

On plain or open lands other industries in addition to the cultivation of the soil can be introduced, whereby employment might be found for a number of men.

If labour colonies are established, men need never be in want of either good food or shelter, and from their wages they can have a sum to draw on leaving. That labour colonies can be made a great boon to destitute men out of employ, and to society generally, there cannot be a doubt. Permit me to give an illustration. At Sydney, as I have already stated, there is a great deal of genuine distress, and, go where you may, constant applications are made for assistance. The tales told of the actual want of food and the inability to procure shelter are most distressing. Without turning a deaf ear to so much misery, you yet feel that any help given can only be temporary relief, and the recipient will be just as badly off to-morrow: he may be told to go and look for work, but, where there are so many out of employ, his chance of obtaining any is very unlikely.

In Melbourne, however, when an appeal for assistance is made, you may relieve the applicant; but you can do much more, and say: "Meet me at 9 o'clock to-morrow morning at 440, Lonsdale Street (the office of the labour colony), and I will speak to Colonel Goldstein on your behalf. You may rely on obtaining good food and shelter on the labour colony, with wages according to your ability, and the prospect of obtaining permanent employment. Do not fail to be there, for no real case of distress is turned empty away from that office."

Objection may be taken to the recommendations made herein, on the ground that to carry them out would involve a large expenditure. I am aware of this, and I am also certain that it is impossible to promote successful settlement, or meet the "unemployed" difficulty, without the expenditure of money; but I venture to predict that the State would be repaid a hundredfold for moneys advanced and judiciously expended in the direction I have indicated, in addition to the knowledge of the great and lasting good which is being accomplished.

In the important work of colonization in which so many are engaged, and in the earnest efforts being made here to build up a nation which may in process of time be equal in every respect to other nations of the world, not only in physique, but in those higher attainments which constitute a nation's greatness, it is essential to build on a firm and solid foundation; and it will be well with us if the present generation can be encouraged to take to the soil, to go out into the interior of the country, conquering and to conquer the numerous difficulties there are in the way; but this great and noble work cannot be accomplished without means.

6. DEPARTMENTAL REPORT FOR 1898 ON CO-OPERATIVE SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

SIR,—

Overland Corner, 30th June, 1898.

I respectfully submit the following report regarding the present condition of the respective village associations, accompanied by a valuation-sheet, showing the total assets and value of same.

In the first place, all the associations have participated in the late rains, which has given the cereal crops and grass a really good start. In a good many places the wheat crop (self-sown) is so far advanced that it is out in ear, and the stock, although depastured on the land, is unable to keep it down, owing to the present favourable growing weather.

Owing to the success obtained by C. F. W. Pfitzner on the bed of a dry lagoon at Gillen, last season, in successfully harvesting an exceptionally heavy crop of wheat and hay, nearly all available similar lands on the settlements were put under grain crops this season, but in the majority of cases the returns are not likely to be anything exceptional, owing to the almost continuous rains keeping the land either flooded, or at least very cold, owing to its clayey nature.

During the past half-year, root-crops (planted at the beginning of the year) did not average satisfactory returns, owing to the terrible hot winds and sand-storms which prevailed whilst the plants were immature, and thus prevented a proper development of bulbs or tubers.

Moorook was the only settlement which received a fair yield in the potato crop, the crop averaging from three to four tons per acre, and a quantity of the produce realising over £9 per ton.

Every effort has been made to get as large an area as possible under crop this season, consequently, should there be a favourable season, the returns during the coming half-year should be at least enough to meet the working expenses of the whole of the remaining settlements, practically making them self-supporting.

It is proposed to plant a considerable area of irrigable land during the next few months with citrus-trees, peach-stock, and vines of the muscat, sultana, and Zante currant varieties, also to grade a further acreage and sow it with lucerne and other fodder plants. Provision has also been made for a sufficient extent of land to be put under reliable varieties of potatoes and onions sufficient to meet the wants of the respective settlements for the season.

The live-stock generally throughout are in good condition, and on Holder, Waikerie, Pyap, and Murtho considerable quantities of butter are being made and sold locally. Holder Village Association is turning out a really first-class article, and intends to start sending weekly shipments to Adelaide within the next few weeks.

Under the present or old system of management on the settlement I have not much faith in the dairy industry, owing to the difficulty in getting any of the settlers to devote their time to it on anything like economical or workmanlike lines. However, owing to the general tendency towards a change of management from Boards of Trustees to working managers, better results can be expected.