor Lewis Mumford (U.S.A.). At Letchworth the Mrs. Howard Memorial Hall was built in 1905 as a tribute to Ebenezer Howard's first wife.

Associations for the advocacy of Ebenezer Howard's Garden City proposals were established, at various dates from 1904 onwards, in France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Belgium, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Spain, Russia and the United States. Most of these have since been replaced by or merged in societies concerned with Town and Country Planning generally.

Howard's personality was a continual source of surprise to strangers knowing of his astonishing achievements. He was the mildest and most unassuming of men, unconcerned with his personal appearance, rarely giving evidence of the force within him. Of medium height and sturdy build, and always dressed in a rather shabbily conventional way, he was the sort of man who could easily pass unnoticed in a crowd; Mr. Bernard Shaw, who much admired what he did, only overstates a truth when he says

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that this 'amazing man' seemed an 'elderly nobody', 'whom the Stock Exchange would have dismissed as a negligible crank'. No discerning observer, however, could miss the signs of quality in his person. His most distinguished physical characteristics were a clear fresh complexion, a fine aquiline profile, and a really beautiful and powerful speaking voice, and it is not surprising that he was much in demand as an amateur Shakespearean actor in his younger days. He had a natural gift of eloquence; one of his early employers, the eminent Dr. Parker of the City Temple, was undoubtedly right in telling him that he could have been a successful preacher. He was universally liked, and notably by children.

On the platform and as a public figure he was most impressive and seemed of a dominating type; and yet in private and business life his associates tended to disregard him, even when carrying out the projects in which his initiative had involved them. Very largely this was due to his habitual mental pre-occupation; he had little interest in administrative details, and full confidence that other men were well able to look after them; his inventor's mind, when at leisure from the grim grind of shorthand writing, was always revolving around some problem that he had set himself. His tremendous contribution to society was made possible by this concentration, by the fact that he seized upon a social problem of the first consequence, by the quiet daring of his intelligence, and, I would add, by his innate democratic sympathy and conviction of the value of human personality.

Howard's Garden City idea is coming into its own to-day, but not necessarily under his banner, and not without modifications. No one was better aware than he that inventions change as they develop. Whether the new communities of the future will be produced by the voluntary semi-co-operative machinery that Howard so ingeniously devised is a matter of interest, but not fundamental. The method may still prove a fruitful one among others, particularly if coupled, as Howard suggested, with the public acquisition of sites. In Great Britain the whole question of methods is being transformed by the evolution of statutory town and country planning and public guidance of the location of industry. Municipal ownership of town areas, with

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the organic planning of those areas by means of leasehold covenants, is already beginning to supplement public control of private development. It may be that the reservation of agricultural land by regional and local zoning will make it less necessary that green belts should be in the same ownership as the towns they encircle. And certainly a national system of Compensation and Betterment-collection would modify Howard's basis of Garden City finance.

Howard's synthesis has stood the test of experiment and the cross-examination of public controversy. It is I believe the key to the planning of the coming period. All its essential elements stand: moderate-sized industrial and trading towns in close contact with a surrounding agricultural countryside, each a healthy, well-equipped and coherent community; zoning of areas within each town for ready access between homes, workplaces, shops and cultural centres; limitation of density to safeguard light, gardens and recreation space, but not exaggerated to the pitch of urban diffusion; civic design aiming at harmony rather than standardization; planned internal and external communications; and unified site-ownership coupled with leaseholds, reconciling public interests with freedom of choice and enterprise.

Probably a modification of the first of these elements may be necessary in the case of the existing built-up areas of London and other huge agglomerations. In the inner areas of these cities Howard's country-belt may perforce be diminished to a park-strip or the parkway 'perimeter-barrier' suggested in the Forshaw-Abercrombie Plan for London County. I have had my doubts of Howard's grand strategy of a flank attack on the congestion of the great cities: if we could, by rigorous agricultural zoning, stop their continuous outward spread, and by national standards of density in redevelopment, ensure their progressive opening-out, that procedure would appeal to me as less catastrophic and more humane. Recent planning thought in Great Britain, including the brilliant contribution of the Uthwatt Committee, has sought to find a means of recovering at least part of the heavy outlay involved in compensation for reducing the over-intensive use of land, by a levy on the increases of land value that will occur elsewhere. This line of approach, logical

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and fair-minded as it is, may fail politically. Many people gravely question the financial practicability, and indeed the social justice, of payment by the State of full compensation for a degree of exploitation of land that is injurious to social welfare and never ought to have been allowed.

An intermediate course could theoretically be found by the 'time-limit' on uses of land no longer approved by public policy, and this was suggested by the Uthwatt Committee as part of a balanced solution of the whole problem. But it may be that a formula reasonably equating Compensation and Betterment, and acceptable to landowners as well as to the State, will not be found. It may be that the short-sightedness of some city authorities, and of some property interests, will in fact bring about the collapse in central values that Howard expected, without the compensation that his modern followers have proposed. A radical opening-out of congested cities, coupled with the building of new communities, must come, because the major social forces are now set in that direction, and the issues have become too clear for the history of the past half century to repeat itself. The new pattern of development does not necessarily entail the crisis that Howard foresaw for London and other great cities. They can forestall it by planned decongestion and dispersal to new towns, and a fair system of Compensation and Betterment-collection would greatly ease the transition if the parties can come to terms. It is by no means certain that Howard was wrong in his view that the creation of a number of new communities, and the movement of a considerable amount of industry (perhaps under State encouragement and guidance) away from the congested centres, will precede a solution of the land-value problem in those centres. But reservations on this and other points of detail and strategy in his book do not in the least weaken the force of his main argument.

Let it be remembered that in reading this book we are studying a blue-print nearly fifty years old. What is astonishing is not that it has faded on the edges, but that its centre remains so clear and bright.

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A Note on Terminology

Not only the term Garden City, but most of the terms used in discussion of the wider aspects of town and country planning, have been used in different senses, and the consequent confusion of discussion has affected policy. Gradually, as the elements of Garden City planning become the subjects of legislation and official orders, more standardization of terminology is likely to be achieved.

Garden City. Use of this term as a picturesque *sobriquet* of particular cities goes far back. Chicago (surprising as it seems at a distance) called itself The Garden City, through pride in its magnificent surroundings. Christchurch, founded in 1850, was known as the Garden City of New Zealand. The first place to be given Garden City as its official name appears to have been the New York suburb on Long Island started by Alexander T. Stewart in 1869. By 1900 there were, besides this one, nine villages and a small town in the United States named Garden City; how many there are now I do not know. Howard, who chose the term as meaning as much a city *in* a garden—that is surrounded by beautiful country—as a city *of* gardens, was unconscious of the Long Island use of the name when he adopted it. Its world-wide currency is due to his book; and the term as descriptive of a type of urban settlement should only be used in the sense which he gave to it. A short definition was adopted, in consultation with him, by the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association in 1919: 'A Garden City is a Town designed for healthy living and industry; of a size that makes possible a full measure of social life, but not larger; surrounded by a rural belt; the whole of the land being in public ownership or held in trust for the community.'

Garden Suburb, Garden Village. In these combinations the word Garden connotes simply a well-planned open lay-out. It is misleading, though good authorities have been guilty of the practice, to describe a Garden Suburb as a suburb 'laid out on Garden City lines'. The word Suburb is conveniently reserved for an outer part of a continuously built-up city, town, or urban area, implying that it is not separated therefrom by intervening country land. Thus a district so placed, and containing, besides

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dwellings, businesses serving only the local population, should be termed a Dormitory or Residential Suburb; and one so placed having industry as well, an Industrial Suburb. However well planned, such a place is wrongly called a Garden City or Satellite Town. The word Village implies small scale, detachment, and (I suggest) a basis which is primarily agricultural. Garden Village has been used as a name for a small settlement containing a factory and an associated openly planned housing estate; it should not however be used generically for such settlements if in a suburban situation.

Satellite Town. This term was first used in Great Britain in 1919 as an alternative description of Welwyn Garden City—a true Garden City in its scale, detachment, lay-out, structure, and basis of local employment. The reasons for adopting the new term were: first, the prevalent misuse of Garden City as synonymous with Open Suburb or Garden Suburb; second, recognition of a special economic linkage with Greater London. Some planning writers have thoughtlessly renewed the old confusion by using the term Satellite Town to describe a well-planned Industrial Suburb. It is better reserved for a Garden City or country town, at a moderate distance from a large city, but physically separated from that city by a Country Belt.

Country Belt, Agricultural Belt, Rural Belt. These terms are synonymous. They describe a stretch of countryside around and between towns, separating each from the others, and predominantly permanent farmland and parkland, whether or not such land is in the ownership of a town authority.

Green Belt. Originally used by Unwin as a further synonym for Country Belt, this term has also been applied, thus far confusingly, to a narrow strip of parkland more or less encircling part of a built-up metropolitan or large urban area. Park Belt is a better name for such a strip.

Decentralization, Dispersal, Diffusion. Till recently advocates of the Garden City idea have used Decentralization as the keyword for the planned movement of people and work-places from congested urban areas to detached smaller towns. In America it is often used to mean the spontaneous movement from the centre to the immediate outskirts of an urban area—quite a different thing. Lately the word Dispersal has been adopted for

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the former process; and this usage is now becoming standardized. As a planning term Dispersal does not connote a wide spreading of development over rural areas. For this latter process, if a technical label is needed, it is better to use the term Diffusion. Decentralization remains available as a general term for any outward movement. For the combined settlement of both industry and residents in suburbs I suggest the word Sub-Centralization.

