

make suitable settlers for New Zealand—as they have in the past—but there is an added difficulty in this connection in that the birth-rates in these countries have become dangerously low. The countries of south-eastern Europe offer a better proposition as far as numbers are concerned, but there is no guarantee that their governments would let them come, and in any case it would probably not be wise to have a large number of people in New Zealand who were not of British stock. Infinitely preferable from all points of view, in any endeavours to increase the Dominion's population



would be a planned scheme embracing a combination of a natural increase—the raising of the birth-rate and the lowering of the death-rate—and the bringing in of British immigrants.

By those who favour systematic immigration it is contended that the introduction to the country of hundreds of thousands of new inhabitants would not threaten employment stability; it would, on the contrary, be a big factor in providing employment, as an expanding population means a growing market for all products. A 25 per cent. increase in population automatically means a 25 per cent. increase in the amount of work offering for carpenters, electricians, painters, doctors, dentists, teachers and workers in every class.

No large-scale movement could be achieved without difficulties and inconveniences, and no matter how carefully laid any future immigration plans may be the influx must be accompanied by a process of adjustment. Probably, too, it would be advisable, when the time comes, for the Dominion to act not independently but in concert with other nations of the Commonwealth. In a recent article in the "Sunday Express," London, Lord Strathspey advanced the suggestion that a permanent organisation should be set up as soon as possible, under the aegis of the British and Empire Governments, to act as an information centre and control room for Empire population movements. Its files would record officially, month by month, just how many immigrants of what ages, sex and occupations were needed in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and so on; just how many immigrants of what categories Britain and each other country could spare; how each trade and group could best be served in each country; and how suitable emigrants could be attracted and helped to make the passage and find suitable new employment and homes.

It is possible that the people of New Zealand would be happier and better off if the population of the country remained at about a million and a-half instead of being increased to five millions, with all the reshuffle and adjustment that that would entail, but it is problematical whether the country can be held indefinitely without population. The war is over and for the moment the danger has passed. But without knowledge of what the future holds in store there can be no guarantee that the danger may not some day return. Not long before the war New Zealand heard the slogan, "Populate or Perish!" from those who believed a greatly increased population vital to the defence of the Dominion. In spite of the passing of the recent crisis that slogan will have to be borne in mind in the coming years.