

SESS. II.—1879.
NEW ZEALAND.

IMMIGRATION TO NEW ZEALAND.

(FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE AGENT-GENERAL.)

[In Continuation of D.-1, Sess. II., 1879.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the HON. the MINISTER for IMMIGRATION.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 29th August, 1879.

Referring to the telegrams* from the Hon. the Premier, copies of which I transmit herewith, I have the honor to remark that, on receipt of the telegram dated the 15th instant, I was not clear on all points as to its meaning. I transmitted the telegram dated the 21st instant, asking for further information. I also considered it desirable that you should be made acquainted with the present position of emigration here, and I therefore stated the numbers (4,000) of emigrants despatched from April to August (both months included), and the numbers waiting for ships; and also that, judging from the experience of the last three months, I estimated that about three hundred and fifty nominated statute adults per month were availing themselves of the invitation of their friends in the colony. Your reply, while explaining certain details, leaves me in some uncertainty as to the question referring to the numbers likely to accept the terms mentioned during the financial year. On this point, however, I may say that if I am authorized to despatch emigrants on such terms in every month of the financial year, I have no doubt that, under the circumstances at present existing in this country, I could obtain a large number of persons to accept them. At the same time, if I am restricted to grant passages only during the months which for the last three or four years emigration has been confined, and during which there is, as a rule, a less inclination on the part of the more suitable people to emigrate, a much smaller number would be obtained. But it is difficult to estimate very closely until I know what particular occupations are required.

I observe, however, that in the last-dated telegram I am directed to wait for the instructions which have been sent by the last mail, so that I shall confine my operations to entertaining applications from the persons nominated by their friends in the colony.

With reference to the question of the special ships for farmers, I am disposed to think that the Government are under some misapprehension as to the total amount of assistance which it was likely would be required. I have granted such assistance to only a few families whose circumstances and characters appeared to me to justify such encouragement. I have kept carefully in view the desirability of the principal number paying in full for their own passages. And Mr. Reed, Mr. Berry, Mr. Clayden, and others, who have been engaged in promoting that class of emigration, were instructed by me not to encourage the idea that assistance would be granted, except under special circumstances.

The "Wanganui," the first ship sailing under the arrangement providing for only one class of passengers, a liberal dietary, and other advantages, with a moderate rate of passage-money, will sail next week with a full complement of over 200 intending settlers. Of those who proceed by that vessel I have granted assistance (averaging about £10 per head) to only nine families, representing about forty-one statute adults.

I have reason to think that the "Wanganui" will convey to New Zealand a valuable and suitable body of colonists. They are taking with them, I believe, a considerable amount of capital, and will in all probability be the means of inducing many other similar suitable people to follow them. I shall, of course, discontinue to entertain any further applications for assistance towards the passages of persons by these special ships. Probably, however, now that the system of sending ships with only one class of passengers (which I consider is one important way of promoting emigration to New Zealand of persons possessing moderate capital) has been successfully initiated, the shipping companies will continue to lay on ships from time to time offering similar advantages.

I have, &c.,

JULIUS VOGEL,
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Minister for Immigration, Wellington.

No. 2.

The Hon. the MINISTER for IMMIGRATION to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Immigration Office, Wellington, 6th November, 1879.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th August, No. 753, covering copies of telegrams upon the subject of the change of plan in respect of free immigration which was adopted by the late Government, full particulars of which will have reached you in Mr. Gisborne's letter of the 14th August.

I gather from your letter now under reply, as well as from your subsequent telegrams (copy of which is attached), that the imposition of a charge of £5 per head on each adult male immigrant would not, under existing circumstances, be of itself a sufficient consideration to keep the number of applicants for passages within the limits required by the present powers of absorption by the colony.

Since my predecessor's letter of the 14th August was written it has become more apparent that it will be necessary further to restrict the number of immigrants, and temporarily to suspend even nominated immigration of those who would arrive in the winter months, the exception being that which there has never been reason to interfere with—the despatch of single women.

The Government wishes it to be understood that this suspension is of a temporary character, and with special reference to the season of the year; and it desires effect to be given to it in such a way as will enable immigration to be hereafter resumed with as little difficulty as possible.

From returns and correspondence before me, I learn that between August last and the present time there were immigrants on the way to New Zealand to the number of about 3,687; that about 350 nominated immigrants were coming forward monthly, but that on the whole a much larger number of immigrants than 350 were being despatched monthly, as detailed in the attached statement.

The present Government, on taking office, found that there was a greater scarcity of employment in the colony than had been the case for many years past.

There are 2,411 workmen of different classes now placed by the Government on public works throughout the colony to meet the necessities of the unemployed, and this at a time of the year when ordinarily farming operations would absorb the surplus labour. The Government is accordingly forced to the conclusion that, until the depression consequent on the low prices of wool and grain, and the losses from drought, has been alleviated, it would be unwise to run any risk of aggravating the difficulty now experienced by the working classes in many parts of the country in obtaining employment.

