

## CITY UNEMPLOYED

In addition to the economic need of peopling our vacant lands with immigrants from agricultural Europe, there is the immediate necessity of getting the available unemployed in our cities on the soil. The English Farm Colonies, which grew out of the distressing conditions of 1905 and 1906 in London, have been referred to, as have also Sir Rider Haggard's reports on the Salvation Army's agricultural settlements in Colorado and California, and his recommendation that the Imperial Government should finance the establishment of an extensive colony in Canada under similar direction.

As the Bureau of Municipal Research informs us, the Salvation Army Colony at Hadleigh, England, has been a successful venture and might prove a useful guide. It is 3,000 acres in extent. Of this 400 acres are leased to a farmer, 100 acres are planted with fruit trees, and the rest is used for pastures, market gardens, chicken farms, and brickworks. Most of the men sent there are degenerates from the city, and are not really suited to farm life, but a large num-

ber of them are reclaimed, and the better class are restored to independence. The farm accommodates 500 or 600 men at a time. During the period of distress referred to a committee in West Ham, London, purchased 204 acres at South Ockendon, in Essex, for £7,000 and thus took care of a great many men who otherwise would have been workless and without means of support. It must be repeated that the creation of these farm colonies was an emergency measure.

In another part of Europe a colony for tramps was established. A piece of land considered too poor for cultivation was used for the purpose. There was no compulsion to go there, but those who took advantage of the food and shelter offered had to work. Prominent among the Labor Colonies in Switzerland is Tannen-hof, which was established in 1889. At first it was meant for ex-convicts, but now is used for unemployed as well. It is a small colony, holding from 40 to 50 men, and is not self-sustaining. A few farm colonies in Switzerland to which loafers are sent compulsorily are self-supporting. In March of last year a valuable study was made in the New York Municipal Lodging House. Among the results revealed by this study were the following: The lodging house does not tempt outsiders to come to New York. Of 2,000 men, only 40 had been in the United States less than three years. Only nine per cent. had been in the city less than one year. The average age of men taking shelter was 36 years. Five per cent. were under 21 years of age. Only 137 were over 60. About twelve per cent. were sub-normal. Forty per cent. were skilled workers. Five per cent. admitted they were beggars. There were 78 farm hands among the destitute. About thirty-five per cent. were deemed unemployable. Fifteen per cent. of the employables were victims of seasonal trades.

When the war broke out The Daily News advocated the removal of groups of the unemployed to Northern Ontario, where, under expert leadership, they could construct log cabins for themselves and clear farm lands for themselves or future settlers. Objection to the plan was taken by people who thought that the expedient would involve too great hardships. The Bureau of Municipal Research points out that 50,000 wage-earners in the State of Wisconsin are employed in occupations which require them to live in camps. Some 20,000 men live in bunk cars. About an equal number work in the woods and are commonly housed in log cabins or shanties. At least 5,000 lodge in bunk houses or barracks during the ice-cutting season. There appear to be two kinds of camps: those for laborers who speak English, eat American food and travel alone; and foreigners' camps for those who speak no English, travel and work in gangs under the leadership of an interpreter, and board themselves in their native fashion. These details are mentioned to show that camp life could be organized in winter as well as in summer. Thousands of settlers, lumbermen and miners lead hardy lives in Northern Canada all the year round. No doubt, therefore, remains that it would be entirely feasible for the larger Canadian cities to engage a great proportion of their unemployed in pioneer work. Nothing, however, will be achieved if municipal authorities delay action until the approach of winter.