Experience does not make me optimistic of a uniform use of planning terms. An attractive name, coming to be associated with an attractive form of development, rapidly acquires prestige. Men having sub-standard goods to offer will put the popular label thereon; and in time the odium attaching to the substitute will diminish the prestige of the label, and therefore of the original goods. That has happened to Garden City. It is now happening to Satellite Town, which has been applied to industrial excrescences on vast agglomerations, and to Green Belt, which has been applied to exiguous ribbons of park-space which you can almost step over without noticing. Perhaps we cannot prevent these perversions of good words by commercial and demagogic interests. But at least we should avoid them in planning literature.

Welwyn Garden City
September 1945

The Garden City Idea and Modern Planning by Lewis Mumford

Garden Cities of To-morrow has done more than any other single book to guide the modern town planning movement and to alter its objectives. But it has met the traditional misfortune of the classic: it is denounced by those who have plainly never read it and it is sometimes accepted by those who have not fully understood it. Nothing could be a more timely contribution to building a life-centred civilization than the republication of Sir Ebenezer Howard's famous book.

At the beginning of the twentieth century two great new inventions took form before our eyes: the aeroplane and the Garden City, both harbingers of a new age: the first gave man wings and the second promised him a better dwelling-place when he came down to earth. Both inventions had originally been conceived by that brilliant, many-sided technician, Leonardo da Vinci; for he not merely studied the flight of birds to good purpose but proposed to abate the congestion and squalor of Milan by building a group of ten cities of five thousand houses, limited to thirty thousand inhabitants each, cities which, in another place, he proposed to design with a complete separation of pedestrian and horse traffic, and with gardens attached to a municipal irrigation system.

Ebenezer Howard was not influenced even at second hand by Leonardo, whose notebooks were not yet available in English; instead, he was in the tradition of a group of early nineteenth-century writers: Spence, the land reformer, who sought the nationalization of land; James Buckingham, who had published a plan for a model industrial town in 1848; Edward Gibbon Wakefield, who had pointed out the necessity for a more systematic plan of colonization for distant lands; and not least, two critical thinkers who were nearer at hand, Henry George and Peter Kropotkin. The work of these men gave substance to Howard's own intuitions and beliefs; but no little stimulus

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came to him from his visit to America, where he had before him the constant spectacle of new communities being laid out every year on new land, and he was impressed by the possibility of a fresh start.

Had Howard been a mere dreamer this book might have remained an object of curious discussion, like Edgard Chambless's *Roadtown*, which gave to the physical utilities of planning the priority that Howard, a far better sociologist, gave to social and economic arrangements. But Howard was a practical idealist, like the Rochdale co-operators before him; and he utilized the widespread interest in his idea to gather support for the planning and building of an experimental Garden City.

Howard's initiatives in the Garden City paralleled the Wright Brothers'. I emphasize this parallelism because it points to a functional relationship that has too often been overlooked even by those who have advocated the Garden City; for if the aeroplane, in its present or conceivable future forms, is to be anything but a menace to health and sanity and safety, and if it is to become as much a part of our daily life as the motor-car now is, it will be so only after the Garden City, with its wide belt of open land, has become the dominant urban form.

What were the leading ideas that have given Howard's theoretic exposition, and its first practical application in Letchworth Garden City, the immense influence that they have achieved? One would think, from a great many foolish allusions that one finds currently in both English and American discussions of town planning, that the sole characteristic of the Garden City was Howard's alleged plan for lowering the density of the population to twelve houses to the acre. Nothing could be more fantastic than this error: you will look in vain through the pages of *Garden Cities of To-morrow* for even the hint of such a proposal.

Furthermore, if by any chance Howard had framed such a notion, it should hardly have attracted attention; for there was nothing whatever new or startling in the mere suggestion that open planning is more salubrious than closed and congested planning. People had discovered that fact during the Middle Ages and had built their summer houses in the suburbs accordingly: in many early New England towns twelve houses to the

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acre would have seemed rather cramped; and the same fact would hold true of many English and American suburbs that have been built since the middle of the nineteenth century.

The preposterous notion that twelve houses per acre is specially identifiable with the Garden City could only have occurred to those who had not even a cursory knowledge of the actual development of cities during the last three hundred years. The whole subject of open planning versus closed planning is capable of rational discussion on its own grounds: but when some decision has been reached here, provisionally, it will be found that, whatever it is, it leaves the idea of the Garden City, as outlined by Ebenezer Howard, completely intact.

What actually happened was that during the very years that Howard was campaigning for the Garden City, Sir Raymond Unwin, the co-planner of Letchworth, demonstrated that even from an economic standpoint there is 'Nothing Gained by Overcrowding'. That demonstration was indeed a revolutionary one; and it had a powerful and well-deserved influence.

Unwin showed that vast amounts of money had been wasted in duplicating unnecessary streets and in robbing people of garden space, under the false notion that crowding houses together would reduce their costs: he thus documented the standard of twelve houses per acre which he had introduced into Letchworth and was later to apply in public housing when he was chief architect in the Ministry of Health. To attribute Unwin's discovery to Howard is to be fair to neither man.

Here let me say in passing, lest I be thought to avoid the issue of open versus closed planning, that Unwin's density of 36-48 per acre is closer to the standards I believe vital than the 136 per acre that the County of London Plan, for example, accepted. But I do not believe that 48 per acre is the highest number compatible with health and good living; and I would therefore criticize any rigid mechanical application of Unwin's standard. If I needed authority for this position I should find it in Howard's pages.

In the matter of density in housing, Ebenezer Howard's proposals were on the conservative side: in fact, they followed the traditional dimensions that had been handed down since the Middle Ages, and, one may add by way of criticism, followed

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them too closely. For Howard specifically said that the average size of a building lot was 20 by 130, while the minimum was 20 by 100. This twenty-foot front is far too narrow for a good modern building row, with relatively shallow rooms, fully open to the penetration of the sun's rays. But the densities so provided are those of the traditional city before overbuilding took place: 20 by 100 is, for example, the typical New York City lot. With five people to a family this gave a density (allowing for cross-roads) of about 90 to 95 persons per residential acre, and with our smaller family units would give a density of about 70 per acre.

Indeed, in the concrete details of planning Howard was still under the spell of the age that lay behind him. His Crystal Palace Road, with its great shopping district under glass, facing a wide open space, partly reminds one of Princes Street in Edinburgh; but even more it recalls the glass-covered streets of that early Victorian Buckingham, if not the fantasies of Mr. H. G. Wells. Howard did indeed make one brilliant technical innovation which has passed almost unnoticed and was forgotten in the development of the garden cities that followed: this was in his conception of the Grand Avenue, 'a belt of green, upwards of three miles long', dividing the town into two separate zones. Such an internal green belt, for separating the functional elements of the city, suggests a pattern that has still fully to be realized: one sketched out in the report on Honolulu (*Whither Honolulu?*) which the writer submitted to the City and County Park Board in 1938.

Howard's greatness did not lie in the field of technical planning, and no one knew this better than he did: every concrete sketch of the new type of city is carefully labelled with a warning that what he has set down is only a diagram, and that the actual city would have to be an adaptation of this diagram to actual conditions. When Messrs. Unwin and Parker came to design Letchworth itself, they perhaps leaned over backwards, in their effort to avoid mechanical stereotypes, in order not to duplicate Howard's diagrammatic city. Unwin's love for the rambling layout of medieval German hill towns was even in some degree at war with Howard's rational clarifications and forward-looking proposals.

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But the important point to remember is that the Garden City principle deals with the constants in planning: the idea itself does not stand or fall with the successes or mistakes of Letchworth or Welwyn; neither can Howard's contribution be lightly set aside by those who have, at a later date, been led to make a similar analysis and have possessively given the central idea a new name. Plainly, like every other invention, Howard's Garden City is open to successive improvements in detail: moreover, the idea would give rise to one type of city in Hertfordshire or Buckinghamshire and another in the San Bernardino Valley in California or in the Columbia River Valley of the Northwest. It is precisely because Howard was in practice both a sociologist and a statesman that his proposals have this universal quality.

Howard's prime contribution was to outline the nature of a balanced community and to show what steps were necessary, in an ill-organized and disoriented society, to bring it into existence. On one side was the overgrown and over-congested metropolis penalized in its health by its slums, and in its efficiency by ill-sorted and misplaced industries, given to extravagant wastes in time and energy and money merely to transport its goods and people over distances that had been expanded for no good human purpose, desolate in its lack of social facilities, though possessing, in its central institutions, the chief organized forms of social life. The continued growth of centres like London, Paris, and Berlin, and their imitators lower down in the urban scale, had not resulted in any commensurate gains in social life. Hence the increase of population and wealth in our big centres had paradoxically resulted in destitution, and no small part of the city's income was concerned with alleviating this destitution by costly measures of sanitation and slum clearance.

