

1. To give employment to those who, from old age or infirmity, are unable to earn a living in our towns, it will be advisable to set aside or purchase suitable land, easy of access, where these people can be housed and employed in growing flowers, vegetables, and certain kinds of fruit for the supply of our cities. Such settlements would furnish comparatively light work for these people, and remove them from the over-crowded and unwholesome quarters of our larger towns. I see no reason why such settlements may not soon become self-supporting. I would suggest that this should form part of a reformed scheme of charitable aid, and should be under the control of the local authorities.

2. To give instruction in agriculture to mechanics who have been displaced by the introduction of machinery, and to other town-bred people, with the object of enabling them to take up land. For this purpose it will be necessary to acquire a farm of from 600 to 1,000 acres, on which the various operations of agriculture and the care of stock can be carried out systematically, and instruction given to those employed. Men taking advantage of such an institution should not be allowed to remain more than two years on the farm, and the rate of remuneration should be in proportion to the value of services rendered. Such farms cannot be expected to pay, and will cost the colony a considerable sum annually. It is probable the cost of these institutions will outweigh the benefits to be derived therefrom.

3. To give men temporary work, and so help them to tide over a difficulty. There are several objections to establishing a State farm for such a purpose: for instance, generally when work is most needed in the country districts is the time when most men will be required on the State farm; and when most men are out of work is the time when men cannot advantageously be employed on a farm. I believe that there are other ways of giving men temporary employment than that afforded by a State farm. For instance, the planting of forest trees over large areas might with advantage be undertaken by the State. Such work can be advantageously undertaken during the winter months, when other work is most difficult to obtain. Nurseries will have to be established in suitable localities, where some of the older men might be employed; while the younger and more able-bodied could be employed in preparing the land and planting out young trees. Men employed in this work should be paid lower wages than the rate for unskilled workmen in the locality, so that no inducement should be offered to seek this employment whilst other work was offering. It may be objected that this scheme will cost a considerable sum; but I consider it will be money well invested, as in the not distant future timber suitable for sawmill purposes will be valuable.

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