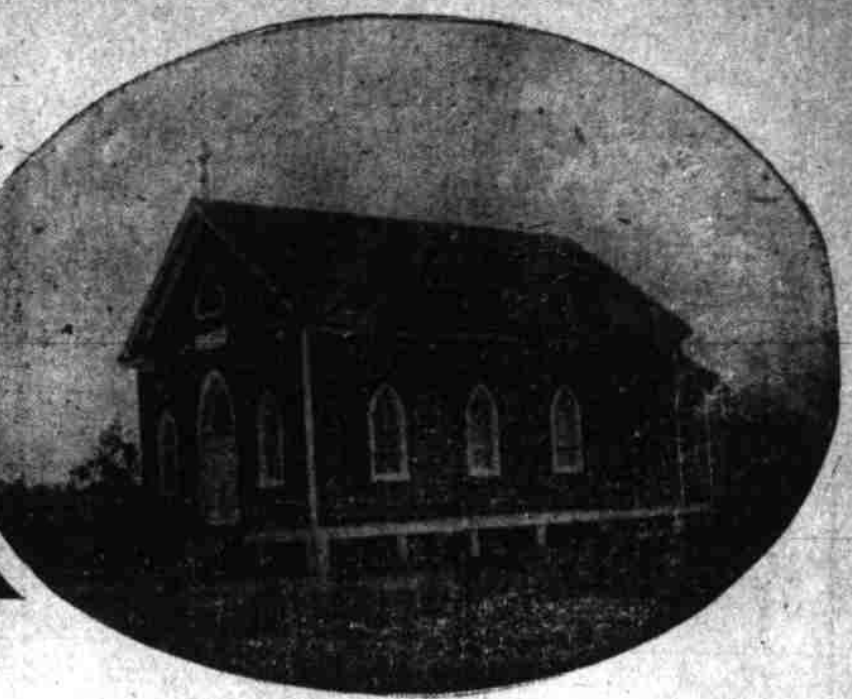
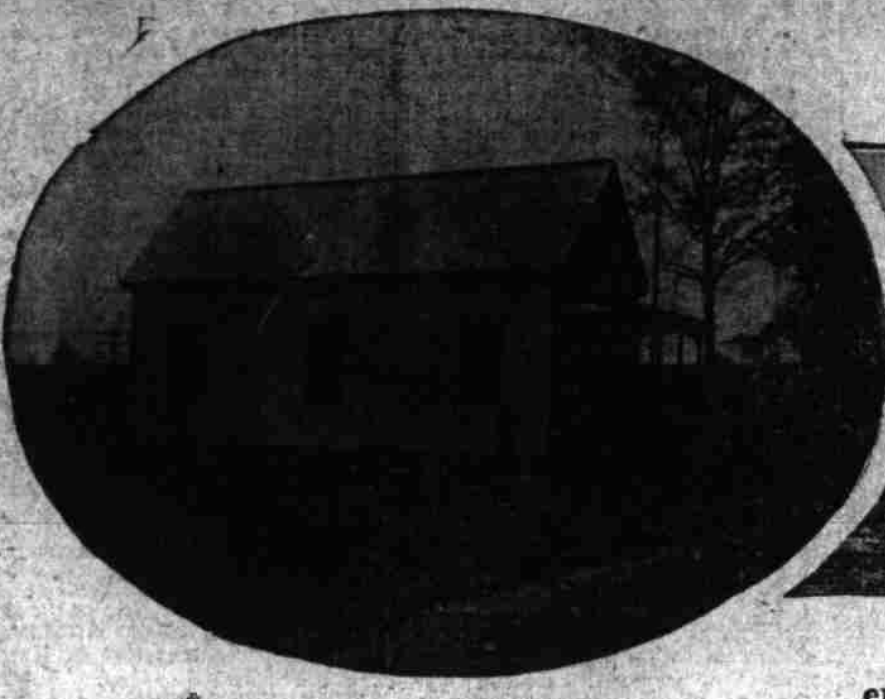


North Carolina's First Great Colonization Movement

Heralds a New Era of Prosperity



The co-operative store and the church in the Italian colony, designed and erected by the colonists themselves. The centre picture is a birdseye view of the Italian colony.

Assured Success of This Movement Means the Development of Her Wonderful Agricultural Resources.

BY R. W. VINCENT.

Wilmington, April 24, 1908.

