

SCHEME OF STATE-DIRECTED EMIGRATION AND COLONIZATION.

1. The necessity for a large national system of emigration is found in the fact that the population of the United Kingdom is excessive, and increases at a prodigious rate : hence widely spread distress, much crime and drunkenness (usually allied to misery), and unreasonable competition—evils for which the only practicable ready remedy, if a general upheaval of social foundations is to be avoided, will be found to be national emigration.

2. It is well known that unless new markets are called into being our foreign trade is likely to decrease steadily ; because (a) protective duties hamper us everywhere, and (b) most countries yearly manufacture more of the sorts of goods they used to buy from us. A "new channel" is also indispensable because there has been such great activity during the last quarter-century in building and reconstructing stupendous public works, railways, machinery, manufactories, and maritime tonnage, of a total value impossible to state, but as to which some notion may be gathered from the knowledge that on railways alone four hundred millions sterling have been expended—all affording means of living for myriads—that little remains to be demolished, erected, or remodelled. Yet the population has increased by eight millions, and the agricultural produce of the soil has probably diminished. Such a new channel would be created by systematically colonizing Canada, whose unoccupied virgin lands are capable of maintaining perhaps a number equal to the total population of Europe.

3. I propose that the organization be entirely a State one, adequate for removal annually of 200,000 individuals (of all ages) from the United Kingdom, and their settlement in Canada and the North-West territory of the Dominion, where sufficient land is offered free by the Dominion Government. The poor who are without, or have next to no resources, are those who would be (on their voluntary application, and on approval) selected : the system to be one of family emigration ; and, since five can be reckoned as the average number in a family, 150,000 at least out of the whole number would be composed of aged persons, women, and babes—very few among them bread-winners. Thus the country could lose nothing by the departure of people no small proportion of whom are now partly maintained at the cost of ratepayers and of the benevolent, while all are what is currently (although not technically) called "paupers." Certainly we can easily spare, say, 50,000 able-bodied men and youths every year, and their dependents.

4. The emigrants proper to be men (with their families) acquainted with the cultivation of the soil. A slight knowledge might suffice ; nor can it be disputed that the poor quarters in our cities and towns would supply large contingents of men, born and reared in the country, accustomed to farm work. Only men of good character, not convicted of crime, nor more than twice of drunkenness, under forty-six years old, and with not exceeding five accompanying members of family, to be eligible ; single women to be ineligible ; the taking single men to be discountenanced ; and young people to be encouraged to marry, in order to become eligible.

5. A State inspection to be organized in order to "pass" applicants. There could be an authorized official in every town ; the superior superintendence of this department to be confided to selected persons among the trade-union leaders, appointed for the purpose by Government as permanent officers. Their special knowledge of the labour-market would be useful in order that surplusage only might be drawn away.