

*Miscellaneous Sources of Occupation.*

Stewart Island is so singularly favourably situated for the proper class of settlers, that it is difficult to determine what they could not do. With good crafts, bold hearts, and skilful hands, the fishermen could, at the proper season vary the ordinary business of his life by the more exciting occupation of whaling and sealing. The waters in the vicinity of the island were at one time frequented by large numbers of the various members of the *Cetaceous* and *Phocidæ* families; indeed at Wilson's, or Broad Bay, there was years ago a very considerable whaling settlement, and from what I can learn the whales and seals are beginning to return to their old haunts. There is no occasion for him to confine his energies to his own territory: like the Vikings of old, he can, though with a more peaceful intent, steer his bark to foreign shores. He can wage war on the seal at the Auckland, Campbell, and McQuarrie Islands to the south, or seek it in the numerous caves in the deep sounds of the west coast of the main, from Preservation Inlet to Martin's Bay. He can cruise through Foveaux Strait and round his island home in pursuit of the richest fish the sea produces—the whale; or sail to the Snares for mutton birds, and albatross and other sea-fowl feathers. The first, dried and smoked, sell readily at from four to five shillings a dozen, wholesale, in the local market, for exportation to the North; and feathers—mutton bird, at five pence per lb., albatross, for considerably more. With a craft of his own the Stewart Islander can take his mutton birds not required for home consumption to the best market—the North Island, where the Maoris, I understand, give as high as twelve or more shillings a dozen for them; and he can, unlike the ordinary whaler, do all this without risk, danger, or loss of time,—always within easy reach of his home. While trawling, if he sees a whale, he can, if prepared, give chase, and if he gets his monster fish, tow it home and try it out at his leisure; if he loses it, go on trawling; always sure of a return of some sort. He lives in a genial climate, with the means of subsistence, nay wealth, at command, and surrounded with such comfort as few of his calling experience, either in the home country or in the bitter winters of Nova Scotia. To the fishermen the Government propose to bring out, or Nova Scotians, Stewart Island will prove a very paradise.

*Surveys.*

After experiencing the expense attendant on surveying the Martin's Bay special settlement, it becomes a question of serious consideration for the Government, whether its ability can compass the prosecution of similar undertakings in other parts of the Province, unless a radical alteration in this feature of the scheme can be devised. In the case of Stewart Island I propose the following:—

Authorized surveyors, according to requirement, to be appointed by the Government;—placed on the same footing, as regards free grants of land, with the other settlers, each having a half-acre in the town or village he resides in, with a 20-acre suburban lot. Here the responsibility of the Government ceases and the settlers' begins. These will cut their own lines and pay for the professional services of the surveyor, charged in accordance with a rate fixed by the Government, or its equivalent in kind, either in oysters, mutton birds, dried fish, &c., as may be most convenient to both parties to the contract. Thus, while the Government is at no expense, the cost to the settler will be trifling and easily met.

Each of the bays along the coast will be colonized by small communities, who, from ties of consanguinity, friendship, or interest, will desire to settle together for purposes of co-operation in pursuing their calling. The half-acre village lots and 20-acre suburban sections will therefore be laid off simultaneously; the trouble and expense to the surveyor and settlers being thereby greatly reduced. The surveys, of course, to be inspected by the District Inspector at Invercargill.

The survey of mineral lands which may be applied for under lease will be executed by the surveyor in the locality, as also any purchases which may be effected on the island, should it ever be deemed desirable to throw any part of it open for sale: for these, however, he will be paid in the usual way; in fact, the same system of district survey will be pursued there as has for years been so satisfactorily in operation in Southland, the only difference being that, as regards the settlers under "The Special Settlements Act, 1871," the circulating medium will be changed from money to marketable produce, which can be readily converted into money.

Though such a proposition may, from its novelty, induce the Government to doubt whether competent surveyors can be obtained to work for such remuneration, a little consideration will remove any misgivings on this head. The two objections which may be supposed to deter a surveyor of capacity from residing permanently on Stewart Island under any propositions are, the mode of recompensing his services, and a seeming banishment to an isolated part of the Colony, by which he steps out of the stream which may float him, sooner or later, a prize in his profession.

As regards the first, any payment in kind will be in articles of merchandise which command a ready and certain sale. In taking them, he will, doubtless, stipulate he suffers no loss on their sale, and will get them shipped to his agent at Campbelltown by the fishermen, in their crafts, when they visit the main on their own business. He will be paid liberally, and can make certain of being paid regularly, for the means will be before the door of every fisherman in the village he resides in, nor need he have any trouble in collecting his tithes. Thus, a very moderate amount of business capacity will enable him to secure himself, and with ordinary ability, tact, and temper, he must be master of the situation.

As regards the last, judging from experience, the prizes are few, and to ability, so far as remuneration is concerned, not of great moment, while there is always a pleasant uncertainty as to their retention; as at any meeting of a Provincial Council this may, at a moment's notice, be torn away.

On the island a surveyor can live in comfort, ease, and, above all, independence: he can support his family at small expense, for if he has the tact to make himself popular, he will find willing hands and grateful hearts to minister to his wants at trifling cost. He need not waste his substance in dress,—a charge a professional man in centres of population is forced into to a greater or lesser extent; in fact, he may, if he choose, save the greater part of whatever money he may make. If he has spare means, he will have an opportunity of sharing in fishing, whaling, or sealing enterprises. He may