

DISILLUSIONED AUTHOR'S SCHEME

After more than 40 years' advocacy of socialism, the Australian author and poet, Mr. E. J. Brady, is disillusioned about individual experiments in communal settlement, as a result of the failure of his co-operative land settlement scheme at Malla-coota Inlet, in East Gippsland (says the Melbourne "Herald").

Mr Brady, who was secretary of the first Socialist League in Australia in 1890 in Sydney, recently gave to a group of unemployed men the use of a big area of land which he owns at Malla-coota to form a co-operative settlement. In addition, the settlers were also provided with tents and other housing accommodation, agricultural implements, and various household accessories, and a motor-boat for fishing and recreation.

The plan has now been abandoned. The State Government provided farms and clothing and 16 married men went on the land, their families in Melbourne being granted full sustenance in their absence. It is stated that some refused to work, and quarrels developed as a result of which most of the men left.

HEAVY COST.

It is known that Mr Brady's personal loss on the experiment is several hundreds of pounds.

Mr Brady, who is a member of the Victorian Socialisation Committee, set up by the last conference of the Victorian branch of the Australian Labour Party, said that he was now convinced after 50 years of investigation, and as a result of his recent experience, that individual attempts at establishing co-operative or communal schemes were doomed to failure.

"I am now convinced that the only way in which we can solve the economic problem is either by Fascist control with machine guns or by Communist control with machine guns and rifles," said Mr. Brady.

"I stand with Upton Sinclair (the American author) for a peaceful solution of the social problem, but I am convinced as a result of my recent experiment that there is no possibility of solving it by any attempts dependent upon the human element without proper control and organisation by a constitutional authority."

GOOD LAND.

Mr Brady explained that he was associated with the late William Lane when the latter decided upon his experiment in establishing the "New Australia" communal settlement in Paraguay as he considered at that time that it would have a better chance in Australia. In spite of the result of the Paraguay experiment, he had thought that in view of the altered development and economic outlook in Australia now an experiment could be successfully tried.

After having explained that as a result of suggestions made to him, a committee had been formed in Melbourne to settle selected men on his land at Malla-coota Mr Brady said:

bourne to settle selected men on his land at Malla-coota Mr Brady said: "I placed at their disposal about 900 acres of what is quite good agricultural country - the best land at my disposal, with plant and other necessary requirements for the launching of a successful settlement.

DID EVERYTHING POSSIBLE.

"I gave them the use of a motor boat, and an area for residential purposes overlooking some of the most beautiful scenery in the State. It was proposed that eventually, as the settlement developed, substantial residences would be built by and for the settlers, all the timber for which was available on the land.

"The committee which was established in Melbourne to further the scheme, did everything possible to provide for the comfort of the new settlers and to see that they got a 'fair go' at the outset.

"They did get a 'fair go,' but I have now to admit that, through no fault of ours, the experiment was a failure."