

encountered the greatest difficulty in ascertaining the position of the confiscated lands, as he found that no one Department knew the whole of the arrangements with respect to them. The Confiscated Lands Department knew something about the lands between Waitotara and Waingongoro, but almost nothing about the lands north of the Waingongoro; while in the Crown Lands Department there were some few records, and in the Native Office a great many minutes and records, respecting the action taken and proposed to be taken by the late Government" (*Hansard*, 1872, page 431); and partly also upon the declaration made by the Hon. Mr. Hall, in the debate on the Rangitikei-Manawatu Crown Grants Bill, that even in the case of lands adjudicated by the Native Lands Court as having been fairly purchased, and over which the Native title had been declared extinguished, "it was not a duty on the part of the Colony to place every purchaser in possession, and if necessary 'in forcible possession' of his land;" that, in fact, "it had been hitherto held, where Natives had sold to Europeans who had got the Native Lands Court to adjudicate upon the title, that the Europeans had this warning from the Colony, 'We do not undertake to place you in possession of land by force of arms.' To do this might not involve the employment of very large armed forces, and the Colony could not undertake to do it." (*Hansard*, 1872, page 920.)

I have, &c.,
I. E. FEATHERSTON,
Agent-General.

No. 25.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

(No. 188.)
7, Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.,
31st March, 1873.

SIR,—

Referring to the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse's Memorandum, No. 27, of 27th November, 1872, in which he states that he omitted to inform me that "it is desired that the number [of emigrants during the current year] for each Province should be as follows:—

" Auckland	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	800
" Hawke's Bay	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	600
" Wellington	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,000
" Marlborough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	100
" Canterbury	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,250
" Otago	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,250
Total statute adults	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8,000"

In reply I have the honor to state that every possible effort will be made to comply with the wishes of the Government. At the same time I beg to point out that the Government is apparently not aware that I do and can exercise little or no control over the distribution of emigration. Applicants for passages invariably specify the Province to which they intend to emigrate. The number of applications in which a particular Province is not mentioned is exceedingly few, and emigrants, having once specified the Province, will go to no other.

I may further state that every now and then there appears to be a run on a particular Province for a time, when another Province suddenly comes to the front, to give place in its turn to some other. On the whole, however, it may be safely asserted that Canterbury has for some years been the first favourite, owing mainly, no doubt, to its having been kept prominently before the public by means of its continuous stream of emigration.

How, then, is the suggestion made by the Government to be carried out? Suppose that 3,250 people apply for passages to Canterbury, and only 2,250 for passages to Otago, what is to be done with the number of applicants for Canterbury in excess of the number ordered by the Government? Are the 1,000 applicants in excess of the number ordered for Canterbury to be told that they can only have passages on condition of their going to Otago or some other Province; or are they to be rejected *in toto*? Suppose, again, that 2,000 eligible emigrants, complying with all the regulations, apply for passages to Auckland and Hawke's Bay respectively; are they to be told by the Agent-General that the Government has only authorized the introduction of 800 to Auckland and 600 to Hawke's Bay? Of course, such is not the intention of the Government.

And, after all, with the present power of absorbing labour possessed by each Province, it appears to me, comparatively speaking, immaterial at what port the immigrants are landed; for labour, like any other marketable commodity, will be sure to find its way to the best market; and Government can no more prevent a migration of immigrants from one Province to another which presents greater attractions, than it can prevent a sudden rush to a newly-discovered and promising gold field.

During the last year I was enabled to relieve the inequalities in the distribution of emigration as between the North and South Islands, by sending the ships "Friedeborg" and "Palmerston" with Germans and Scandinavians to Canterbury and Otago. But I feel certain that in future the Germans and Scandinavians will themselves select the particular Province in which their friends are already located. I scarcely would have alluded to this point, had it not been that the Hon. Mr. Waterhouse, in a telegram received on 12th November, referring to a suggestion made to the same effect by the Hon. Mr. Gisborne, in his Memorandum No. 115, of 4th September, 1872, intimated to me that this suggestion must now be regarded as an absolute instruction.

I have, &c.,
I. E. FEATHERSTON,
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington, N.Z.