

termed "spasmodic" assisted immigration in the past has not been such as to encourage us to risk it in the future.

I would only further repeat what you already well know—viz., that the limit to the extent to which New Zealand can at present absorb labour from the mother country with mutual advantage is its suitability to the circumstances and requirements of the colony.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

I have, &c.,
J. MACANDREW.

Enclosure in No. 23.

The CHAIRMAN of the TUAPEKA COUNTY COUNCIL to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS, Wellington.

SIR,—

Tuapeka County Council, Lawrence, 15th June, 1878.

I have the honor to bring under the notice of the Government the great necessity that exists for the importation of more labour to this colony, and to direct your attention to the fact that it is impossible to carry on public works, owing to the very great difficulty that exists in procuring labour.

Contractors in this district are offering 10s. and 11s. per diem for ordinary day labour, notwithstanding which the supply is totally inadequate to the demand, and, as a necessary consequence, the contractors have in some cases been compelled to throw up contracts and forfeit their deposits, owing to the impossibility of procuring labour, while others are struggling to complete their works by employing Chinamen, who are altogether incapable of performing road-work.

As an instance of the increase in the price of labour, I may mention that the contracts let by this Council recently are 33 per cent. higher than similar ones let upon the same road when I had the honor of holding the position of Minister of Works for Otago some four years since, thus practically proving that though our large national works have in many instances been completed, yet the labour of the country has become absorbed in the vast amount of settlement that has taken place, the continuous works going on throughout the length and breadth of the country, and last, though not least, the general prosperity of the colony, which, I am proud to say, in my humble opinion, was never so great and staple as at the present time.

It therefore, I think, becomes a matter of considerable moment to the legislators of the colony, and a subject that demands the serious consideration of the Government, and I would strongly urge upon them the necessity of encouraging and assisting immigration by every legitimate means in their power, in order that some provision, however inadequate, may be made for supplying the present great and increasing scarcity of labour throughout the country.

This appears to be the only course open for regulating the present very high rates for labour, and developing the many resources of the colony, while every effort should be made to resuscitate our immigration scheme upon a large scale, and to even offer additional inducements to intending immigrants of a desirable class.

Never in any period of the history of the colony have the requirements for immigration been so great as at present. In this district the rates of wages are higher and employment more plentiful than in the palmiest days of the gold fields, which will give some idea of the present labour market, when we consider that Tuapeka was perhaps the richest and most payable gold field in the entire colony.

I trust, therefore, in this matter you will not consider me intrusive, as I deemed it my duty as Chairman of an important county, and from my well-known and intimate knowledge of the interior districts of this portion of New Zealand and their wants, to make known these facts to the Government of the country; and, did time permit, I could dwell upon the matter at some considerable length, knowing large tracts of valuable country that could be brought under cultivation and be made capable of supporting thousands of farming men and their families by ordinary industry.

For the reasons stated in the foregoing the proprietors at present in the country are afraid to put a plough in the land on account of the scarcity of labour and exorbitant rates of wages charged.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,
HORACE BASTINGS,
Chairman.

Enclosure 2 in No. 23.

The MAYOR of INVERCARGILL to the Hon. the MINISTER for IMMIGRATION..

(Telegram.)

Invercargill, 24th June, 1878.

CROWDED public meeting last night in response to the largest requisition ever presented to the Mayor of this town, that Government be requested to cablegram the Agent-General to select and forward to Bluff Harbour 1,200 suitable emigrants, as many agriculturists as possible, during the ensuing spring.

JOSEPH HATCH,
Mayor.

Enclosure 3 in No. 23.

The Hon. the MINISTER for IMMIGRATION to the MAYOR of INVERCARGILL.

(Telegram.)

Auckland, 25th June, 1878.

PLEASE to indicate the particular class of immigrants; also the number of each, outside of agricultural labourers, desired to be sent to Invercargill. Although 1,200 is very largely in excess of the number which has been already sent for upon the recommendation of the local Immigration Officer, I am