

STORIES of New Jersey

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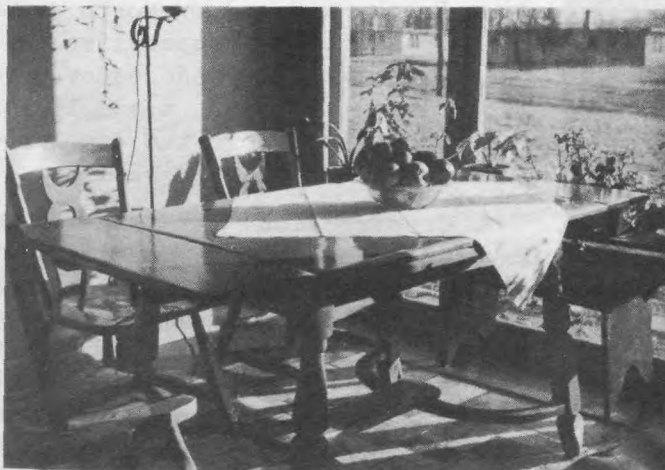
JERSEY HOMESTEADS

In exchange for a crowded tenement, a pleasant house and garden; for a cluttered city street, sunny fields and cool green woods; for an ill-lighted, stuffy workroom, a modern glass and concrete factory set in the open-country-- these and the opportunity to share in the profits of their own labor are the advantages enjoyed by the group of families that has joined the Jersey Homesteads, a cooperative colony near Hightstown, N. J.

The colony occupies 1,275 acres of beautiful rolling farm land and forest 5 miles southeast of Hightstown in Monmouth County. A factory is the center from which spread out, fanlike, the homes of the workers, the stores and the school. A wide belt of farm land and forest belonging to the colony encircles the community. This insures freedom from the encroachment of industrial or commercial activities.

The colony was started by the Department of the Interior of the Federal Government, at the suggestion and under the sponsorship of a group of prominent men interested in social betterment. It was designed as an experiment in the decentralization of industry, to enable workers to live in pleasant homes, near their work, with enough land on which to raise some of their own food, and so supplement their incomes. The colonists have organized all the work of the community and the administration of its affairs on a cooperative basis.

The idea of cooperation as a solution of many problems of modern living was first presented nearly 100 years ago, in 1844, in the mill town of Rochdale,



A Sunlit Corner of a Homestead Kitchen

England. A group of 28 flannel weavers realized that if they banded together to provide themselves with goods, tea, sugar, flour, etc., they could share in savings which no one of them could effect alone. They performed wholesale functions by buying their flour in quantity; they performed retail functions by serving themselves in their own little store, and all the savings were shared equally. From this small beginning the great consumer cooperative movement, which now numbers 120,000,000 members, has spread throughout the world.

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