

The Conference of Prime Ministers held in the summer of 1921 approved the proposals of the earlier Conference (see Section X, page 8 of Cmd. 1474). It expressed the hope that His Majesty's Government would, at the earliest possible moment, take power to perform its part in any schemes of co-operation subsequently agreed on, preferably in the form of an Act, which would make it clear that the new policy was intended to be permanent (see Annex II).

The Conference further recommended that the Governments of the Dominions should consider how far their existing legislation might require modification or expansion in order to secure effective co-operation, and should work out for discussion with His Majesty's Government the proposals which appeared to them most practicable and best suited to their interests and circumstances.

In accordance with this resolution His Majesty's late Government introduced a Bill into Parliament in April, 1922.

The Bill was passed with virtually no opposition, and is now on the statute-book. Its short title is "The Empire Settlement Act, 1922," and a copy of the Act is appended to this Memorandum (see Annex III). The Act authorizes His Majesty's Government to spend up to £3,000,000 per annum on participation in schemes for facilitating settlement in or migration to any part of the Dominions overseas, including schemes of development or land-settlement. The executive work in the United Kingdom has been entrusted to a Committee (the Oversea Settlement Committee), on which the Departments concerned are represented, together with unofficial members having a special knowledge of migration problems. About eleven thousand five hundred persons have been assisted under the Act to proceed overseas between July, 1922, and February, 1923.\*

A statement is appended (Annex IV) containing particulars of the agreements entered into under the Act with Dominion and State Governments and with private organizations.

A table giving statistics bearing on overseas settlement is also appended (Annex V).

The primary object of the new policy is to promote the development of Empire production and consequently of Empire trade. A growing population overseas is a necessary condition and concomitant of the development of Empire production. It is not the only factor, since movement of population cannot by itself be effective unless the settlers are able to make good and to find markets for the produce of their labour. Such aspects of the question are being examined in other memoranda, but it will be generally recognized that an increase of population in the Dominions is one of the essential requirements for the end in view. The new policy, therefore, aims at remedying the shortage of white population overseas and at diminishing in some degree the present excessive inequality of distribution of the white population of the Empire, while at the same time ensuring that a larger proportion of the normal stream of migrants from the more densely populated countries of the Empire shall be retained under the British flag. It should not be looked upon as a remedy for the immediate abnormal unemployment in this country, but rather as a constructive method of increasing the strength and well-being of the white nations which owe allegiance to the Crown.

The aims of the new policy can only be secured by the settlement of population upon the land overseas. There are at present few openings in the Dominions for industrial workers from this country, and the only male settlers for whom openings are available in considerable numbers are those who are able and willing to work upon the land. At the present time, therefore, a policy of Empire-assisted settlement and Empire-directed migration must be primarily a policy of settlement upon the land.

In this connection the importance of making suitable provision for the settlement overseas of women and girls must not be overlooked. A certain number of the men to be settled under approved schemes will no doubt be young married men, who will be accompanied by their wives and families. But the settlement of single women and girls is also essential if the policy is to have lasting results in the development of the new communities; and the question of the conditions under which such settlement can best take place is a matter which requires careful consideration.

Although the figures quoted show that the new policy has already produced concrete results, there are indications that the scheme of State-aided Empire settlement has not as yet been so successful as it might be made in promoting the development of primary resources and placing new settlers upon the land overseas.

In so far as State-aided settlement has fallen short of success, the lack of success appears to be due to the fact that the co-operation between the Governments of the Empire contemplated by the Empire Settlement Committee, who reported in 1917, by the preliminary Conference and the Prime Ministers' Conference held in 1921, and recently extended and made permanent by the Empire Settlement Act, has been less complete and the measures adopted less comprehensive than they should have been. In this country there is still misunderstanding and ignorance in regard to the aims and nature of the new policy, and the arrangements made between His Majesty's Government and the Dominion representatives for selecting and recruiting new settlers are still far from perfect.

One of the chief difficulties is the insufficiency of arrangements overseas for the reception, distribution, training, settlement upon the land, and initial supervision of British settlers. Unless these arrangements are made adequate and prove adequate in practice the adoption of a strong policy in this country will result in disillusionment and disappointment, and will ultimately check instead of increasing migration.

The report of the Oversea Settlement Committee for 1922 (see Cmd. 1804) refers at length to each class of settler to be dealt with under the new policy—*i.e.*, children and juveniles (the migration of which classes appears to give the greatest promise of success), women and adult males, both single

\* NOTE.—His Majesty's Government also initiated shortly after the armistice a scheme of free passages for ex-service men and women wishing to settle overseas. The number of approved applicants and their dependants who have sailed under the scheme is approximately 83,000. This scheme has now been closed down.