North Carolina's first systematic colonization movement is an assured success. What this simple statement means to the State can hardly be expressed in words. The possibilities are great. Within the State are hundreds of thousands of acres of undeveloped land—land presenting soil types not surpassed in the country for the cultivation of fruits and vegetables. The importance of the development of this vast area—the untold wealth slumbering beneath the surface, only awaiting the magic touch of the agriculturist to bring it into being—cannot be over-estimated, however extravagant the language. Nor will this great movement be confined to North Carolina. In the South Atlantic States there are countless acres of virgin land inviting cultivation—naturally the South will welcome a successful solution of the immigration problem—a successful method of colonization, and the North Carolina promoters have blazed the way. Thus will the North Carolina project serve as an object lesson and the result will be the upbuilding of this great section and a turning point which shall eventually lead on to the flood-tide of its prosperity. It is a movement upon which any man with love of country may reasonably grow enthusiastic, for the possibilities that the future presents are limitless.

Behind this great movement stands one man—Mr. Hugh MacRae, of Wilmington, than whom North Carolina has no more zealous son. Several years ago it dawned upon this busy man that the reclamation of the great undeveloped virgin land of the State meant much, not only to North Carolina, but to the whole South, and he realized that immigration was the solution of the matter. The South has witnessed the rise and fall of numerous immigration schemes, and by their mistakes, Mr. MacRae resolved to profit.

He realized that if the end justified the means, the colonization project required careful study; that to be successful it must have a sure foundation, and he began at the bottom. The average colonization scheme had made at least one serious error—the idea had been to sell the land, and when this was effected to let the settlers take care of themselves. With this and other mistakes in view Mr. MacRae started out to formulate plans that must be successful. How well he has succeeded is history now.

Three years ago he began his preparations—he has made mistakes, lots of them, but fortunately he has been able financially to pay for them—and he has sunk thousands in the endeavor that others might profit; that he is a benefactor of his city, his State and the South, goes without saying. The result of his labors, concretely stated, is that at the present time he has founded five colonies, peopled with over six hundred substantial farmers,

and a sixth is under way. That the movement has been crowned with success—that its future is assured—there can be no argument. Peopled now by settlers from the North and West, the plans to induce a flow of foreign immigration will soon be in full sway. What has been accomplished and what the future holds for this movement is told as intelligently and comprehensively as possible in the article that follows.

HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

Nearly three years ago—realizing the great possibilities to the South

enterprise. The next step was the employment of lawyers to investigate the titles of this land and these had to be clear and perfect before a purchase was effected. Then samples of the soil from the various tracts of land—which were widely separated for obvious reasons—were sent to the United States bureau of soil survey, Department of Agriculture, for test and analysis. When these preliminaries were completed the land which passed the rigid inspection of the title and soil experts was purchased. Approximately this accepted land amounted to 100,000 acres, in five separate and distinct tracts. The investigations of the

duction of this particular crop. I could not suggest by formula, a better type than that formed by nature in this section.

These vital points settled, a corps of fourteen civil engineers was put in the field. These men, experts in their profession, surveyed the tracts, (it had been fully determined to establish five distinct colonies) laid out the streets, plotted the land into ten and twenty-acre farms, fixed the system of drainage that would ensure the health of the colonists and the success of the crops, and pointed out locations for the dwellings of the colonists. Thus was a sure and stable foundation laid, and not until then did the men be-

where it was proposed to plant a mixed colony, and thus was the first seed sown.

CONDITIONS AT FIRST HAND.

It was the foreign colonists, however, upon which the company had set its heart and to solve this problem and turn the tide of deplorable immigration southward Mr. Fisher turned his attention. His first move was to arrange for a trip abroad in order that he might study at first hand the conditions that surround the rural population of Europe and view in their own natural surroundings the people whom it was desired to secure as immigrants. Armed with

a foundation. The efforts in other quarters were as houses founded upon the sands, because not well organized—get the immigrants, the promoters declared, and let the future take care of itself; take no thought for the morrow. But this was not Mr. MacRae's idea. Before the first move had been made toward inducing the tide of immigration to flow to North Carolina the plans for the future comfort and welfare of the proposed colonies were provided for with a far-sightedness that has marked no similar effort, probably, in the country's history. Thus, when Mr. Fisher returned from abroad, ready to begin his labors in earnest, he had some-

A History of the Carolina Trucking Development Company's Project and the Results Accomplished.

reasons for planting and help them over the rough places that they must needs encounter in beginning life in a new country, and under radically different conditions. Then barns and stables were established on each colony and in these the superintendent keeps mules and up-to-date farming implements that might be hired to the colonists who are unable at first to buy their own mules and implements. Schools and churches were projected and everything that could be planned in advance for the welfare of the colonists until they could get a start was arranged. The company even gives them work at good wages improving the roads, clearing the land, etc., while waiting on their growing crops, in order that they may not need to be idle. This, then, was the foundation, and knowing this one cannot marvel at the success of the project and the bright outlook for the future holds.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE.

A colony—inserted into the environments surrounding the new colonies—the soil, the climate and healthfulness of the Wilmington section may be of interest.