The country, on the other hand, was equally impoverished: emptied out of its more able and enterprising spirits by the very growth of big cities. Here were fresh air, sunlight, pleasant vistas, quiet nights, all scarce commodities in the big cities; but on the other hand, there was another sort of destitution, a dearth of human companionship and of co-operative effort. Agriculture, having lost much of its local market, was a declining

occupation, and life in a country town was as mean, illiberal, and dismal as life in a metropolitan slum. Nor would decentralization of single industries into the open country help matters here: for if man is to live a balanced life, capable of calling out all his faculties and bringing them to perfection, he must live in a community that fully sustains them. What was needed, Howard saw—as Kropotkin at the same time proclaimed—was a marriage of town and country, of rustic health and sanity and activity and urban knowledge, urban technical facility, urban political co-operation. The instrument of that marriage was the Garden City.

Here again I must utter a warning against those who mistake Howard's programme for one of breaking down the distinction of town and country and turning them into an amorphous suburban mass. The reader who has the patience to follow Howard's argument will see that he had no such end in mind; indeed, the whole project is an attempt to guard against its happening.

For the Garden City, as conceived by Howard, is not a loose indefinite sprawl of individual houses with immense open spaces over the whole landscape: it is rather a compact, rigorously confined urban grouping. Of the total tract to be included in the domain of the Garden City, one thousand acres, at the centre, were to be occupied by the city itself; and five thousand acres formed an agricultural green belt. Thirty thousand people were to live on those thousand acres; 30 per gross acre as compared with 57 per gross acre in the present congested, park-destitute county of London. Parks were provided within the Garden City on the basis of a little more than nine acres per thousand; well above the four acres suggested in the new plan for London, but not so much higher than the six that Westminster normally boasts. It may be argued that Howard's town-density is greater than would be generally acceptable; he cannot be accused of being an advocate of urban sprawl.

Where then did Howard's originality lie? Not in special details, but in his characteristic synthesis; in particular these proposals: the provision of a permanent belt of open land, to be used for agriculture as an integral part of the city; the use of this land to limit the physical spread of the city from within, or

encroachments from urban development not under control at the perimeter; the permanent ownership and control of the entire urban tract by the municipality itself and its disposition by means of leases into private hands; the limitation of population to the number originally planned for the area; the reservation for the community of the unearned increment from the growth and prosperity of the city, up to the limits of growth fixed; the moving into the new urban area of industries capable of supporting the greater part of its population; the provision for founding new communities as soon as the existing land and social facilities are occupied.

In short, Howard attacked the whole problem of the city's development, not merely its physical growth but the inter-relationship of urban functions within the community and the integration of urban and rural patterns, for the vitalizing of urban life on one hand and the intellectual and social improvement of rural life on the other.

In treating rural and urban improvement as a single problem, Howard was far in advance of his age; and he was a better diagnostician of urban decay than many of our own contemporaries. His Garden City was not only an attempt to relieve the congestion of the big city, and by so doing lower the land values and prepare the way for metropolitan reconstruction: it was equally an attempt to do away with that inevitable correlate of metropolitan congestion, the suburban dormitory, whose open plan and nearer access to the country are only temporary, and whose lack of an industrial population and a working base make it one of the most unreal environments ever created for man: a preposterous middle-class counterpart to the courtly inanities of those absolute monarchs who, at Versailles or Nymphenburg, contrived for themselves a disconnected play-world of their own. *The Garden City, as Howard defined it, is not a suburb but the antithesis of a suburb: not a more rural retreat, but a more integrated foundation for an effective urban life.*

Howard saw that there was no solution of the city's problems within the existing framework of municipal administration, because one of its greatest problems was the lack of economic and social and political relation to the surrounding countryside:

here his vision was far clearer than the vision of those municipal reformers and those housing experts who have let themselves become absorbed in some single aspect of urban development and have forgotten the larger situation of which the narrow problem they have chosen to solve is but a part. What Howard said about the relation of town and country within the Garden City area is equally applicable to the entire business of city and regional planning: the administrative unit that is created must be capable of embracing both the urban and the rural aspects of the region.

Not the least part of Howard's conception was his emphasis upon the *grouping* of Garden Cities: he realized that the advantages of a single city would be multiplied by the creation of 'town-clusters', groups or constellations of such cities. But with his resolute sense of the practical, he first proposed to make an experimental demonstration with a single Garden City. Unlike many bold dreamers, he not merely helped to bring Letchworth into existence; but in time he founded a second city, Welwyn. Meanwhile the ideas Howard had expounded were to become the common property of planners all over the world and were to influence the planning of Hilversum in the Netherlands, Ernst May's satellite communities in Frankfurt-am-Main, and Wright and Stein's Radburn.

Here we must touch on Howard's qualifications as a statesman; for he was a statesman in the sense that J. W. Mitchell of the co-operative movement was a statesman; and his life work demonstrates the best qualities of British statecraft, for with all Howard's sense of the moment and the passing opportunity, he was not, like too many of our contemporaries, afraid of rational plans and long-term commitments. Howard's mind was the English mind at its best: always in touch with the practicable, always in sight of the ideal. He believed consistently in the experimental method; and he felt that in political life, no less than in science, a crucial experiment would carry such conviction that those who had been opposed to the abstract scheme would be convinced no less than those who had favoured it. 'Would it not . . . be better to study a smaller problem first, and to paraphrase [Nunquam's] words, "Given, say, 6,000 acres of land, let us endeavour to make the best use of it"? For then, having

dealt with this, we shall have educated ourselves to deal with a larger area.' This is the way that rational men should think and act. With his gift of sweet reasonableness Howard hoped to win Tory and Anarchist, single-taxer and socialist, individualist and collectivist, over to his experiment. And his hopes were not altogether discomfited; for in appealing to the English instinct for finding common ground he was utilizing a solid political tradition.

At this distance, what strikes one about Howard's Garden City proposals was how little he was concerned with the outward form of the new city and how much he was concerned with the processes that would produce such communities. He did not win support by publishing meretricious pictures of the City Beautiful or by pretending life would be changed out of recognition in this new environment. He pleaded for definite improvements along lines that had already been accepted: he trusted to change by 'the force of example, that is, by setting up a better system and by a little skill in the grouping of forces and the manipulation of ideas.' In this grouping and manipulation lay his strength as a thinker. And in one of the concluding chapters, called Social Cities, he looked forward to the step beyond experimental demonstration. 'Railways', he observed, 'were first made without statutory powers. They were constructed on a very small scale. . . . But when the "Rocket" was built and the supremacy of the locomotive fully established, it then became necessary, if railway enterprise was to go forward, to obtain legislative powers.'

Sir Ebenezer did not take the second step he had originally envisaged so clearly: with the impatience of an old man, he sought to duplicate his original success instead of widening it out into broader channels. At the end of the last war, his younger lieutenant, Mr. F. J. Osborn, proposed to build 'New Towns after the War', on a scale commensurate with the current needs for housing and rehousing: a proposal that required complete legislative backing. Howard's absorption in the launching of the second garden city diverted energy from the more important work that Mr. Osborn had outlined; and the broad political need to unite housing and industrial rehabilitation with urban improvement was subordinated to a muddled and waste-

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ful effort at town extension and estate building within the existing municipal areas.

Only during the last decade has our thinking on the subject of housing and community planning become political. The Barlow Report in Great Britain has taken up the process of urban improvement at the point where Howard in his old age abandoned it. Now the great need of the moment is to harness the entire process of urban building to the substantial innovations in municipal economics and planning that Sir Ebenezer Howard originally set forth.

By now, our neotechnic and biotechnic facilities have at last caught up with Howard's and Kropotkin's intuitions. Howard's plan for canalizing the flow of population, diverting it from the existing centres to new centres; his plan for decentralizing industry and setting up both city and industry within a rural matrix, the whole planned to a human scale, is technologically far more feasible to-day than it was forty or fifty years ago. For in the meanwhile, our new means of instantaneous communication have multiplied; likewise our means for swift transport; and points that are fifty miles apart are now as close, provided the Garden City pattern of development is followed, as points five miles apart were in the congested metropolis of yesterday.

Meanwhile, the need for balanced communities has deepened; for the task of our age is to work out an urban environment that will be just as favourable to fertility, just as encouraging to marriage and parenthood, as rural areas still are. Howard, at the time he first wrote, had no reason to be concerned with the threat of a declining population; but it happens—so organic, so deeply biotechnic, was his whole conception—that the sort of city he projected was precisely the kind whose population will be biologically capable of reproducing itself and psychologically disposed to do so. With the prospects of a dwindling population if the past tendencies toward urban concentration continue, the question now becomes not whether Britain and the United States can afford to build Garden Cities, but whether they can afford to build anything else.

So far I have dealt with Howard's thought in relation to its immediate environment. But the ideas for which he stood have no national boundaries; and the kind of urban organization he

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favoured has an importance for the United States for the same basic reasons that it has for England. Our own tradition of city building includes the New England village which was indeed originally an informal kind of Garden City; it includes the early New England factory town, which, as Mr. John Coolidge has shown, embodied some very admirable efforts in both town planning and housing; and not least it includes a multitude of utopian centres from the Shaker communities in New York and Massachusetts to Salt Lake City in Utah in which an effort was made to establish higher physical and social standards. Meanwhile, the over-canny and socially disruptive speculation which produced the great mass of our industrial and commercial centres has created vast areas of blight that cry as loudly for reorganization and rebuilding as the bombed areas of Britain.

