

labour; to introduce "sweating" with all its horrors; to make competition deadly; to have refuges, gaols, hospitals, asylums all filled up and crowded out with the destitute and unscrupulous overflow of other countries, would be a neglect of the welfare of the colony to be counted as a crime against public men. Without falling wholly to the money standard of classification, an Act similar to that which has proved successful for four years in South Australia might be introduced here with benefit. At all events, some scheme must be devised which shall prevent the social inundation of a colony reclaimed from the barbaric waste with so much courage, bloodshed, and self-denial as the settlers of New Zealand have expended.

The steady absorption of many employments by the Chinese appears threatening in some parts of the country. They have gained control of certain branches of business, and are invading not only commercial but industrial life. It is to be regretted that members of a lower and alien race should dispossess shopkeepers, but it is much more dangerous when working-men and -women are in peril of being ousted by men whose wants are fewer and domestic burdens lighter than our own. It must not be forgotten that it is possible we might have to protect ourselves against a far more formidable immigration than that of Chinese—viz., from the swarming millions of Japan. The Japanese are a people, proud and fiery; they very probably would not brook interference or stoppage if once their human tide had begun to flow over our shores. The Japanese, while as frugal in expenditure and food as a Chinese, is much more clever and far more dangerous to the craftsman and factory-hand. A Japanese can live and prosper where a Chinese would starve. As an object-lesson to this effect, we may glance at statistics from Honolulu (Sandwich Islands). There the Chinese had gained considerable ground, and were fast dispossessing the natives when the Japanese appeared. The following figures will be of interest for that locality:—

						Chinese.	Japanese.
In 1890	...	...	...	...	...	15,300	12,620
In 1893	...	...	...	...	...	15,100	26,000

showing in three years a decrease of 200 Chinese and an increase of 13,380 of the indomitable little brown men.

This points out that it is the Asiatic, whether Hindoo coolie, Chinese, Japanese, or so-called "Assyrian,"* that is to be feared, and not one nationality alone.

STATE FARMS.

The State Farm at Levin has by this time proved its thorough usefulness. It has been valued, and the improvements made have justified the expenditure. This is much to say, even for a well-managed farm in private hands, because a bush farm in New Zealand can hardly be expected to make return or do anything but absorb money for the first few years, while the Levin State Farm has only been in existence two years and one month. If cut up and sold at the present moment the enhanced price would repay the Government all cost. It must not, however, be forgotten that to make a financial success or a "show farm" for agricultural example was not the intention with which the State Farm was initiated. It is a reservoir or storage-place where labour can be temporarily placed till other channels are opened. This intention has been carried out. Labouring-men—generally elderly men with families—have been given some weeks' or months' work until they have got a few pounds together or found fitting employment. Those persons who try their utmost to depreciate or mock at the attempt to alleviate distress by the institution of State farms should refrain from criticism until they have paid a personal visit to the farm at Levin—should see the good quality of the work done, and then, remembering the class of labour employed, and the object of its employment, utter coarse strictures if they can.

Mr. Mackay, the chief clerk of the department, who has had considerable experience on farms and stations in New Zealand, has taken great interest in the State Farm, and, as it is situated in Wellington District, much of its control has been under his superintendence. For the particulars, therefore, concerning details, I will refer those interested to his report on page x.

One State farm has its use—viz., to see if such establishments are practical and useful. That point having been decided, other farms, at least one for each province, should be established. The use of a State farm in Wellington for labourers in Invercargill or Auckland is nil. Nor is one place, to which twenty or thirty men can be sent, to be considered as an exhaustive remedy if three or four hundred men are out of employment.

I am more and more impressed with the necessity that exists of establishing farms which shall be used as places of restriction for the incurably vagrant atoms of the population. The State farm does not and should not fulfil this purpose; it is for the disposal and help of worthy persons, unsuccessful for the time, or failing through advancing years. What is required is a place of detention and discipline. There exists in every town a certain number of men whose position vibrates between that of the loafer and the criminal: these should be altogether removed from cities. The spieler, the bookmaker, the habitual drunkard, the loafer on his wife's earnings, the man who has no honest occupation, he whose condition of "unemployed" has become chronic and insoluble, all these persons are evil examples and possible dangers. Such a one should be liable, on conviction before a Stipendiary Magistrate, to be removed for one or two years to a farm, where simple food and clothes would be found for him in return for his enforced labour. The surroundings would be more healthy, the open-air life and regular occupation would induce more wholesome habits and principles than the hours formerly spent in the beer-shop and at the street-corner, while the removal from bad companionship would liberate from the pressure of old associations. He would, on his discharge, probably value more highly his liberty to work as a free man for the future, and, as the State would have been to no cost for his maintenance, it would be a gainer by his temporary

* The dark-skinned hawkers who roam about New Zealand, whether gypsies, Hindoos, Sikhs, or Levantines, are called "Assyrians" for some curious but unknown reason—perhaps because they "came down like a wolf on the fold."