

No. 116.

MEMORANDUM No. 145, 1873, for the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

YOUR letter, No. 193, of date 8th April last, in which you "submit that the expectations as regards promoting emigration to New Zealand which you held out to the Government had been more than realized, and that the system of emigration inaugurated by you has been, on the whole, attended with satisfactory results, and promises better results in the future," opens up the whole question of the present state of emigration to New Zealand, and compels the Government to express their full and free opinion thereon. It is with very great regret that the Government feel bound to come to a very different conclusion to that which you have arrived at, and in which you invite them to concur. It is impossible that the Government should consider the present rate of immigration to the Colony as satisfactory; while with regard to its future prospects, it is premature to discuss the matter, beyond expressing the hope that your expectations, as stated in your letter under reply, may be realized.

I was very much struck by the paragraph No. 1 of this letter, in which you state that the earliest specific instructions you received in regard to emigration did not reach you until 1st February, 1872; and I cannot hesitate to say that a very grave degree of culpability rests somewhere, if you were left without instructions either oral or written on the subject of immigration from the date of your appointment in Wellington on 1st April, 1871, until the date above referred to, 1st February, 1872. It did seem to me incomprehensible that you, recently a member of the Government and Superintendent of the Province, engaged a few months previously in correspondence with the Government on the subject, should be left absolutely in the dark on this all-important subject when you undertook the duties of Agent-General, and proceeded to England to inaugurate a system of emigration to this Colony. The scope of your early correspondence shows that you were alive to the duties of your office, and that you did not regard it, for the first seven months after your arrival in England, as a sinecure. It may be true to the letter that you were without specific instructions till 1st February, but it is clear that you were not insensible to the spirit of the instructions that would be communicated to you by the Government on the subject. Nearly three months before you received what you term your earliest specific instructions in regard to emigration, you informed the Government, by letter of 16th November, 1871, that since your arrival in England, at the latter end of July, your time had been mainly devoted to emigration, believing, as Mr. Vogel said, "that the keystone of success of the Public Works policy is the contemporaneous increase of the population of the Colony;" and you add, "I telegraphed on the 4th instant from Frankfort—'Emigration during next two years of 6,000 Germans and Scandinavians arranged.' You will perceive, from the brief report I now make of my proceedings, that I have acted more from my knowledge of the mind of the Ministry than from any positive or definite instructions." With this knowledge of the mind of the Ministry, coupled with the fact that, in November, 1871, you felt yourself armed with sufficient power to arrange for an emigration of 6,000 souls from Germany and Scandinavia, I am at a loss to conceive how eighteen months after, in April, 1873, you can attribute the smallness of emigration to the Colony during that period to the absence of any specific instructions till February, 1872. It appears to me, from the general tenor of your early correspondence, that you felt yourself perfectly unfettered in promoting in whatever manner seemed best to you, immigration, not only from Great Britain, but from the Continent. Before leaving this subject of your contracts or agreements for sending out 6,000 or 8,000 German and Scandinavian emigrants, I would beg to direct your attention to my Memorandum No. 90, of 5th May, 1873, requesting to be informed whether these contracts or agreements are still in force, or have fallen through.

I admit to the full the difficulties you had to contend with in entering on your duties in finding yourself surrounded with different sets of Emigration Regulations for the several Provinces, but it is to your credit that you reduced these diverse regulations to an uniform system before you were six months in England, namely, in December, 1871, since when that obstacle has been removed. There is force, too, in the difficulties you mention—namely, that emigration to the Colony had almost died out, and that in consequence there were great obstacles in the way of its revival. The restrictions also placed upon your landing immigrants in the Colony during winter months are valid grounds for a deficient supply being shipped during the months of April, March, and May; and I must admit that the months of November, December, and January are, as regards emigration, to a great extent closed months, although, I presume, not more closed to New Zealand than to any other countries. I am not able to say whether I agree with you that no other Australasian Colony had ever attempted emigration on such a scale as New Zealand has for the last two years; but this I can say, that it is patent to every one that the supply of immigrants is lamentably short of the requirements of the Colony, and of the number ordered by the Government during the last two years. I may add that, if my memory does not mislead me, the forty-acre system established in the Province of Auckland, some fifteen years ago, under the Superintendency of Mr. John Williamson, yielded in the course of fifteen months, without pecuniary cost to the Province, some 4,000 souls, which contrasts favourably with the dribbles—they cannot be called a stream—that have been up to the present flowing to the entire Colony. You lay such stress in your correspondence upon having sent out 6,974 souls or 5,923 statute adults between July, 1871, and 31st December, 1872, that it is requisite to analyze the figures in order to ascertain the precise number of these emigrants directly due to your agency. Of the 5,923 statute adults above referred to, there are—

Nominated immigrants	...	...	...	...	...	...	861
Brogden's immigrants	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,860
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,721

—leaving 3,202 as the direct contribution of the Colonial Agency, with its large staff and ample funds at its disposal.

I confess I find it difficult to reconcile the assurances which you have repeatedly given the Government that you would establish a large stream of emigration to the Colony with the statement you now make, that you never held out to the Government the expectation that