Here, too, partial experimental efforts have been made in the right direction, from the communities erected by the U.S. Shipping Board in 1918 to the Greenbelt Towns that were created by the Resettlement Administration in 1936—not least Greenbelt, Maryland, itself. But, as in England, reformers and politicians have avoided an integral attack upon the problem of civic and rural reconstruction and have confined themselves to the demolition of slums and to the building of a multitude of housing communities, some of which are, by their very constitution, the slums of to-morrow, if not already the slums of to-day. Nowhere is there a greater need for the kind of fundamental thinking that Howard applied to city building than in the United States; and nowhere is there greater need for proceeding from experimental action to broad legislative powers.

Nor is it only in the older portions of the United States that decentralization by Garden Cities is needed: Howard's broad programme should find its boldest applications in the more recently settled sections of the United States, particularly in California and the Pacific Northwest, where the tendency to funnel the population into vast amorphous urban areas like Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Region, Portland, and Seattle will not merely delay the many-sided exploitation of the natural resources of this area, but will undermine a native birth-rate already sagging as badly as that of Sweden or Great Britain.

The most important thinking that has been done in the United

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States during the last decade on the elements of planning has, probably, been the work of the National Resources Planning Board and its state affiliates: yet nothing shows how defective our preparation for such work has been so much as the fact that the problem of regional development has been separated from that of city development; so that the report on *Our Cities* deals almost exclusively with cities as self-sustaining entities, and particularly with metropolitan areas, while the reports on resources and industrial opportunities stop short at the outskirts of the city. There is hardly a portion of this work that would not have been more significant and more effective had the investigators and planners fully absorbed the great lessons first expounded in Howard's *Garden Cities of To-morrow*.

Happily it is not too late to make good this deficiency. Before too many billions of dollars are sunk in cramped misplaced housing, misconceived road systems funnelling into metropolitan areas, extravagantly extended suburbs, and misplanned slum clearances and rebuildings, it would be well for those who have not read Howard's book, or have not grappled with it, to go carefully over his thesis and to absorb all its implications. This is not merely a book for technicians: above all it is a book for citizens, for the people whose actively expressed needs, desires, and interests should guide the planner and administrator at every turn. Letchworth and Welwyn themselves have still something to teach the American planner, but *Garden Cities of To-morrow*, the repository of the ideas that begot Letchworth and Welwyn, has still far more to teach. Howard's ideas have laid the foundation for a new cycle in urban civilization: one in which the means of life will be subservient to the purposes of living, and in which the pattern needed for biological survival and economic efficiency will likewise lead to social and personal fulfilment.

Amenia, New York
September 1945

Author's Introduction

'New forces, new cravings, new aims, which had been silently gathering beneath the crust of reaction, burst suddenly into view.'—J. R. GREEN, *Short History of the English People*, Chap. x.

'Change is consummated in many cases after much argument and agitation, and men do not observe that almost everything has been silently effected by causes to which few people paid any heed. In one generation an institution is unassailable, in the next bold men may assail it, and in the third bold men defend it. At one time the most conclusive arguments are advanced against it in vain, if indeed they are allowed utterance at all. At another time the most childish sophistry is enough to secure its condemnation. In the first place, the institution, though probably indefensible by pure reason, was congruous with the conscious habits and modes of thought of the community. In the second, these had changed from influences which the acutest analysis would probably fail to explain, and a breath sufficed to topple over the sapped structure.'—*The Times*, 27th November 1891.

In these days of strong party feeling and of keenly contested social and religious issues, it might perhaps be thought difficult to find a single question having a vital bearing upon national life and well-being on which all persons, no matter of what political party, or of what shade of sociological opinion, would be found to be fully and entirely agreed. Discuss the temperance cause, and you will hear from Mr. John Morley that it is 'the greatest moral movement since the movement for the abolition of slavery'; but Lord Bruce will remind you that 'every year the trade contributes £40,000,000 to the revenue of the country, so that practically it maintains the Army and Navy, besides which it affords employment to many thousands of persons'—that 'even the teetotallers owe much to the licensed victuallers, for if it were not for them the refreshment bars at the Crystal Palace would have been closed long ago'. Discuss the opium traffic, and, on the one hand, you will hear that opium is rapidly destroying the *morale* of the people of China, and, on the other,

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that this is quite a delusion, and that the Chinese are capable, thanks to opium, of doing work which to a European is quite impossible, and that on food at which the least squeamish of English people would turn up their noses in disgust.

Religious and political questions too often divide us into hostile camps; and so, in the very realms where calm, dispassionate thought and pure emotions are the essentials of all advance towards right beliefs and sound principles of action, the din of battle and the struggles of contending hosts are more forcibly suggested to the onlooker than the really sincere love of truth and love of country which, one may yet be sure, animate nearly all breasts.

There is, however, a question in regard to which one can scarcely find any difference of opinion. It is wellnigh universally agreed by men of all parties, not only in England, but all over Europe and America and our colonies, that it is deeply to be deplored that the people should continue to stream into the already over-crowded cities, and should thus further deplete the country districts.

Lord Rosebery, speaking some years ago as Chairman of the London County Council, dwelt with very special emphasis on this point:

'There is no thought of pride associated in my mind with the idea of London. I am always haunted by the awfulness of London: by the great appalling fact of these millions cast down, as it would appear by hazard, on the banks of this noble stream, working each in their own groove and their own cell, without regard or knowledge of each other, without heeding each other, without having the slightest idea how the other lives—the heedless casualty of unnumbered thousands of men. Sixty years ago a great Englishman, Cobbett, called it a wen. If it was a wen then, what is it now? A tumour, an elephantiasis sucking into its gorged system half the life and the blood and the bone of the rural districts.' (March 1891.)

Sir John Gorst points out the evil, and suggests the remedy:

'If they wanted a permanent remedy of the evil they must remove the cause; they must back the tide, and stop the migration of the people into the towns, and get the people back to the land. The interest and the safety of the towns themselves were

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involved in the solution of the problem.' (*Daily Chronicle*, 6th November 1891.)

Dean Farrar says:

'We are becoming a land of great cities. Villages are stationary or receding; cities are enormously increasing. And if it be true that great cities tend more and more to become the graves of the physique of our race, can we wonder at it when we see the houses so foul, so squalid, so ill-drained, so vitiated by neglect and dirt?'

Dr. Rhodes, at the Demographic Congress, called attention to 'the migration which was going on from the English agricultural districts. In Lancashire and other manufacturing districts 35 per cent of the population were over sixty years of age, but in agricultural districts they would have over 60 per cent.¹ Many of the cottages were so abominable that they could not call them houses, and the people so deteriorated in physique that they were not able to do the amount of work which able-bodied persons should do. Unless something was done to make the lot of the agricultural labourer better, the exodus would go on, with what results in the future he dared not say.' (*Times*, 15th August 1891.)

The Press, Liberal, Radical, and Conservative, views this grave symptom of the time with the same alarm. The *St. James's Gazette*, on 6th June 1892, remarks:

'How best to provide the proper antidote against the greatest danger of modern existence is a question of no mean significance.'

The Star, 9th October 1891, says:

'How to stem the drift from the country is one of the main problems of the day. The labourer may perhaps be restored to the land, but how will the country industries be restored to rural England?'

The Daily News, a few years ago, published a series of articles, 'Life in our Villages', dealing with the same problem.

¹ This quotation is left as it originally appeared, but there must be a mistake in placing the decimal point. In 1939, the persons over 65 were, in the urban areas of England and Wales 8·77 per cent of the population, in Greater London 8·33 per cent, and in the rural districts 10·3 per cent. *Ed.*

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Trade Unionist leaders utter the same note of warning. Mr. Ben Tillett says:

'Hands are hungry for toil, and lands are starving for labour.'

Mr. Tom Mann observes:

'The congestion of labour in the metropolis is caused mainly by the influx from the country districts of those who were needed there to cultivate the land.'

All, then, are agreed on the pressing nature of this problem, all are bent on its solution, and though it would doubtless be quite Utopian to expect a similar agreement as to the value of any remedy that may be proposed, it is at least of immense importance that, on a subject thus universally regarded as of supreme importance, we have such a consensus of opinion at the outset. This will be the more remarkable and the more hopeful sign when it is shown, as I believe will be conclusively shown in this work, that the answer to this, one of the most pressing questions of the day, makes of comparatively easy solution many other problems which have hitherto taxed the ingenuity of the greatest thinkers and reformers of our time. Yes, the key to the problem how to restore the people to the land—that beautiful land of ours, with its canopy of sky, the air that blows upon it, the sun that warms it, the rain and dew that moisten it—the very embodiment of Divine love for man—is indeed a *Master Key*, for it is the key to a portal through which, even when scarce ajar, will be seen to pour a flood of light on the problems of intemperance, of excessive toil, of restless anxiety, of grinding poverty—the true limits of Governmental interference, ay, and even the relations of man to the Supreme Power.