First, let us see what has been done in the way of successful trucking in this section, for that, after all, is the chief argument used in inducing a man to change his location and some of the intending settlers, perhaps, are kept hooks at the test of demonstration farm maintained by the company. It received in 1907 from carefully measured ground the following cash returns per acre for the area actually planted:

Lettuce	500
Strawberries	200
Beets	300
Cauliflower	200
Snap Beans	150
Cucumbers	200
Cantaloupes	300
Radishes	75
Onions	125
Peppers	200
Egg Plant	150
Carrots	75
Cabbage	150
Spinach	150
Turnips	150
Tomatoes	150
Asparagus	200
English Peas	150
Irish Potatoes	175
Sweet Potatoes	125

Force is added to this showing when it is known that the demonstration farm is located on one of the poorest soil types of any land owned by the company. The crops enumerated only occupied the ground for a period of from six weeks to five months, except strawberries, and the ground was then replanted in other crops; thus by careful rotation from three to four crops are gathered from the same piece of land each year. Here is another example of what has been accomplished in this section as wonderfully endowed by nature.

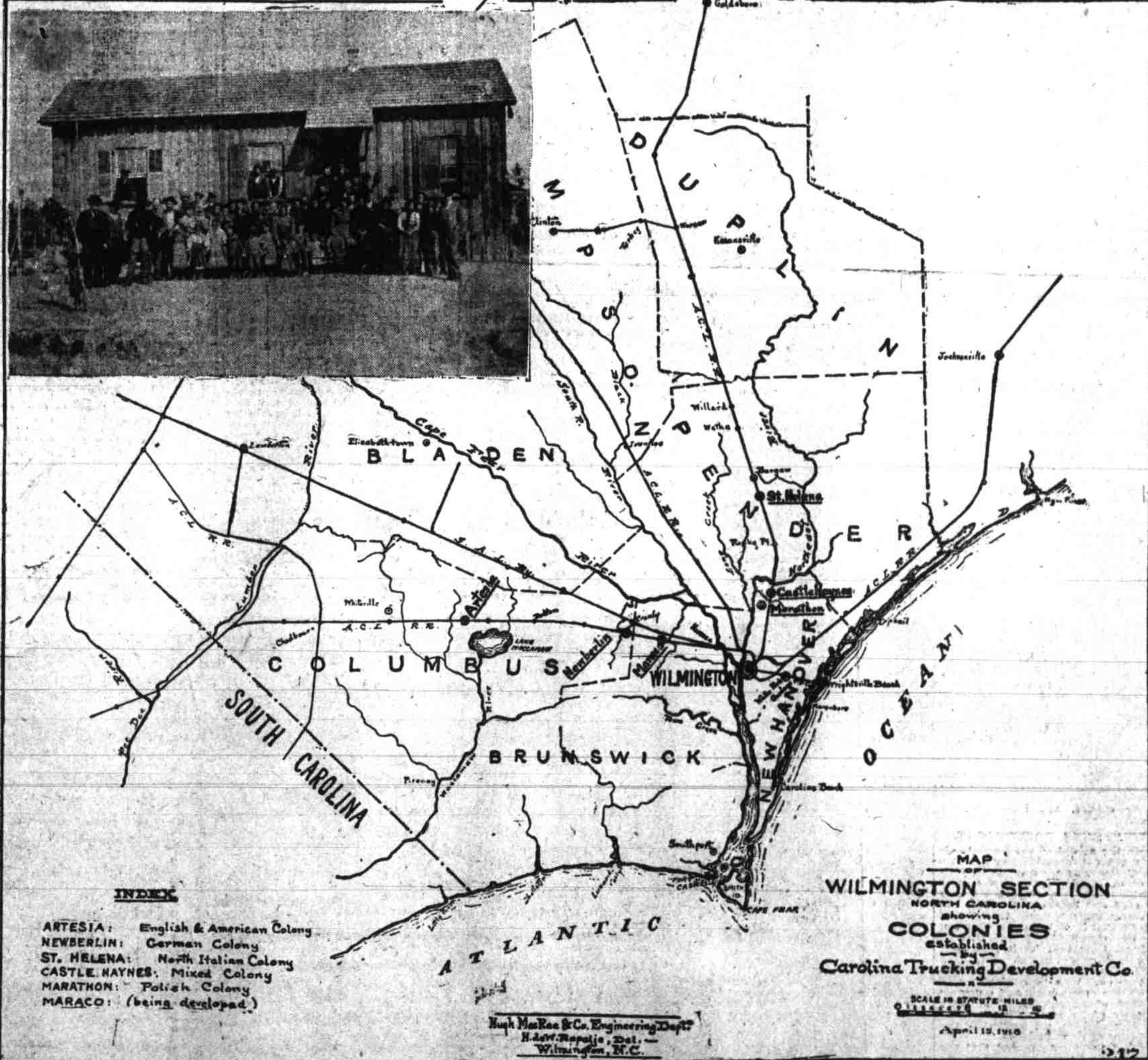
ONE MAN'S SUCCESS.

