

General in London by the outgoing mail, with instructions to give as much publicity as possible throughout the Continent of Europe to the conditions under which emigration to this Colony is at present conducted. I may state briefly what these conditions are,—

The Agent-General grants assisted passages to eligible married couples at a charge of £5 per head cash, or a promissory note for £10. Children half-price.

Single men, £8 cash, or £4 cash and £8 promissory note.

Single women, between ages of fifteen and thirty-five, get free passages.

In addition to this system of assisted passages, there is within the Colony what is known as the nominated system of immigration, whereby persons settled in the Colony can have their friends or relatives brought out at still lower rates, viz. £4 for each adult; single women, between sixteen and thirty-five, free; and children half-price.

Further, with a view to the encouragement of immigration of persons able to pay their own passages, it is proposed that a refund of the cost of passage to the extent of £20 worth of land should be given to each statute adult, under easy conditions of occupation. I quite concur in the view you express, that if some of the agricultural and industrious people of Belgium could be induced to emigrate to New Zealand, they would form a most desirable class of settlers, would prove a great acquisition to the Colony, and would most materially benefit themselves by the migration. Your surmise that no obstacle would be thrown in the way by the Belgian Government of making Antwerp a shipping port for emigrants from the Continent of Europe, is extremely satisfactory. I shall esteem it a favour if you will, whenever you feel disposed, communicate with this Government on this important subject of promoting emigration to New Zealand, or any of the Australian Colonies.

I have, &c.,

G. MAURICE O'ROKKE.

The Consul-General for Belgium, Melbourne.

---

#### No. 114.

MEMORANDUM No. 143, 1873, for the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

YOUR letter of the 9th January last, commenting on Memorandum No. 38 from the Public Works Office, dated eight months previously (signed by the Hon. Mr. Reeves, and not by the Hon. Mr. Ormond as you state), on the subject of a scheme for settling a portion of the confiscated land north of Wanganui and at Tauranga, has remained unanswered awaiting the explanation you then promised to give for declining to carry out the instructions you received. I must, in the first place, observe that there was nothing in Mr. Reeves' Memorandum to lead you to suppose that it was the intention of the Government to plant settlements indiscriminately upon confiscated lands.

In the first Memorandum on the subject, that of Mr. Ormond of the 19th February, 1872, to which Mr. Reeves refers, no mention whatever is made of confiscated lands; but it merely points out the desirability of inducing, by the offer of land upon easy terms, immigration to the Colony of small capitalists. And when, in furtherance of this object, Mr. Reeves made mention of the confiscated lands north of Wanganui and at the Tauranga, the confiscation of which is undisputed, I can see nothing either to appal the British public, or to have warranted you in ignoring for several months, without explanation, the instructions of the Government of that day.

I must, in the first place, express the disapproval of the Government at your assuming as their Agent the power of setting aside, without even informing them of your intention to do so, definite instructions to endeavour to induce an emigration of the small-farmer class, on the system of deferred payments for the lands they might occupy. Your letter of 9th January concluded with the remark that you hoped "that that scheme would never be resuscitated—at any rate, not brought before the public of England." I cannot imagine that it is your desire that these confiscated lands should lie waste; and it is unnecessary to remind you that the object of confiscating the lands of rebel Natives has been in a great measure to establish settlements for their permanent occupation. I of course admit that when you did reply, after several months, to the Hon. Mr. Reeves' Memorandum, you had the authority of Hon. Mr. Sewell for suspending all action in the matter; but the fact remains, that without that reversal of your instructions you had allowed them to pass unheeded for several months. Your letter of the 28th March ultimo, which arrived by the last mail, enters into an elaborate condemnation of the policy of the Government in endeavouring to have the confiscated lands occupied. It does appear strange that the Agent-General of the Government should feel it within his functions to combat their policy, as in ordinary cases it is presumed to be the duty of the Agent to carry out the instructions he may receive. In the present case you are not satisfied with obeying the instructions of the Government of which Mr. Sewell was a member, but you in very condemnatory terms discuss the conduct in this matter of the preceding Administration. I am constrained to say, moreover, that the arguments you advance are very far from carrying conviction to my mind. You say that the proposed settlement of the confiscated lands would be viewed with disfavour by statesmen and influential journals of England. Now, I take it that it is not necessary for the New Zealand colonists to consult these authorities on a matter of such purely Colonial concern, and I doubt if they would pay much heed to us if we did consult them. That you were not supplied with maps and descriptions of the soil, would not, I think, have militated against the successful launching of the scheme. You were informed of the position of the country; and the Government had a right to depend on your general knowledge of both coasts to be able to fairly represent the plan of colonization submitted to you. I think it is to be regretted that, although you temper the remark with the words "however unjust," the old cry, as you designate it, "of the settler's greed for land," should have found place in your despatch. Coming from an old colonist, the suggestion has a force that it would not otherwise have.

I desire to add that the inference which you endeavour to draw from certain remarks of the Hon. Mr. Stafford on the subject of the position and disposal of the confiscated lands, does not appear to be warranted by the general tenor of his replies. Mr. Stafford more than once emphatically asserts