

and the cost of a curing-house, which lasts for three years, is £120. There is a curing-house to every fifteen or twenty acres, with a manager on about £150 a year (a Dutchman) at each. I doubt if the cost, with coolie labour, in New Zealand would exceed this. Jamaica is another country where, owing to the exertions of Sir J. P. Grant, tobacco has of late years greatly added to the resources of the island (*see* Dr. Hooker's last report on Kew).

17. I should (or I may say shall) be only too glad to be allowed to bring coolies to New Zealand, and enter into the speculation on my own account. It would, I believe, be a very profitable undertaking, and I should have no difficulty whatever in getting up a company in India and Virginia to establish the enterprise. But I have higher ambitions. I have all my life contended against the principle of allowing private individuals to make rapid "fortunes," when the fortunes might be made in behalf of the whole community. Sheep-farmers have gone to England with enormous wealth, produced from New Zealand grass, while the country—*i.e.*, the taxed population of the country—has to borrow large sums to make roads and harbours. Cannot some of the agricultural wealth of the country be absorbed by Government for the benefit of the whole body of New Zealand residents, whose interest it represents? This is my object in pointing out a direction in which Government can extract an income from land without coming into competition with any of the present interests of the white population, and with the result of relieving the heavy burden of taxation which now lies upon them. At the same time I do not, as I have said above, advise any rash speculation on a large scale. A few acres of tobacco, cultivated and cured under American experts, a few bushes of tea and coffee, grown by experienced hands, would decide, as well as the cultivation of one thousand acres or a million bushes, whether large profits are possible or not. The first step would, in fact, be a large Government experimental farm worked by black labour.

I shall be glad to use my influence with the connections I have formed in Virginia, to supply the New Zealand Government with properly skilled experts, and shall be prepared, if the subject is taken up, to enter into personal communication with the New Zealand Government in 1879 or 1880.

I have, &c.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

E. BUCK.

Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL for NEW ZEALAND to Mr. E. BUCK.

SIR,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 12th February, 1878.

I exceedingly regret that, through its being accidentally mislaid, I have so long suffered your letter to remain unanswered.

I beg you to believe the delay has arisen through no want of appreciation of your communication. On the contrary, it has exceedingly interested me; and, as it is designed for the benefit of New Zealand, I heartily thank you for it on behalf of the colony.

Individually I largely share your opinions as to the larger duties of Governments. Monopoly is an ugly word, and naturally unpopular, nor am I in any way favourable to it in a sense that would give to some members of a community advantages over others; but I have long felt that there was a limit to be drawn to the sweeping and unlimited objection to Governments doing things which private enterprise might accomplish. It frequently, indeed, is the case that under the guise of this specious doctrine private individuals get monopolies for the benefit of themselves at the expense of the rest of the community.

I have gladly recognized the great change in public opinion which has made itself manifest during the last few years. For example, there is now a strong feeling in favour of Central Governments undertaking the charge of railways and telegraphs, and of Local Governments taking the charge of water and gas supply, and of tramways. In New Zealand, indeed, we have gone further, for we have successful Government systems for perfecting and guaranteeing land titles, for insuring life, and for taking charge of trusts.

Turning to the question of a Government undertaking the charge of introducing a great natural product, I should not individually approve any monopoly which arrested the unrestricted personal following of the occupation when it became profitable. At the same time I think, as an encouragement, the Government might at first try the experiment, upon such terms and conditions as might be found desirable.

As to the question of using coolie labour, I confess I have not fully made up my mind on the subject. I entertain a very strong opinion that the amelioration of the position of the natives of tropical climates can only be brought about by the recognition of a material increase in the value of their labour. Whilst slavery has been abolished, the inhabitant of temperate climates has not yet grown to recognize that, in still requiring tropical productions at rates which necessitate the employment of labour at almost nominal wages, he still virtually requires of the dark man to give his labour to the white under a system very little different from slavery. If it were possible for the Governments of tropical countries to fix a high exchangeable value as the condition of exporting tropical productions, the tropical races would rapidly improve their condition, and the white man would merely have to recognize that the labourer who produced sugar is as much entitled to consideration as the one who produces bread. The labourers of temperate climates would equally benefit, because they would be freed from the disposition rapidly