Mr. George W. Trask, who has a farm of 50 acres three miles north of Wilmington, received \$12,000 from 14 acres of lettuce in 1907, three acres being under canvas and 11 acres in the open.

Mr. Trask bought his farm in 1902 for \$2,000 entirely on credit. At the end of two years he had it paid for, had built a barn at a cost of \$600 and had \$500 in bank. This year he has built new modern house costing approximately \$5,000.

What Mr. Trask has done, others can do if they use common sense and energy.

The crop which brought \$12,000 did not occupy the ground more than four



The map shows the location of the various colonies. The picture in the upper left hand corner is a group of Italian colonists at St. Helena.

that lay in immigration of the right sort—Mr. Hugh MacRae conceived the project of establishing a chain of colonies around Wilmington. His first idea was that the rich alluvial lands lying between Wilmington and Southport on either side the Cape Fear River—land now used largely for the cultivation of rice—if properly drained would provide the most suitable soil for raising of truck. The first step, however, was to secure options on a sufficient quantity of land to warrant plenty of room for the colonists once the scheme was launched. Agents working quietly secured options on 450,000 acres before real estate dealers were awake to the fact that something was afoot, and of course the price of land went up. That, however, did not deter the man who was planning a work of such magnitude, and his agents were told that they could continue to take options on good land at any reasonable price, for no such obstacle was to be permitted to stand in the light of this

government soil experts, which were thorough and conclusive, opened the eyes of Mr. MacRae and his associates to two important facts: The rich alluvial lowland lying along the river that by commonly accepted belief was thought to be the best trucking land in the State, is not best for truck-growing, and second that the sandy loam lying south, west and north of Wilmington was especially adapted to it.

THE SOIL IDEAL.

While the plans for colonization were under way soil experts from the government Agricultural Department visited the tracts and not only confirmed the reports of the original investigation, but grew enthusiastic, declaring that the soil on which it was intended to plant the colonies was the exact soil for the growth of vegetables and small fruits. One expert said: "Should I be asked to prescribe a soil for lettuce, for instance, describing the exact chemical elements necessary for the proper ed-

hind this movement take up the problem of bringing into the State colonists who are to play so important a part in its development.

FINDS THE RIGHT MAN.

Casting about him for the proper person to undertake this serious task Mr. MacRae hit upon Mr. C. L. Fisher, of Missouri. Mr. Fisher had been engaged in important Western railroad colonization schemes and had been successful.

A rare judge of men, Mr. MacRae seldom errs in his estimate of them, and he engaged Mr. Fisher as general agent of the company. His duties are to secure future colonists and see that they are comfortably located. Sounds like an easy task but it isn't.

It was in November, 1905, that Mr. Fisher came from his home in Missouri to take up the duties of his new position and as a pensioner for one of the projected colonies he brought with him a party of twenty Illinois farmers. A number of these investigated in truck farms at Castle Haynes,

letters of introduction to foreign diplomats in high places directed in the channels in which it was thought they would best serve his purpose, Mr. Fisher went abroad and there spent four months, visiting Germany, Italy, France and other countries in which agriculture is the chief pursuit. Here he studied the conditions surrounding the small farmer; his handicaps, the disadvantages under which he labors, the soil, the climatic conditions and particularly his methods of farming. Naturally, with his keen perception and intellect, Mr. Fisher learned much, in fact acquired the knowledge he had set out to attain, and when he returned to North Carolina was ready to undertake the gigantic task planned for him—a task that the Southland has been working upon for a decade and has as yet taken but a few faltering steps toward its solution, and these in the wrong direction.

And that is where the South as a whole has made its great mistake—lack of systematic, substantial plans—

thing substantial to offer these strange folk when he besought them to come and cast their lots in North Carolina. First, the soil—unvaried anywhere in the country for truck farming; the climate—open, mild winters which permit of work all the year round; healthfulness, good markets for their products, and far better prices than they could obtain in their own country and last, but by no means least, the boon of citizenship in free America, unhampered by plague, pestilence or famine.

TAKING THOUGHT FOR FUTURE.

But there was still more to these well-laid plans, they went further. Mr. MacRae's ideas did not by any means embrace leaving the colonists to their fate after they were settled on his farms—upon this one rock have many own colonization schemes split, and by these mistakes he has profited. Capable, efficient superintendents, experts in soils and agriculture were employed to take charge of each colony, look after the comfort of the colonists, teach them the