The resumption of immigration, other than that of single women, must also be largely guided, first, by the extent to which the Government will be enabled, by the raising of the loan, to proceed with the prosecution of railway construction and other public works; and, secondly, by the extent to which spontaneous emigration from the Home country is taking place.

On these two points you will be able to form an opinion in advance of that which can be formed by the Government in the colony; and you will hold yourself in readiness to give effect to any modifications of your present instructions which may be sent to you on the revival of trade, or in consequence of any other circumstances which may make it advisable to renew more active operations in this department.

At present, and until it is known whether the prospect of a good harvest will be realized, the instructions contained in the Premier's telegrams (copies of which are attached) will hold good.

With regard to such nominated immigrants as may have had a pledge of assistance before the above telegrams reached you, and have already made their arrangements to come out, the Government will of course keep faith with them.

There may also be cases of an exceptional character—of families closely related to settlers in the colony who are certainly in a position to insure their obtaining immediate employment on arrival, or also of families comprising in their number a large proportion of single women—in respect of which you will use your own discretion; but with regard to all others it will be necessary to postpone for the present the acceptance of their proposals. I have issued instructions to this effect to the Immigration Officers in the colony.

With regard to the class of immigrants now arriving, I may state that, at present, mechanics have great difficulty in obtaining work, and, when the Government has only railway formation to offer, an obvious difficulty arises from giving spade and shovel work to carpenters and blacksmiths. The same does not apply to ordinary labourers or really competent agricultural workmen. I mention this as ruling what should be the line to be taken by you in guiding the course of spontaneous immigration on which your advice will doubtless be sought, and also on the renewal of general immigration.

There can be no doubt that there must be a strong revival of confidence among the agricultural population, and progress in the active work of settlement and cultivation of the lands, before larger commercial enterprise, involving buildings, &c., in the large towns and centres of population, will be entered upon. In connection with this matter I may mention that the Government proposes to ask the Legislature to increase the facilities for settlement on the deferred-payment system. A copy of the Bill embodying its proposals is forwarded herewith.

Under existing circumstances it will be necessary to issue instructions to Mr. G. M. Reed and the other Agents, informing them of the present intentions of the Government, and you are authorized to make any reductions in this branch of the department which can fairly be made, having regard to existing agreements.

Referring to the sailing of the "Wanganui" with a special class of immigrants possessing a small capital, the last paragraph of Mr. Gisborne's letter of the 14th August will have removed any ambiguity which existed in the telegrams of the 15th and 26th August.

I have, &c.,
W. ROLLESTON.

The Agent-General for New Zealand,
London.

Enclosure 1 in No. 2.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

(Telegram.)

London, 23rd October, 1879.

IMMIGRATION. Have accepted since April few applications, except nominated. Since middle August, sent only nominated. Discouraging nominated. Immense number nominated coming forward, undeterred by five pounds payment. Am I to refuse nominated, except those already promised? Three vessels this month, and three next, with nominated emigrants.

The Hon. Premier, Wellington.

VOGEL.

Enclosure 2 in No. 2.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 21st October, 1879.

EMPLOYMENT very scarce. Until further orders suspend despatch immigrants, except in fulfilment existing engagements, and except females. Reply.

Vogel, London.

HALL.

Enclosure 3 in No. 2.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 27th October, 1879.

IMMIGRATION. Shipments following those arranged would arrive after harvest. Prospect large spontaneous immigration. Suspend for present all nominated immigration, except those already promised; also except cases where full passage paid, and special cases, respecting which instructions will be sent by next mail. Continue send females.

Vogel, London.

HALL.

Enclosure 4 in No. 2.

STATEMENT showing the Number of GOVERNMENT IMMIGRANTS to arrive in the Colony.

| Ship. | Sailed. | Destination. | No. of Souls. | Remarks. |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------|
| Waikato | 6th August ... | Auckland ... | 261 | |
| May Queen | 9th „ ... | Napier ... | 205 | |
| Opawa | 22nd „ ... | Nelson, &c. ... | 342 | |
| Lady Jocelyn | 27th „ ... | Canterbury ... | 402 | |
| Arethusa | 3rd September ... | Wellington ... | 375 | |
| Dunedin | 28th August ... | Otago ... | 319 | |
| Auckland | 24th September ... | Otago ... | 322 | |
| Hereford | 3rd October ... | Canterbury ... | 333 | |
| Marlborough | 6th „ ... | Otago ... | 250 | |
| Eastminster | 6th „ ... | Wellington, &c. ... | 348 | |
| Two ships | November ... | Ports ... | 530 | |
| Total | ... | ... | 3,687 | |

By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBUY, Government Printer Wellington.—1879.

