

enabled to devote themselves uninterruptedly, first to the work of housing themselves, and then to the routine of their daily labour.

It will be observed that, in making these proposals, which are evidently acceptable to the immigrants themselves, I have kept the following principles steadily in view:—

First, That immigration should be as far as possible self-supporting; and,

Secondly, That the object of the Government in introducing these immigrants is not merely to find labourers for their public works, but by means of the public works to place a self-supporting population upon the land which those works render accessible and reproductive to the agriculturist and others.

I apprehend not the slightest difficulty in carrying out these suggestions. My local knowledge of the Manawatu and long experience of country life have enabled me to put fairly before these people the circumstances by which they will find themselves surrounded at Palmerston, and they have decided to take their wives and families with them at once, and in doing so I think they have acted wisely. With the exception of two of the women who are too near their confinement to bear removal, and a third who will remain behind to attend on them, and for whom I have been able to make cheap and satisfactory arrangements, I can have the whole party ready to embark in the "Luna," or any other steamer, on Tuesday next, or even on Monday afternoon, and they can be landed at Ngawahakarau, within ten miles of their destination.

There I can arrange for the hire of two or three drays for their immediate transport, with all their impedimenta, to Palmerston, where they can squat on an open dry flat, within a stone's throw of their permanent locations, until they can distribute themselves each to their own homes. Mr. Stewart will then take them in hand, and find work for them as soon as they are ready to begin.

I have arranged with their present interpreter, a single man named Andersen, who will go as one of them, to act as the medium of communication between them and the Government, for an extra payment of, say 10s. a week for the first three months, and 5s. a week for the next three months, at the end of which time some other arrangement may be made if it is still found necessary to employ an interpreter, which I think it will not be.

I estimate that the total indebtedness of each immigrant couple to the Government, when landed at Manawatu with four months' supplies, will be about £28, made up as follows:—

Contribution to passage money	...	...	...	...	...	£14
Expenses in depôt and transport to Manawatu	...	...	...	...	...	4
Stores, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	10
						£28

The immigrants are most anxious to reach their destination and be earning money as soon as possible, and I should recommend that for the first two months they should have the full benefit of their earnings, in order to find them money for the purchase of meat and of such other necessary articles as they will probably find they have omitted to procure; after which time either a fixed amount of, say £2 per month, or one-fifth of the gross earnings of each man if employed at contract work, should be deducted by the Paymaster, until the whole amount shall have been liquidated.

The cost of the introduction and location of these immigrants will thus be reduced to a minimum. It will in fact be no more than that of assisted immigrants from England, *plus* the small cost of transit from Norway to England. As I have told these immigrants, if they are handy workmen, industrious, economical, and sober, the result of their first year's work should be to clear them of debt to the Government, and to place them in possession of a ten-acre freehold, with a sufficiency of wheat and potatoes grown on their own land to supply them for the following twelve months. Should they be in anything like constant employment, they can earn with five days' work 25s. a week, or £65 a year; by contract work, in long hours, they could do much more. Deducting £28 for the liquidation of the Government debt, and estimating their expenditure for food and clothing at £25 more, there would be a balance of £12 for the purchase of their ten-acre lot, which, with its improvements, should be worth £20 at least; a result which I gather from their remarks is beyond their most sanguine expectations.

I must apologize for the length of my remarks; but in the interest of this Province, and looking to the Immigration scheme as a whole, I am most anxious that the settlement of these families should be a success, and am also desirous to show exactly the process by which that success has been or may be attained. Believing as I do that the roads as they are opened through the new districts of this Province will, as the result of their formation, especially in a valuable timber country like the Manawatu, afford ample employment for capital and a large labouring population, I am of opinion that if the cost of the introduction of a good class of immigrant labourers can be kept down to the sum I have just now stated, the Government will be able to settle on the land a working settler and his family for every £100 they have to spend in labour on their public works, in all localities where the land is good and in the hands of the Crown. And if, as the result of a systematized immigration in connection with public works, but ten such immigrant families to every mile of railway could be placed in a position to support themselves, such a system could not but be considered a remarkable success.

I have, &c.,

A. FOLLETT HALCOMBE,  
Provincial Secretary.

The Hon the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

P.S.—Since writing the above memoranda, I learn from Dr. Featherston that a promise was made to these pioneer emigrants to land them in Wellington free of expense; the proposal, therefore, to charge them with the cost of their passage cannot be made to apply to these men, although they evidently do not object to the charge, and admit the justice of making the incoming settler recoup to the Colony a part of the expense incurred in his removal.