It may perhaps be thought that the first step to be taken towards the solution of this question—how to restore the people to the land—would involve a careful consideration of the very numerous causes which have hitherto led to their aggregation in large cities. Were this the case, a very prolonged enquiry would be necessary at the outset. Fortunately, alike for writer and for reader, such an analysis is not, however, here requisite, and for a very simple reason, which may be stated thus: Whatever may have been the causes which have operated in the past, and are operating now, to draw the people into the cities, those causes may all be summed up as 'attractions'; and it is obvious,

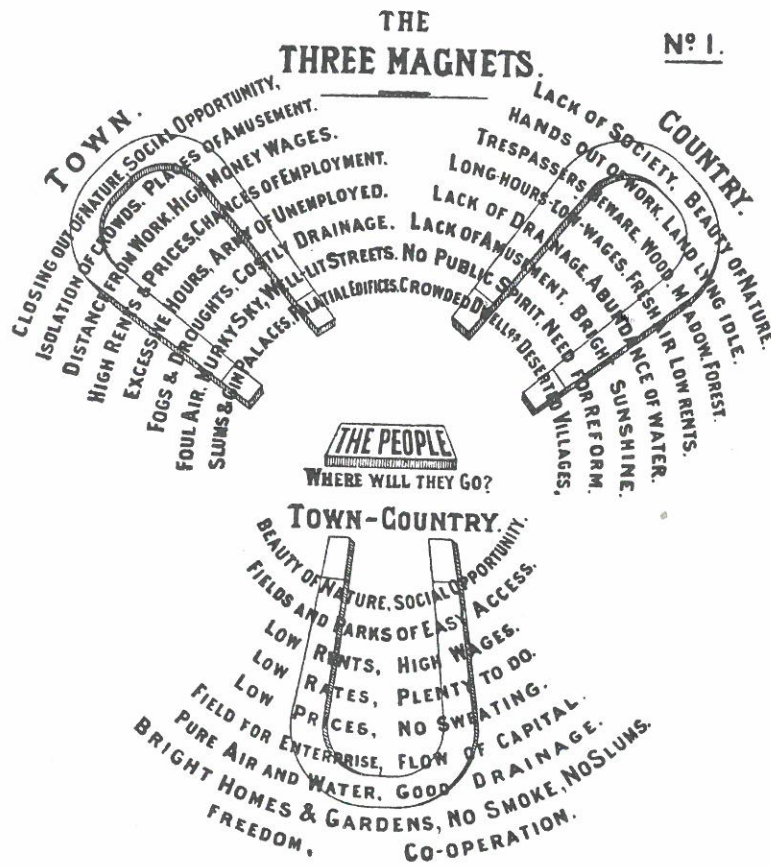
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therefore, that no remedy can possibly be effective which will not present to the people, or at least to considerable portions of them, greater 'attractions' than our cities now possess, so that the force of the old 'attractions' shall be overcome by the force of new 'attractions' which are to be created. Each city may be regarded as a magnet, each person as a needle; and, so viewed, it is at once seen that nothing short of the discovery of a method for constructing magnets of yet greater power than our cities possess can be effective for redistributing the population in a spontaneous and healthy manner.

So presented, the problem may appear at first sight to be difficult, if not impossible, of solution. 'What', some may be disposed to ask, 'can possibly be done to make the country more attractive to a workaday people than the town—to make wages, or at least the standard of physical comfort, higher in the country than in the town; to secure in the country equal possibilities of social intercourse, and to make the prospects of advancement for the average man or woman equal, not to say superior, to those enjoyed in our large cities?' The issue one constantly finds presented in a form very similar to that. The subject is treated continually in the public press, and in all forms of discussion, as though men, or at least working men, had not now, and never could have, any choice or alternative, but either, on the one hand, to stifle their love for human society—at least in wider relations than can be found in a straggling village—or, on the other hand, to forgo almost entirely all the keen and pure delights of the country. The question is universally considered as though it were now, and for ever must remain, quite impossible for working people to live in the country and yet be engaged in pursuits other than agricultural; as though crowded, unhealthy cities were the last word of economic science; and as if our present form of industry, in which sharp lines divide agricultural from industrial pursuits, were necessarily an enduring one. This fallacy is the very common one of ignoring altogether the possibility of alternatives other than those presented to the mind. There are in reality not only, as is so constantly assumed, two alternatives—town life and country life—but a third alternative, in which all the advantages of the most energetic and active town life, with all the beauty and delight of the country,

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may be secured in perfect combination; and the certainty of being able to live this life will be the magnet which will produce the effect for which we are all striving—the spontaneous movement of the people from our crowded cities to the bosom of our



THE THREE MAGNETS

kindly mother earth, at once the source of life, of happiness, of wealth, and of power. The town and the country may, therefore, be regarded as two magnets, each striving to draw the people to itself—a rivalry which a new form of life, partaking of the nature of both, comes to take part in. This may be illustrated

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by a diagram of 'The Three Magnets', in which the chief advantages of the Town and of the Country are set forth with their corresponding drawbacks, while the advantages of the Town-Country are seen to be free from the disadvantages of either.

The Town magnet, it will be seen, offers, as compared with the Country magnet, the advantages of high wages, opportunities for employment, tempting prospects of advancement, but these are largely counterbalanced by high rents and prices. Its social opportunities and its places of amusement are very alluring, but excessive hours of toil, distance from work, and the 'isolation of crowds' tend greatly to reduce the value of these good things. The well-lit streets are a great attraction, especially in winter, but the sunlight is being more and more shut out, while the air is so vitiated that the fine public buildings, like the sparrows, rapidly become covered with soot, and the very statues are in despair. Palatial edifices and fearful slums are the strange, complementary features of modern cities.

The Country magnet declares herself to be the source of all beauty and wealth; but the Town magnet mockingly reminds her that she is very dull for lack of society, and very sparing of her gifts for lack of capital. There are in the country beautiful vistas, lordly parks, violet-scented woods, fresh air, sounds of rippling water; but too often one sees those threatening words, 'Trespassers will be prosecuted'. Rents, if estimated by the acre, are certainly low, but such low rents are the natural fruit of low wages rather than a cause of substantial comfort; while long hours and lack of amusements forbid the bright sunshine and the pure air to gladden the hearts of the people. The one industry, agriculture, suffers frequently from excessive rainfalls; but this wondrous harvest of the clouds is seldom properly ingathered, so that, in times of drought, there is frequently, even for drinking purposes, a most insufficient supply.¹ Even the

¹ Dr. Barwise, Medical Officer of Health for the County Council of Derbyshire, giving evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, on 25th April 1894, on the Chesterfield Gas and Water Bill, said, in answer to Question 1873: 'At Brimington Common School I saw some basins full of soapsuds, and it was all the water that the whole of the children had to wash in. They had to wash one after another in the same water. Of course, a child with

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natural healthfulness of the country is largely lost for lack of proper drainage and other sanitary conditions, while, in parts almost deserted by the people, the few who remain are yet frequently huddled together as if in rivalry with the slums of our cities.

But neither the Town magnet nor the Country magnet represents the full plan and purpose of nature. Human society and the beauty of nature are meant to be enjoyed together. The two magnets must be made one. As man and woman by their varied gifts and faculties supplement each other, so should town and country. The town is the symbol of society—of mutual help and friendly co-operation, of fatherhood, motherhood, brotherhood, sisterhood, of wide relations between man and man—of broad, expanding sympathies—of science, art, culture, religion. And the country! The country is the symbol of God's love and care for man. All that we are and all that we have comes from it. Our bodies are formed of it; to it they return. We are fed by it, clothed by it, and by it are we warmed and sheltered. On its bosom we rest. Its beauty is the inspiration of art, of music, of poetry. Its forces propel all the wheels of industry. It is the source of all health, all wealth, all knowledge. But its fullness of joy and wisdom has not revealed itself to man. Nor can it ever, so long as this unholy, unnatural separation of society and nature endures. Town and country *must be married*, and out of this joyous union will spring a new hope, a new life, a new civilization. It is the purpose of this work to show how a first step can be taken in this direction by the construction of a Town-country magnet; and I hope to convince the reader that this is practicable, here and now, and that on principles which are the very soundest, whether viewed from the ethical or the economic standpoint.

I will undertake, then, to show how in 'Town-country' equal, nay better, opportunities of social intercourse may be enjoyed than are enjoyed in any crowded city, while yet the beauties of

ringworm or something of that kind might spread it through the whole of the children. . . . The schoolmistress told me that the children came in from the playground hot, and she had seen them actually drink this dirty water. In fact, when they were thirsty there was no other water for them to have.'

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nature may encompass and enfold each dweller therein; how higher wages are compatible with reduced rents and rates; how abundant opportunities for employment and bright prospects of advancement may be secured for all; how capital may be attracted and wealth created; how the most admirable sanitary conditions may be ensured; how beautiful homes and gardens may be seen on every hand; how the bounds of freedom may be widened, and yet all the best results of concert and co-operation gathered in by a happy people.

The construction of such a magnet, could it be effected, followed, as it would be, by the construction of many more, would certainly afford a solution of the burning question set before us by Sir John Gorst, 'how to back the tide of migration of the people into the towns, and to get them back upon the land'.

A fuller description of such a magnet and its mode of construction will form the theme of subsequent chapters.

Chapter One

The Town-Country Magnet

'I will not cease from mental strife,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.'

—BLAKE.

'Thorough sanitary and remedial action in the houses that we have; and then the building of more, strongly, beautifully, and in groups of limited extent, kept in proportion to their streams and walled round, so that there may be no festering and wretched suburb anywhere, but clean and busy street within and the open country without, with a belt of beautiful garden and orchard round the walls, so that from any part of the city perfectly fresh air and grass and sight of far horizon might be reachable in a few minutes' walk. This the final aim.'—JOHN RUSKIN, *Sesame and Lilies*.

