

I was fortunate to meet the chairman of the trustees at Lyrup, who showed me over the settlement and gave me much useful information. This settlement is without doubt the most prosperous of any. It was started on the 22nd February, 1894. The full membership is 100, the number at present is eighty-five, of whom fifty-five are married and thirty single, and the total number of men, women, and children is 305. Villagers are supplied at the cost of the association, so far as the assets will permit, with necessary food and clothing at a fixed scale in proportion to the number and ages of each family, and also with medical attendance and medicine. In addition to the rations, each member when at work receives a coupon of—at present—to the value of 6d. per day, paid by the association, the whole or any portion of which may be exchanged at the store for goods available—tobacco, gunpowder and shot, extra sugar, &c., not included in the scale of rations; any portion of such coupons not exchanged being placed to the credit of members whose names they bear. The credit balances of coupons is a first charge on the profits of the association, but not payable until the financial position of the association enables it to declare a dividend. No villager can at any time acquire a share or interest greater than that of any other member in the property or profits of the association. The interest of any member who may by old age, unforeseen illness, or accident become incapacitated for work is not affected thereby.

“The affairs of the association are managed by a Board of five trustees, elected annually at the annual general meeting of the association from amongst the members of the association, and who hold office until their successors are elected. All important decisions of the Board have to be referred to the members of the association for confirmation: decisions, for instance, such as for any outlay exceeding £50, to erect any permanent buildings, or undertaking any particular work, &c. Any resolution carried by a two-thirds majority of the members has to be enforced by the Board. It will be seen from this that the trustees do not govern the association, but their duty is to see that the wishes of the majority regarding the working of the association are duly carried into effect.

“For certain offences specified in the rules a member would become liable to expulsion. The Board, upon complaint made by any member, or upon their own motion, would serve a notice on such villager stating the charge against him, and requiring him to appear before the Board at a certain time (not being earlier than seven days after the service of the notice). The Board would then investigate the charge at the time and place appointed, and, should the members be of opinion that the charge was sustained, the villager would be expelled, and a notice to that effect under the seal of the association served upon him; but he can, within seven days from the receipt of this notice of expulsion, lodge with the Board a notice that he wishes to appeal to the association. The Board would then have to convene a special meeting (giving not less than seven or more than fourteen days' notice) to hear the appeal. The meeting by a majority of votes may confirm or annul the expulsion.

“Besides other meetings which may be called as provided by the rules, a general meeting has to be held on the first Friday in every month, when the Board submits a progress report of the last month's work, and also a schedule of the work they propose to do during the coming month; this is discussed, and a majority, should they see fit, may alter or amend the plan of work for the ensuing month. At this meeting all correspondence and minutes of Board meetings are read, so that all members may be fully acquainted with the business of the association. The names of all trustees voting in favour of and against the various motions at Board meetings are recorded and read out, whereby members are enabled to see how all the trustees are acting, whether to their satisfaction or not.

“The area of land cleared and grubbed at Lyrup is 800 acres, and 250 acres have been under irrigation during the past season. We have one 8 horse-power portable engine (Marshall's), a 6 in. centrifugal pump which throws 600 gallons per minute; close by is the saw-mill, with a circular saw worked by the same engine. We have constructed one half-mile of flume of galvanised corrugated iron, and four miles of main channels, besides smaller channels and head ditching. We planted out, last season: 40 acres of vines, chiefly muscatels; 9 acres of peach-trees (Early Crawford, Lemon Cling, and Lady Palmerston); 6½ acres of lemon-trees (Lisbon); 4 acres of apricot-trees (Morepork and Pennant Hill); 2 acres of fig-trees; 1 acre of prune-trees. We have a large nursery, from which many thousands of trees and vines will be planted out this season; nearly a ton of fruit-stones were put into the nursery this year, also 100,000 cuttings for wine-grapes, and we are going to put in a large quantity of orange and lemon pips.

“We are still busy planting wheat, and by the time we have finished we shall have from 500 to 600 acres in. We have from 8 to 9 acres under vegetables of various kinds, besides 30 acres in potatoes and 2 acres under onions, also a few acres of sorghum. We have one acre set apart for experimental purposes, having established a branch of the Agricultural Bureau at Lyrup. We have tried a small quantity (100 plants) of tobacco, which we found came on remarkably well. Altogether by the end of this planting season we expect to have 800 acres under cultivation.

“We have a large brick-kiln capable of burning 32,000 bricks at a time, and a large drying-shed to dry as many as 40,000.” (The bricks being turned out are of excellent quality, and at the time of my visit they were being used in the erection of the school-building, which is 85 ft. over-all in length, by 30 ft. 4 in. broad, and 16 ft. high.) “We have surface limestone from which we are burning very good lime, and we are also making some very good sand-bricks.

“Our permanent buildings are the school already mentioned, a butcher's shop with workroom, and a large cellar for curing, &c.; the baker's shop is a red-brick building, where all the bread is baked for the village; a gallery, built of sand-bricks, where meals are prepared for single men. Most of our houses at present are built as follows: We obtain corn-sacks, cut them open, then sew them together, put up the framework of the building with sawn timber from the mill, then tightly stretch and tack on the sacking, this is whitened inside and outside with limewash mixed with a small quantity of sugar or soap to make it adhere and not wash off with the rain, the lime fills up