

its cultivation pay expenses, while, in the meantime, the workmen themselves were being trained to habits and duties fitting them for the general labour-market. It is desired that buildings should be erected by the men themselves, with the help of some skilled assistance, that cottages should be built for married men with families, and that, to those who show themselves interested and capable, co-operative shares in the profits of the farm should be given. In most cases these farms would be "transit-stations," through which a steady current of labour, changed from "non-effective" to "effective," should pass. The farms would each be under the control of a practical "captain of industry," who would be held responsible for the training and discipline of the men, and who would endeavour to make the undertaking as remunerative as possible to the State without losing sight of its primary object—namely, the relief of pressure upon the deserving poor.

About seventy years ago (in 1818), a scheme somewhat similar to this was attempted to be carried out in Holland. Labour colonies were started by a private society, but were taken over by the Government in 1859. There was at that time three colonies, and these are still in existence: one at Frederiksoord, another at Willemsoord, and a third at Wilhelminasoord; of these we may take Frederiksoord as a typical example. It is now a fertile district about 16 miles in length, an oasis set in the midst of dreary moorland; it has been entirely redeemed from the waste by the efforts of the settlers. It comprises about 5,000 acres, including six large model farms employing 90 labourers, and 224 small farms each capable of supporting a family. There are five schools (accommodating 500 children), a college for gardening, two Protestant churches with houses for ministers, a Roman Catholic church with priest's house, a Jewish Synagogue and teacher's house. The population averages about 1,800. On a destitute family first arriving in the labour colony, the head of the family is given work as a labourer at current wages for three years, and he may then receive one of the small farms and become a free farmer, always premising that he has done his work as a labourer faithfully and well. If he does not succeed as a farmer he may return to his condition as a labourer, in which capacity he receives a free house and garden. Provision is made for sending away the drunken and idle. The farming families pay a small rent to the colony, and subscribe to a medical and clothing fund; the infirm old people are pensioned off. The colonies have been very successful, and there is no difficulty in filling up any vacancies.

The sketch above given of the Dutch labour colonies proves the possibility of destitute persons succeeding in living in co-operative societies under fostering Government care; still these colonies more resemble special settlements than the State farms about to be established in New Zealand, although the State-farms could easily cease from being transit centres if required and could become co-operative farming communities. The so-called "Beggar colonies" at Veenhuizen and Ommerschans, in Holland, are really "penal settlements" in the country; to these are sent for terms of two years the mendicants and others forming the scum of great cities, for purposes of reclamation, and that useful occupations may be learnt. New Zealand has at present no distinct criminal or pauper class, and therefore no such institutions need consideration, unless we allow that employment on farms is the proper alternative for the ordinary prison discipline.

There is little doubt, however, that if farm-colonies could be established for elderly and aged persons, a great boon would be extended to many deserving old people who now find their declining days passing away in the dull monotony of refuges, or "boarding-out" by charitable aid. The cultivation of gardens would give them pleasure, healthy exercise, and sometimes a little pocket-money, while their self-respect would be preserved and heightened by a sense of usefulness in the world.

For statistics of "Unemployed," &c., see page 6.

FACTORIES.

The Factories Act came into force on the 1st January, 1892. Its objects were the regulation of the methods by which work should be performed in factories and workshops, inspection of their sanitary provisions, and protection of the employes against accident. It also dealt with the hours of labour of women and children, payment to them of overtime, and notified the ages above which young persons might be legally employed.

For these purposes sixty-two districts with their boundaries were gazetted, and a local Inspector appointed at each of the undermentioned places, viz.:—

Factory Districts and Inspectors.

Wellington, James Mackay.
Christchurch, James Shanaghan.
Auckland, Herbert Ferguson.
Dunedin, T. K. Weldon.
Oamaru, Thomas O'Grady.
Onehunga, Bernard Green.
Invercargill, Ewen Macdonnell.
Greymouth, Adam Bassett.
Timaru, Henry Hallett.
New Plymouth, John Duffin.
Hawera, Patrick Quinn.
Patea, Patrick Leahy Harnett.
Wanganui, William Lyons.
Feilding, James Joseph Twohy.
Palmerston North, J. Slattery.
Thames, Richard Stapleton.
Tauranga, Nicholas Kiely.
Napier, John Cullen.

Balclutha, Andrew Christie.
Gore, John Fleming.
Otaki, Timothy O'Rourke.
Bulls, John Coyde.
Pahiatua, Charles Cooper.
Martinborough, Charles Bowden.
Waipawa, Florence O'Donovan.
Waipukurau, Denis Brosnahan.
Taradale, Thomas Leitch.
Danevirke, Edin Joseph Lawliss.
Featherston, Frederick Charles Smith.
Greytown, J. Eccleton.
Carterton, Robert Darby.
Upper Hutt, William Hector McKinnon.
Foxton, John Gillespie.
Eketahuna, Maurice Roche.
Ashurst, Thomas Dyer Brown.
Hokianga, Charles Hogg.