

New Zealand anxious to absorb as many suitable Settlers as possible.

However, it all comes back to this : We are anxious to absorb as many as we possibly can of the settlers who are suitable for settlement in New Zealand. Every successful settler we put on the land in New Zealand or in any other Dominion is another customer for your goods and manufactures, and is another producer of the raw material and food which you require. I have spoken very candidly about New Zealand. While there are defects in the present system, I say by all means go on, and I am very sorry this system was not started twenty or twenty-five years ago. It would have been a very good thing for Britain and a good thing for the Dominions if it had been done.

Meaning of the "Group System."

Colonel Buckley : May I correct what I think is a wrong impression Mr. Massey has got ? By a group system we mean a group of people from this country living together in the same area, not a communistic or socialistic system.

Mr. Massey : I am very glad.

Mr. Graham : Settled in districts.

Mr. Massey : I agree with that.

Difficulty of inducing People to Migrate.

Mr. Burton : There can be no doubt about the enormous importance of this subject. Its importance to you especially in present circumstances I think we all will realize, and its importance to us in the Dominions is also perfectly understood. You are—at all events, you feel yourselves—at present overpopulated ; perhaps you are overpopulated even normally. We, so far as European elements are concerned, are underpopulated in South Africa. The difficulties of South Africa, causing the existence of what we call the poor whites, are not due to an overwhite population, but to quite other factors that are known to you ; and the filling-up of what you may call the waste places of the Empire from centres where population is available, I do not suppose, need even be discussed for a single moment. It cannot be doubted.

The difficulty always is how you are going to get the thing done, and, I suppose, for the main reason that people will not leave the land of their fathers and their own homes for generations and centuries past unless there is some very clear object of gain. They do not go out into the wilds for purposes of patriotism. If you put on a stiff income-tax here you will probably find that as many of them as are affected by it will leave you—those who can afford to go. If you discovered diamond-mines or goldfields anywhere you would not have to have any settlement or migration schemes for that purpose, but you have a great deal of trouble always in getting people to go out under conditions which are not quite those, and where they have to go and settle mainly on the land. Let me just say this : in South Africa we have had a great deal of experience of this particular matter and we have had a very varying experience. There seems to be no particular kind of test or any special line of criticism or of action by which you can judge of the probable success of any particular scheme.

South Africa's Experience of Group Schemes.

Mr. Massey seemed to be alarmed about group schemes, apparently more for political reasons than anything else ; but I quite understand what Colonel Buckley has just said, that the group scheme was simply intended to be a kind of communal arrangement by which people would go who were going to live in one locality. It is a very interesting subject for consideration indeed whether the group scheme is not essentially superior to the indiscriminate firing of individuals into other countries. There is a great deal to be said for the group scheme. I need not go into details now. They are probably quite familiar to you gentlemen who have to deal with the matter here. We have had a great deal of experience in South Africa of the group schemes of migration. Some of them have been hopeless failures ; some of them have been brilliant successes. In some cases a particular locality which has been settled on a group scheme has failed, and another group scheme years afterwards in precisely the same locality has been a brilliant success.

An Example from History.

Well, it is very difficult to say what is the particular reason for the failure or success, but, at all events, there is one group scheme in South Africa the history of which has not been merely one of complete success, but which has changed to a very substantial extent the history of our country. I think you referred to the post-Napoleonic war migration. Well, amongst the migration which took place then was one in 1820 of British settlers to the Cape of Good Hope. They were landed at Port Elizabeth, at what was then called Algoa Bay.

Mr. Amery : Five thousand of them.

Mr. Burton : I am told that the number was four thousand. Well, these people were landed at Algoa Bay, and they simply had to fend for themselves. They did so. They have transformed what is called our Eastern Province in the Cape of Good Hope into a flourishing agricultural part of the country ; they have been eminently successful, and their descendants form to-day one of the most influential and important portions of our population. They have been there an eminent success, and to-day you have got actually going an organization based upon the memory of that 1820 settlement in the shape of the 1820 Settlers' Memorial Association, which has been doing excellent work in an advisory capacity and in an assisting capacity in getting the right sort of man to come out to South Africa.