

The Committee have carefully considered the results achieved under the Empire Settlement Act, and estimate that by the 31st December, 1923, upwards of forty thousand settlers will have been assisted to proceed from the United Kingdom to other parts of the Empire at an outlay of about £800,000, in part recoverable, and shared between the Imperial Government and the Governments of the Dominions concerned. It must, of course, be borne in mind that these figures refer only to State-aided migration under the Empire Settlement Act. The total number of persons who migrated to the Dominions (chiefly to Canada) during the year ending the 30th June, 1923, was 132,000, of whom 22,498 received assisted passages under the Act, and approximately 11,200 were granted passages under the Government free-passage scheme for ex-service men and women.

These results would seem to be incommensurate with the needs of the situation, both in the United Kingdom and in the Dominions, more especially in Australia and Canada, but it is clear that the rate at which any redistribution of the white population of the Empire can take place must be governed by the rate at which the Dominions can satisfactorily absorb these new settlers.

The Committee have carefully considered the causes, partly political, partly economic, which have checked the development of Empire migration and Empire settlement during the last two years. They would point out that a redistribution of population upon a large scale necessarily involves considerable initial expenditure, and requires scientific administration over a period of years. Such a policy can only be carried out effectively by the Governments concerned with the approval and continuous support of their respective peoples. A further difficulty arises from the fact that large expenditure has been, and still is being, incurred in the Dominions in the settlement of ex-soldiers upon the land.

Experience also shows that the figures of migration and settlement are highest in times of trade prosperity and lowest in times of trade depression. During the present period of depression, when agricultural operations and other branches of industry have in many cases been carried on at a loss, there has been a natural decline in the opportunities afforded to British settlers.

The evidence placed before the Committee does not suggest that the comparatively disappointing results achieved are due to lack of publicity or to deficiencies in organization, either in the Dominions or in the United Kingdom, since the number of applicants in the United Kingdom has been continuously in excess of the demand from overseas. This does not, of course, imply that improvements in organization cannot usefully be effected, and, as will be seen from the later paragraphs of this report, arrangements have in fact been concluded during the discussions of the Committee for ameliorating in several particulars the facilities provided.

The Committee believe that the obstacles referred to above will tend gradually to diminish as the importance of a satisfactory distribution of population is more fully understood and as economic conditions improve; and they are confident that the ultimate results of the new policy will amply justify its inauguration.

They therefore recommend that the Governments of those parts of the Empire suitable to settlement should use every endeavour to ensure the progressive enlargement of the policy in their respective territories. Especially, it would appear to be of the first importance that every effort should be made to expedite development—*e.g.*, transport, irrigation, &c.—in those parts of the Empire where such development is still needed. The rate of settlement in such areas must, it is clear, in a large measure depend upon the rate of development. In the earlier stages this is likely to be comparatively slow, but as the newly developed areas begin to accommodate settlers, and as fresh development of further areas is initiated, the rate of absorption should increase more and more rapidly. Development-works should therefore be pressed on as promptly and steadily as possible.

The Committee also believe that much may be accomplished by encouraging among the young during the years of education a desire for life upon the land, together with a knowledge of the geography of the Empire and the conditions of life and opportunities within its territories.

It is relevant to point out that the forthcoming British Empire Exhibition should exercise a valuable influence in directing attention to the opportunities afforded by life in the Dominions. The Committee are glad to hear that a special series of exhibits is being prepared for the British Government Pavilion with the object of illustrating the need for redistribution of population within the Empire and the advantages which settlement overseas offers to the right type of men and women in this country.

## II.—MIGRATION ARRANGEMENTS.

### (A.) SELECTION AND RECRUITING.

The arrangements for selection and recruiting, both through official and voluntary channels, are at present adequate, except in the case of women, to ensure as large a flow of settlers as the Dominions can absorb. It is realized, however, that as developments take place overseas further measures may be required in order to stimulate applications for settlement. Certain of these measures are indicated under subsequent headings.

### (B.) NOMINATION.

It is recognized that the successful settler is the best recruiter of new settlers. The nomination system is based on this principle. It is desirable, however, that the existing system should be extended, (i) by popularizing individual nomination by means of suitable publicity overseas, and by arrangements to relieve the nominator, whenever necessary and possible, of any obligation for the repayment of passage-money, (ii) by encouraging collective nomination—*i.e.*, nominations by Churches and other groups or societies in favour of persons to be selected by kindred organizations in this country.