

1880.
NEW ZEALAND.

EMIGRATION TO NEW ZEALAND.

(FURTHER LETTER FROM THE AGENT-GENERAL.)

[In Continuation of D.-2, 1880.]

Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr. Rolleston with leave of the House.

No. 1.

(No. 492.) The AGENT-GENERAL to the HON. the MINISTER for IMMIGRATION.

SIR,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 14th June, 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 107, of the 3rd April, giving me further information as to the state of the labour market in the colony, and stating that the Government do not consider themselves justified at present in anticipating any resumption of immigration at the time at which it has usually commenced in previous years; and also that it is not likely that Parliament will authorize the introduction, during the ensuing twelve months, of any but nominated immigrants (as to whom you inform me I shall receive special instructions) and single women. You further desire me to make my departmental arrangements accordingly, and to dispense with the services of all local or travelling agents so far as is consistent with existing engagements.

With reference to the contents of your letter and to the Hon. the Premier's telegram of the 26th instant (copy herewith), which I received on the same day as your letter, I have the honor to state that I addressed a letter to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary on the 21st April last in reply to one received from him of the 2nd January, in which I mentioned the steps I had taken and intended further to pursue in reducing the number of officers belonging to or under the control of this department.

As indicated in your letter, the information as to the intentions of Government with reference to emigration has only been gathered by me by the successive instructions which have been forwarded to me from time to time, so that while I have been directed to make considerable reductions in the emigration staff of my department, already considerably reduced from that of previous years, I have had to consider, in connection therewith, the information indicated in your letters that probably emigration, to a certain extent, and for which certain officers would be indispensable, might be resumed. Even now I have to carry into effect instructions to send out single women, and in addition I have still to deal with the nominated persons, lists of whom are received by each mail, and with those whose passages were postponed from last year, respecting whom, as you inform me, I shall receive special instructions.

I mention this in order to show that, in making reductions, it was obviously necessary that I should proceed with some caution before dispensing with the limited number of emigration officers which I have still on the staff of this department. Nor can I at present make that amount of reduction which a total cessation of emigration would enable me to do, until I have carried into effect the instructions to send out single women, and have been informed how the Government propose to deal with the people already nominated, from whom I am daily receiving pressing representations as to the inconvenience they are being put to by the postponement of their nominations. I may point out that you will have to decide on some definite course respecting these nominated emigrants. I have put them off from time to time, but they are disinclined to further delays, and they consider they have claims on the Government. More or less, this is undoubtedly the case. In many instances the Government have received money from their friends, and in numerous others the poor creatures, on the strength of their nominations being accepted, have made their arrangements for going. As, however, your letter now under reply, and the Hon. the Premier's telegram of the 26th instant, prove more definitely than before that emigration for the ensuing twelve months will in any case be very limited, I have arranged to make some further reductions. I have given notice to Mr. Inman, who, although originally engaged as a temporary clerk, has been employed in emigration work at this office for the last three years. I have also given notice to Mr. Sison, the clerk who acts as emigration cashier, and who has been in this department for nearly eight years. Mr. Sison's place would probably have to be refilled in case nominated emigration, requiring receipt of money, is resumed. There will then only remain at this office two officers specially engaged in emigration work—namely, Mr. Smith, the despatching officer, and Mr. Shortt, the chief emigration clerk.