

Translation.

"O N S L A N D."

20.10.03

LEADING ARTICLE.

Warning against Argentina.

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In another column we publish a most important letter from Mr. H.J. Visser who lately returned to South Africa from Argentina. Mr. Visser does not speak from hearsay but of what he has seen and experienced himself, and we advise all our readers most strongly carefully to read this letter and to preserve it, as it may come in handy in conversations with persons who still contemplate leaving their native country.

Some days ago we mentioned an advertisement in the "Middellandsche Africander" announcing that a second great trek to Argentina was being instituted and that a certain postal address in Colberg had to be approached for further information. This day we also publish this advertisement in our paper. Our readers are sufficiently acquainted with our feelings on this matter and we therefore consider it unnecessary to go into detail again.

Lately a man of business, who judges quite impartially, returned from Argentina. He expresses his opinion after all he had noticed during his stay in Argentina, that the said country is not suitable for poor emigrants. One must have capital in order to farm there with profit. He thinks that £5000 is required to commence proper farming there. His advice to all ~~those~~ who have no capital to begin with is : remain at home. And we may add to this that a man who has £5000 to invest would also be able to find



find a means of existence in South Africa, yea thousands get through the world without capital.

Mr. Visser in his letter gives a description of his experiences in Chubut and says later: "Just before I left Buenos Aires I heard from two Africanders, Erasmus and Raft by name, who had lately come from Chubut on their way to South Africa, that the Africanders in Chubut were in a deplorable condition, having to shoot wild ducks and buck for food as their sheep are so lean and scabby that they are unfit for food. These Africanders had together 1500 sheep of which they had already lost 200..... Of the 14 families who during the past year went with me to Argentina, there are only about 4 or 5 in Chubut. Some of them have not the means to return with."

Countrymen! It is true our country has to put up with severe droughts, but it is our native country and it has sustained our fathers for more than two centuries. Mr Visser describes his arrival in Chubut as follows:-

"On arriving in the port of Chubut, Commodore Rividavia, we found that it consisted of about 10 small iron houses or rooms. When we landed we had to buy our drinking water at  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per bottle and that was very salt. We had to take our horses (20 in number) a distance of 18 miles further in order to find water for them. Instead of finding 40 families as we expected we found two consisting of Mr. L. Baumann of the O.R.C. and Mr. Coulter of Australia. We travelled 100 miles inland from the port to Sarmiento Colony where we camped in the neighbourhood of the two lakes. The whole region between the harbour and Sarmiento is worthless and desert, consisting mostly of elevated table lands with not a drop of water. In Sarmiento we found



found about 4 leagues of good land, the greater portion of which is under water during the winter. About 5 years ago this land was occupied by 50 colonists from Wales and Argentina. A few of them have a smaller number of sheep and cattle, the others do transport riding to earn a livelihood."

We will not quote any more from this letter which will be read by all. We are personally unacquainted with Mr. Visser, but the fact that he signs his name to his letter is a proof of his good faith.

*His*