

terms the "submerged tenth" of London might be carried to a successful and advantageous issue. After considerable conversation on the subject, the General said he was inclined to think, so far as he could grasp the position, that the subject was worthy of earnest consideration, and that if I would ascertain the views of the Government in regard to any concessions it was prepared to make in the shape of a free grant of land, would put in writing the arguments I had verbally adduced as to the natural and peculiar advantages of the locality for settlement such as he proposed, and forwarded them to him in London, he would give the matter his most serious attention, and he would be very grateful for my services.

Knowing the locality—Stewart Island—so intimately as I do from years of practical exploration and careful study when I was Commissioner of Crown Lands for Southland, gauging the difficulty of securing ordinary settlement, and fully appreciating the advantage to the colony likely to accrue from its being peopled on a comprehensive and systematic principle such as that foreshadowed by General Booth, I trust you will pardon me for trespassing on your valuable time and attention in bringing the subject before you and soliciting your favourable consideration of the scheme.

There was a block of some 50,000 acres set aside on the eastern frontage of Stewart Island some years ago for special settlement by Shetland Islanders. This, owing to the failure of the scheme, remains untenanted, and, speaking from a personal and intimate knowledge of its position and capabilities, I am certain that it is peculiarly adapted to the system of agriculture particularly favoured by General Booth—namely, spade cultivation in small areas.

The wealth of the soil and suitability of the climate for the successful and abundant growth of cereals, root crops, and garden produce is amply attested by the locations of the Maoris, half-castes, and fishermen carved out of the bush in Horseshoe and Half-moon Bays, and some portions of Paterson Inlet; while in Cooper's Island, or Alloa, in the last-named inlet, there is a flourishing plantation of tropical and semi-tropical trees, such as bamboo, Lord Howe's Island palms, the nikau, karaka, neither of which will grow in the open or the mainland south of Nelson, planted by the late Mr. Charles Trail; the arum lily, geraniums, and many other flowers which die if exposed to the winter's frost in Christchurch or Dunedin, flourish all the year round. In fact, the climate is warmer in summer, all along the east coast of the island, than it is at Invercargill, while the sea air in winter tones down the cold of the season materially.

Irrespective, however, of the ordinary sustenance derivable from the cultivation of the soil, the intelligent and energetic settler on the island has the opportunity of obtaining material assistance to his means of living by developing the valuable fisheries, and entering systematically into the artificial cultivation of the oyster. Louis Napoleon, the late Emperor of the French, after restocking the Bay of Arcachon with oysters, obtained a revenue for the Government of hundreds of thousands of pounds. Stewart Island will be the source from which all the Australian Colonies will draw their supplies of this esculent; while the export to Great Britain in time might be swelled to very large dimensions. I consider there is a fecundity of wealth looming in the future from this industry alone.

The immediate exploration of the Antarctic Ocean will doubtless discover prolific whaling and sealing grounds. No better harbours than those of this island for commanding such can exist. Such a settlement as that contemplated by General Booth will have organization to direct labour to its proper channels, so that there may be no waste of endeavour, while it will possess sufficient means to carry judicious effort to practical success, and prevent the possibility of its dying of inanition.

Before being sent to the field of future exertion, the settler will be doubtless trained to fill his part. Some will learn the mysteries of the artificial cultivation of oysters at some of the numerous establishments in England; others will acquire knowledge of fisheries, fish-curing, &c. Some will be taught ship- and boat-building, and so forth. In any case, if the settlement be entertained, it will, I have no doubt, be a success. Unlike the ordinary special settlements under Governments, where each settler paddles his own canoe irrespective and unsympathetic of the necessities or desires of his neighbour, and too often with insufficient means, which exhausted, results in financial death, General Booth's settlements will have efficient organization at starting, authoritative control when started, and sufficient finance to carry them to a successful issue.

What I have the honour to ask is,—

1. Will the Government give General Booth a free grant of the 50,000 acres at Stewart Island, previously referred to, for the purpose of establishing a settlement of his people on it?
2. The conditions the Government will require the General to implement, should the grant be made?

If you will be good enough to let me have an early answer it will be esteemed a favour.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Lands, Wellington.

WALTER H. PEARSON.

No. 5.

Mr. F. E. RUTLAND to the Hon. the MINISTER OF LANDS.

DEAR SIR,—

Calcutta, 11th January, 1892.

During "General" Booth's visit to Christchurch, and after the interview which he had the pleasure of having with His Excellency the Governor and the Premier (Mr. Ballance), learning that you were in the city, the General requested me to call upon you, as, owing to his many engagements, he found it impossible to do so personally. I made several attempts to catch you, but to my regret I was unsuccessful. The object that I had in view was to obtain some fuller informa-