THE reader is asked to imagine an estate embracing an area of 6,000 acres, which is at present purely agricultural, and has been obtained by purchase in the open market at a cost of £40¹ an acre, or £240,000. The purchase money is supposed to have been raised on mortgage debentures, bearing interest at an average rate not exceeding £4 per cent.² The estate is legally vested in the names of four gentlemen of responsible position and of undoubted probity and honour, who hold it in trust, first, as a security for the debenture-holders, and, secondly, in

¹ This was the average price paid for agricultural land in 1898: and, though this estimate may prove far more than sufficient, it is hardly likely to be much exceeded.

² The financial arrangements described in this book are likely to be departed from in form, but not in essential principle. And until a definite scheme has been agreed upon, I think it better to repeat them precisely as they appeared in *To-morrow*, the original title of this book—the book which led to the formation of the Garden City Association. (Footnote to 1902 edition. *Ed.*)

THE TOWN-COUNTRY MAGNET

trust for the people of Garden City, the Town-country magnet, which it is intended to build thereon. One essential feature of the plan is that all ground rents, which are to be based upon the annual value of the land, shall be paid to the trustees, who, after providing for interest and sinking fund, will hand the balance to the Central Council of the new municipality,¹ to be employed by such Council in the creation and maintenance of all necessary public works—roads, schools, parks, etc.

The objects of this land purchase may be stated in various ways, but it is sufficient here to say that some of the chief objects are these: To find for our industrial population work at wages of *higher purchasing power*, and to secure healthier surroundings and more regular employment. To enterprising manufacturers, co-operative societies, architects, engineers, builders, and mechanics of all kinds, as well as to many engaged in various professions, it is intended to offer a means of securing new and better employment for their capital and talents, while to the agriculturists at present on the estate as well as to those who may migrate thither, it is designed to open a new market for their produce close to their doors. Its object is, in short, to raise the standard of health and comfort of all true workers of whatever grade—the means by which these objects are to be achieved being a healthy, natural, and economic combination of town and country life, and this on land owned by the municipality.

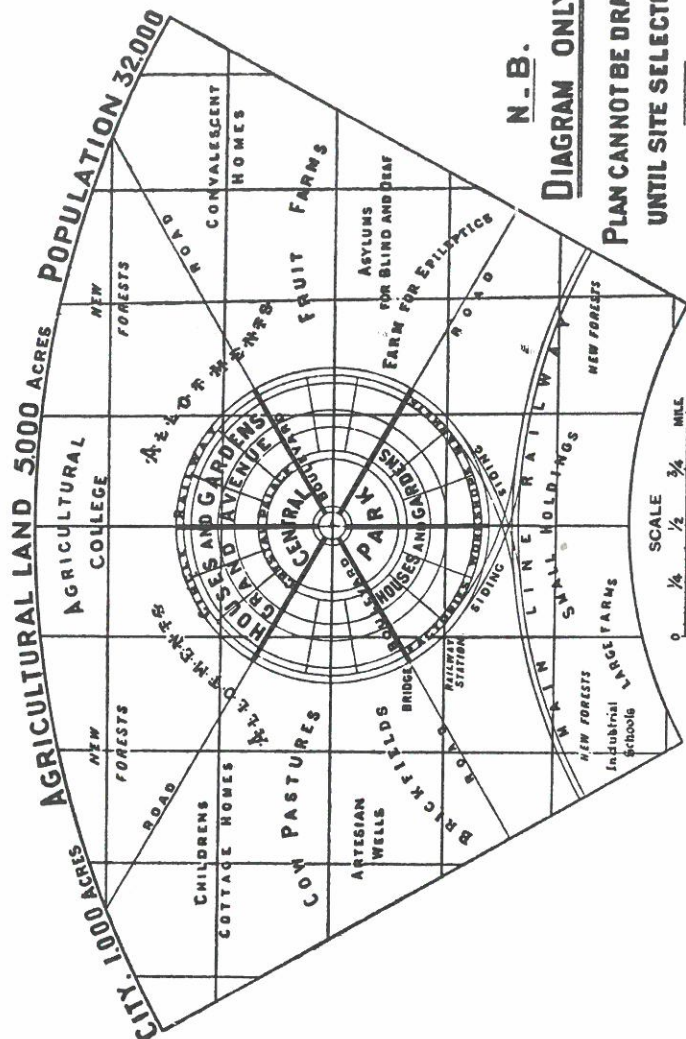
Garden City, which is to be built near the centre of the 6,000 acres, covers an area of 1,000 acres, or a sixth part of the 6,000 acres, and might be of circular form, 1,240 yards (or nearly three-quarters of a mile) from centre to circumference. (Diagram 2 is a ground plan of the whole municipal area, showing the town in the centre; and Diagram 3, which represents one section or ward of the town, will be useful in following the description of the town itself—a description which is, however, merely suggestive, and will probably be much departed from.)

Six magnificent boulevards—each 120 feet wide—traverse the city from centre to circumference, dividing it into six equal parts or wards. In the centre is a circular space containing about

¹ This word, 'municipality', is not used in a technical sense.

— N°2. —

GARDEN - CITY



GARDEN CITY AND RURAL BELT

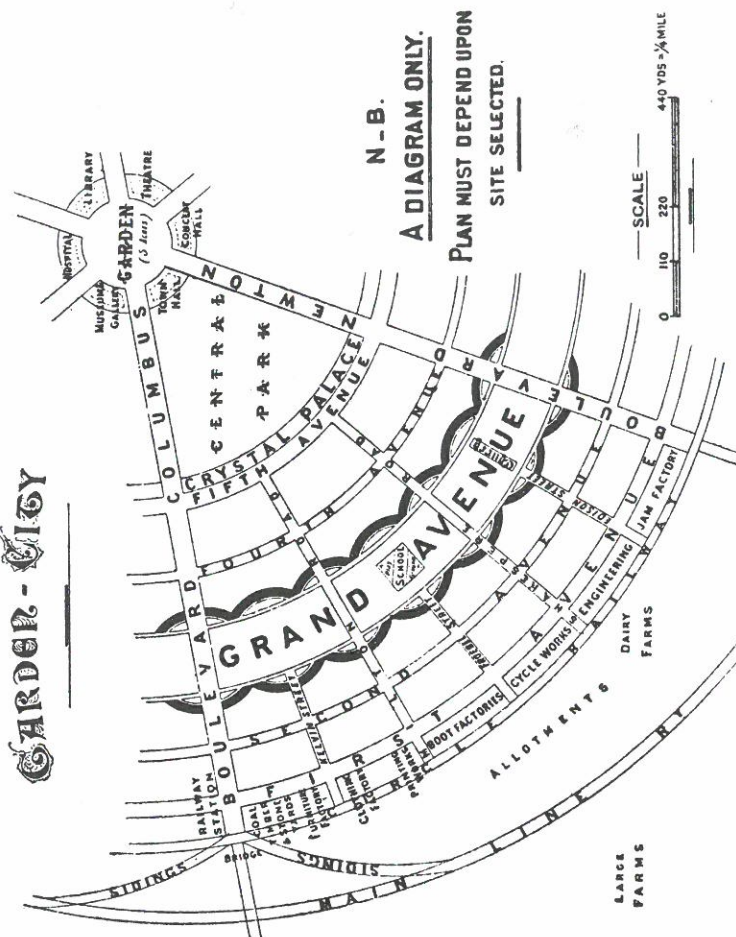
THE TOWN-COUNTRY MAGNET

five and a half acres, laid out as a beautiful and well-watered garden; and, surrounding this garden, each standing in its own ample grounds, are the larger public buildings—town hall,

N°3.

WARD AND CENTRE

GARDEN - CITY



WARD AND CENTRE OF GARDEN CITY

principal concert and lecture hall, theatre, library, museum, picture-gallery, and hospital.

The rest of the large space encircled by the 'Crystal Palace' is a public park, containing 145 acres, which includes ample recreation grounds within very easy access of all the people.

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Running all round the Central Park (except where it is intersected by the boulevards) is a wide glass arcade called the 'Crystal Palace', opening on to the park. This building is in wet weather one of the favourite resorts of the people, whilst the knowledge that its bright shelter is ever close at hand tempts people into Central Park, even in the most doubtful of weathers. Here manufactured goods are exposed for sale, and here most of that class of shopping which requires the joy of deliberation and selection is done. The space enclosed by the Crystal Palace is, however, a good deal larger than is required for these purposes, and a considerable part of it is used as a Winter Garden—the whole forming a permanent exhibition of a most attractive character, whilst its circular form brings it near to every dweller in the town—the furthest removed inhabitant being within 600 yards.

Passing out of the Crystal Palace on our way to the outer ring of the town, we cross Fifth Avenue—lined, as are all the roads of the town, with trees—fronting which, and looking on to the Crystal Palace, we find a ring of very excellently built houses, each standing in its own ample grounds; and, as we continue our walk, we observe that the houses are for the most part built either in concentric rings, facing the various avenues (as the circular roads are termed), or fronting the boulevards and roads which all converge to the centre of the town. Asking the friend who accompanies us on our journey what the population of this little city may be, we are told about 30,000 in the city itself, and about 2,000 in the agricultural estate, and that there are in the town 5,500 building lots of an *average* size of 20 feet x 130 feet—the minimum space allotted for the purpose being 20 x 100. Noticing the very varied architecture and design which the houses and groups of houses display—some having common gardens and co-operative kitchens—we learn that general observance of street line or harmonious departure from it are the chief points as to house building, over which the municipal authorities exercise control, for, though proper sanitary arrangements are strictly enforced, the fullest measure of individual taste and preference is encouraged.

Walking still toward the outskirts of the town, we come upon 'Grand Avenue'. This avenue is fully entitled to the name it

THE TOWN-COUNTRY MAGNET

bears, for it is 420 feet wide,¹ and, forming a belt of green upwards of three miles long, divides that part of the town which lies outside Central Park into two belts. It really constitutes an additional park of 115 acres—a park which is within 240 yards of the furthest removed inhabitant. In this splendid avenue six sites, each of four acres, are occupied by public schools and their surrounding playgrounds and gardens, while other sites are reserved for churches, of such denominations as the religious beliefs of the people may determine, to be erected and maintained out of the funds of the worshippers and their friends. We observe that the houses fronting on Grand Avenue have departed (at least in one of the wards—that of which Diagram 3 is a representation)—from the general plan of concentric rings, and, in order to ensure a longer line of frontage on Grand Avenue, are arranged in crescents—thus also to the eye yet further enlarging the already splendid width of Grand Avenue.

On the outer ring of the town are factories, warehouses, dairies, markets, coal yards, timber yards, etc., all fronting on the circle railway, which encompasses the whole town, and which has sidings connecting it with a main line of railway which passes through the estate. This arrangement enables goods to be loaded direct into trucks from the warehouses and workshops, and so sent by railway to distant markets, or to be taken direct from the trucks into the warehouses or factories; thus not only effecting a very great saving in regard to packing and cartage, and reducing to a minimum loss from breakage, but also, by reducing the traffic on the roads of the town, lessening to a very marked extent the cost of their maintenance. The smoke fiend is kept well within bounds in Garden City; for all machinery is driven by electric energy, with the result that the cost of electricity for lighting and other purposes is greatly reduced.

The refuse of the town is utilized on the agricultural portions of the estate, which are held by various individuals in large farms, small holdings, allotments, cow pastures, etc.; the natural competition of these various methods of agriculture, tested by the willingness of occupiers to offer the highest rent

¹ Portland Place, London, is only 100 feet wide.

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to the municipality, tending to bring about the best system of husbandry, or, what is more probable, the best *systems* adapted for various purposes. Thus it is easily conceivable that it may prove advantageous to grow wheat in very large fields, involving united action under a capitalist farmer, or by a body of co-operators; while the cultivation of vegetables, fruits, and flowers, which requires closer and more personal care, and more of the artistic and inventive faculty, may possibly be best dealt with by individuals, or by small groups of individuals having a common belief in the efficacy and value of certain dressings, methods of culture, or artificial and natural surroundings.

This plan, or, if the reader be pleased to so term it, this absence of plan, avoids the dangers of stagnation or dead level, and, though encouraging individual initiative, permits of the fullest co-operation, while the increased rents which follow from this form of competition are common or municipal property, and by far the larger part of them are expended in permanent improvements.

While the town proper, with its population engaged in various trades, callings, and professions, and with a store or depot in each ward, offers the most natural market to the people engaged on the agricultural estate, inasmuch as to the extent to which the townspeople demand their produce they escape altogether any railway rates and charges; yet the farmers and others are not by any means limited to the town as their only market, but have the fullest right to dispose of their produce to whomsoever they please. Here, as in every feature of the experiment, it will be seen that it is not the area of rights which is contracted, but the area of choice which is enlarged.

This principle of freedom holds good with regard to manufacturers and others who have established themselves in the town. These manage their affairs in their own way, subject, of course, to the general law of the land, and subject to the provision of sufficient space for workmen and reasonable sanitary conditions. Even in regard to such matters as water, lighting, and telephonic communication—which a municipality, if efficient and honest, is certainly the best and most natural body to supply—no rigid or absolute monopoly is sought; and if any private corporation or any body of individuals proved itself

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capable of supplying on more advantageous terms, either the whole town or a section of it, with these or any commodities the supply of which was taken up by the corporation, this would be allowed. No really sound system of *action* is in more need of artificial support than is any sound system of *thought*. The area of municipal and corporate action is probably destined to become greatly enlarged; but, if it is to be so, it will be because the people possess faith in such action, and that faith can be best shown by a wide extension of the area of freedom.

Dotted about the estate are seen various charitable and philanthropic institutions. These are not under the control of the municipality, but are supported and managed by various public-spirited people who have been invited by the municipality to establish these institutions in an open healthy district, and on land let to them at a pepper-corn rent, it occurring to the authorities that they can the better afford to be thus generous, as the spending power of these institutions greatly benefits the whole community. Besides, as those persons who migrate to the town are among its most energetic and resourceful members, it is but just and right that their more helpless brethren should be able to enjoy the benefits of an experiment which is designed for humanity at large.

Note: The following quotation appeared at the head of this chapter in the edition of 1898. *Ed.*

'No scene is continuously and untiringly loved, but one rich by joyful human labour; smooth in field; fair in garden; full in orchard; trim, sweet and frequent in homestead; ringing with voices of vivid existence. No air is sweet that is silent; it is only sweet when full of low currents of under sound—triplets of birds, and murmur and chirp of insects, and deep-toned words of men, and wayward trebles of childhood. As the art of life is learned, it will be found at last that all lovely things are also necessary;—the wild flower by the wayside, as well as the tended corn; and the wild birds and creatures of the forest, as well as the tended cattle; because man doth not live by bread only, but also by the desert manna; by every wondrous word and unknowable work of God.'—JOHN RUSKIN, *Unto This Last* (1862).

Chapter Two

The Revenue of Garden City, and how it is obtained—The Agricultural Estate

'It is my object to put forward a theoretical outline of a community so circumstanced and so maintained by the exercise of its own free will, guided by scientific knowledge, that the perfection of sanitary results will be approached, if not actually realized, in the co-existence of the lowest possible general mortality with the highest possible individual longevity.'—DR. B. W. RICHARDSON, *Hygeia; or, a City of Health* (1876).

'When drainage everywhere, with its double functions, restoring what it takes away, is accomplished, then, this being combined with the data of a new social economy, the products of the earth will be increased tenfold, and the problem of misery will be wonderfully diminished. Add the suppression of parasitism and it will be solved.'—VICTOR HUGO, *Les Misérables* (1862).¹

Amongst the essential differences between Garden City and other municipalities, one of the chief is its method of raising its revenue. Its entire revenue is derived from rents; and one of the purposes of this work is to show that the rents which may very reasonably be expected from the various tenants on the estate will be amply sufficient, if paid into the coffers of Garden City, (a) to pay the interest on the money with which the estate is purchased, (b) to provide a sinking fund for the purpose of paying off the principal, (c) to construct and maintain all such works as are usually constructed and maintained by municipal and other local authorities out of rates compulsorily levied, and (d) (after redemption of debentures) to provide a large surplus for other purposes, such as old-age pensions or insurance against accident and sickness.

Perhaps no difference between town and country is more noticeable than the difference in the rent charged for the use of

¹ These and several other quotations, which appeared in the original edition of 1898, were omitted from later editions. *Ed.*

THE AGRICULTURAL ESTATE

the soil. Thus, while in some parts of London the rent is equal to £30,000 an acre, £4 an acre is an extremely high rent for agricultural land.¹ This enormous difference of rental value is, of course, almost entirely due to the presence in the one case and the absence in the other of a large population; and, as it cannot be attributed to the action of any particular individuals, it is frequently spoken of as the 'unearned increment', i.e. unearned by the landlord, though a more correct term would be 'collectively earned increment'.

The presence of a considerable population thus giving a greatly additional value to the soil, it is obvious that a migration of population on any considerable scale to any particular area will be certainly attended with a corresponding rise in the value of the land so settled upon, and it is also obvious that such increment of value may, with some foresight and pre-arrangement, become the property of the migrating people.

Such foresight and pre-arrangement, never before exercised in an effective manner, are displayed conspicuously in the case of Garden City, where the land, as we have seen, is vested in trustees, who hold it in trust (after payment of the debentures) for the whole community, so that the entire increment of value gradually created becomes the property of the municipality, with the effect that though rents may rise, and even rise considerably, such rise in rent will not become the property of private individuals, but will be applied in relief of rates. It is this arrangement which will be seen to give Garden City much of its magnetic power.

The site of Garden City we have taken to be worth at the time of its purchase £40 an acre, or £240,000. The purchase money may be assumed to represent thirty years' purchase, and on this basis the annual rent paid by the former tenants was £8,000. If, therefore, there was a population of 1,000 persons upon the estate at the time of the purchase, then each man, woman, and child was contributing towards this rent-roll an average sum of £8 per annum. But the population of Garden City, including its agricultural land, is, when completed, 32,000,

¹ These and all other figures are given as in the original edition of the book in 1898. Money values in England have of course changed considerably since that date. *Ed.*

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and the estate has cost them a sum on which they pay an annual charge by way of interest of £9,600. Thus, while before the experiment was initiated, 1,000 persons out of their united earnings contributed £8,000 a year, or £8 *a head*, on the completion of the town 32,000 persons out of their united earnings will contribute £9,600 a year, or an average of 6s. *a head*.

This sum of 6s. per head per annum is all the rent, strictly speaking, which the inhabitants of Garden City will ever be called upon to pay; for it is all the rent which they *pay away*, any further sum they pay being a contribution towards their rates.

Let us now suppose that each person, besides contributing annually 6s. a head, contributes an average annual sum of £1 14s., or £2 in all. In that case two things may be noticed. First, each person will be paying for ground rent and rates only one-fourth of the sum which each person before the purchase paid in ground rent alone; and, secondly, the Board of Management, after the payment of interest on the debentures, will receive an annual sum of £54,400, which, as will be presently shown, would, after providing a sinking fund (of £4,400), defray all those costs, charges, and expenses which are usually met by local taxation.

The average annual sum contributed by each man, woman, and child in England and Wales for local purposes is about £2 a head, and the average sum contributed for ground rent is, at a very low estimate, about £2 10s. The average yearly contribution for ground rent and local rates is, therefore, about £4 10s. It might, therefore, be safely assumed that the people of Garden City would willingly pay £2 per head in complete discharge of ground rent and local rates; but to make the case the clearer and stronger, we will test the supposed willingness of the tenants of Garden City to pay such a sum as £2 a year for rates and rents in another way.

For this purpose, let us deal first with the agricultural estate, leaving the town estate to be dealt with separately. Obviously the rent which can be secured will be considerably greater than before the town was built. Every farmer now has a market close to his doors. There are 30,000 townspeople to be fed. Those persons, of course, are perfectly free to get their foodstuffs from any part of the world, and in the case of many products will

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doubtless continue to be supplied from abroad. These farmers are hardly likely to supply them with tea, with coffee, with spices, with tropical fruits or with sugar,¹ and their struggle to compete with America and Russia for the supply of wheat or flour to the town may be as keen as ever. But surely the struggle will not be so despairing. A ray—a beam of hope will gladden the heart of the despairing home-producer of wheat, for while the American has to pay railway charges to the seaboard, charges for Atlantic transit and railway charges to the consumer, the farmer of Garden City has a market at his very doors, and this a market which the rent he contributes will help to build up.²

Or, consider vegetables and fruits. Farmers, except near towns, do not often grow them now. Why? Chiefly because of the difficulty and uncertainty of a market, and the high charges for freights and commission. To quote the words of Dr. Farquharson, M.P., when they 'try to dispose of these things they find themselves struggling so hopelessly in a spider's web of rings and middlemen, and speculators, that they are more than half-inclined to give up the attempt in despair, and fall back on those things that stand up straight and square to their prices in the open market'. A curious calculation may be interesting with regard to milk. Assuming each person in the town consumed only one-third of a pint a day, then 30,000 would consume 1,250 gallons a day, and might thus save, taking railway charges at a penny per gallon, upwards of £1,900 per annum in railway rates upon the one item of milk, a saving which must be multiplied by a large figure in order to realize the general saving to be effected by placing consumer and producer in such close association. In other words, the combination of town and country is not only healthful, but economic—a point which every step taken will serve to make yet more clear.

But the rents which the agricultural tenants of Garden City would be willing to pay would increase for another reason. The waste products of the town could, and this without heavy

¹ The electric light, with cheap motive power for its generation, with glass-houses, may make even some of these things possible.

² See *Fields, Factories, and Workshops*, by Prince Kropotkin (London, 1898), and *The Coming Revolution*, by Capt. J. W. Petavel.

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charges for railway transport or other expensive agencies, be readily brought back to the soil, thus increasing its fertility. The question of sewage disposal is naturally a difficult one to deal with, but its inherent difficulty is often much increased by artificial and imperfect conditions already in existence. Thus, Sir Benjamin Baker, in his joint report with Mr. (now Sir) Alexander Binnie to the London County Council, says: 'In approaching the consideration of the vast question of the whole sewerage system of the Metropolis, and the state of the Thames, as a practical problem . . . we had clearly at once to recognize the fact that the general features of the main drainage system were unalterably settled, and must be accepted in the same way as the main lines of thoroughfares have to be accepted whether quite as we could wish them to be or not.' But on Garden City site, given the skilful engineer, he would have comparatively little difficulty. He would have, as it were, a clean sheet on which to prepare his plans, and the whole estate being equally the property of the municipality, he would have a free course before him, and would doubtless succeed in adding greatly to the productiveness of the agricultural estate.

The great increase in the number of allotments, especially such favourably situated allotments as are shown in Diagram 2, would also tend to raise the total sum offered in rent.

There are yet other reasons why the rent which a farmer on the Garden City estate would be willing to pay for his farm, or a labourer for his allotment, would tend to increase. The productiveness of the agricultural part of the estate, besides being increased by a well-devised system of sewage disposal, and by a new and somewhat extensive market, with unique conveniences for transit to more distant markets, would also be increased because the tenure on which the land is held encourages maximum cultivation. It is a just tenure. The agricultural portion of the estate is let at fair rents, with a right to continue in occupation as long as the tenant is willing to pay a rent equal to that offered by any would-be occupier, less, say, 10 per cent in favour of the occupying tenant—the incoming tenant having also to compensate the outgoing tenant for all unexhausted improvements. Under this system, while it would be impossible for the tenant to secure to himself any undue share of that

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natural increment of land-value which would be brought about by the general growth in well-being of the town, he would yet have, as all tenants in possession probably should have, a preference over any newcomer, and would know that he would not lose those fruits of his past industry which were not yet ingathered but were still adding their value to the soil. Surely no one can doubt that such a tenure would, of itself, tend greatly to increase at once the activity and industry of the tenant, the productivity of the soil, and the rent which the tenant would be willing to pay.

That there would be this increased offer of rent will become yet more obvious if we consider for a moment the *nature* of the rent paid by a tenant of Garden City. Part of what he pays would be in respect of interest on the debentures on which the money to purchase the estate was raised, or in the redemption of those debentures, and would thus, except so far as the debentures were held by residents on the estate, pass away from the community altogether; but the whole of the remaining sum paid would be expended locally, and the farmer would have a share equal to that of every adult in the administration of such money. The term 'rent', therefore, has, in Garden City, acquired a new meaning, and, for the sake of clearness, it will be necessary in future to use terms which will not be ambiguous. That part of the rent which represents interest on debentures will be hereafter called 'landlord's rent'; that part which represents repayment of purchase-money 'sinking fund'; that part which is devoted to public purposes 'rates'; while the total sum will be termed 'rate-rent'.

From these considerations, surely it is obvious that the '*rate-rent*' which the farmer will be willing to pay into the treasury of Garden City will be considerably higher than the *rent* he would be willing to pay to a private landlord, who, besides increasing his rent as the farmer makes his land more valuable, will also leave him with the full burden of local taxation resting upon him. In short the plan proposed embraces a system of sewage-disposal which will return to the soil in a transmuted form many of those products the growth of which, by exhausting its natural fertility, demand elsewhere the application of manures so expensive that the farmer becomes sometimes blinded to their

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necessity, and it also embraces a system of rate-rents by which many of the farmer's hard-earned sovereigns, hitherto lost to him by being paid away to his landlord, shall return to his exhausted exchequer, not indeed in the form in which they left it, but in a variety of useful forms, such as roads, schools, markets, which will assist him most materially, though indirectly, in his work, but which, under present conditions, entail so severe a burden as to make him naturally slow to see their inherent necessity, and even to look upon some of them with suspicion and dislike. Who can doubt that if the farm and the farmer can be placed under conditions so healthful and natural alike in a physical and moral sense, the willing soil and the hopeful farmer will alike respond to their new environment—the soil becoming more fertile by every blade of grass it yields, the farmer richer by every penny of rate-rent he contributes?

We are now in a position to see that the rate-rent which will be readily paid by farmer, small occupier, and allotment holder, would be considerably greater than the rent he paid before: (1) because of the presence of a new town population demanding new and more profitable farm products, in respect of which railway charges can be largely saved; (2) by the due return to the soil of its natural elements; (3) by the just, equitable, and natural conditions on which the land is held; and (4) by reason of the fact that the rent now paid is *rate and rent*, while the rent formerly paid left the rates to be paid by the tenant.

But certain as it is that the '*rate-rent*' would represent a very considerable increase over the bare *rent* formerly paid by the tenants on the estate, it is still very much a matter of conjecture what the '*rate-rent*' would be; and we shall, therefore, be acting prudently if we greatly under-estimate the '*rate-rent*' which would probably be offered. If, then, in view of all the circumstances, we estimate that the *farming population* of Garden City will be prepared to pay for rates and rent 50 per cent more than they before paid for *rent alone*, we shall reach the following result:

<i>Estimated Gross Revenue from Agricultural Estate</i>	
Original rent paid by tenants of 5,000 acres, say	£6,500
Add 50 per cent for contributions to rates and sinking fund	3,250
Total ' <i>rate-rent</i> ' from agricultural estate	£9,750

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We shall in the next chapter estimate the amount which may, on the most reasonable calculation, be expected from the town estate, and then proceed to consider the sufficiency of the total rate-rents for the municipal needs of the town.