

# CORRESPONDENCE

WITH THE

# NEW ZEALAND COMMISSIONERS

RELATIVE TO

# IMMIGRATION.

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**PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, BY COMMAND OF  
HIS EXCELLENCY.**

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WELLINGTON.

—  
1870.

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## CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE NEW ZEALAND COMMISSIONERS RELATIVE TO IMMIGRATION.

### No. 1.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to Mr. J. KNOWLES.

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Wellington, 1st December, 1869.

SIR,—

The Government have, with the consent of His Honor the Superintendent of the Province of Wellington, conferred on you the appointment of Secretary to the Commissioners (Hon. F. D. Bell and Hon. Dr. Featherston) who have been appointed under "The New Zealand Commissioners Act, 1869," and who are now on their way to England; and I trust that you will be able to join them in London with no unnecessary delay.

You will be expected to assist them in the capacity of Secretary, not only in their duties under the Act, but in any other business relating to this Colony which they may transact, and thus to obviate any expenditure by them in England on account of clerical work. The Government believe that your long official experience and extensive knowledge of New Zealand affairs, will be of material aid to the Commissioners in the details of their work, especially of the duty which is intrusted to them to collect information and undertake negotiations on which proposals for systematic immigration can, as promised last Session by the Government, be made to the New Zealand Legislature.

As soon as you arrive in London you will be good enough to report yourself to the Commissioners, whose address you can ascertain from the London Agent, Mr. Morrison, and thenceforth take your instructions from them. They will provide you from time to time with payments on account of your travelling allowance. Your salary will be paid here, commencing from the date of your leaving New Zealand, at the rate of four hundred pounds (£400) per annum, with an additional travelling allowance at the rate of ten shillings (10s.) per diem while on board ship, and while you are in England at the rate of one pound (£1) per diem. If you are required by the Commissioners to travel away from London, your actual travelling expenses will be paid by the Commissioners. In order to provide you with funds till you reach London (for payment of passages, &c.), the Government will advance to you one hundred and twenty pounds (£120), for which you will account, through the Commissioners, to the Treasury. The duration of this arrangement will of course depend on the Commissioners, but it is understood that your passage back to New Zealand will be paid, and the same allowance as that given to you on your passage to England granted.

I have, &c.,

J. Knowles, Esq., Superintendent's Office, Wellington.

W. GISBORNE.

### No. 2.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to the NEW ZEALAND COMMISSIONERS.

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Wellington, 8th December, 1869.

GENTLEMEN,—

I have the honor to transmit, for your information, the accompanying copy of a letter, dated the 2nd instant, from Mr. John Knowles, who has been appointed Secretary to the Commissioners under "The New Zealand Commissioners Act, 1869."

Mr. Knowles left for Melbourne in the "Rangitoto" on the 3rd instant.

I have, &c.,

To the New Zealand Commissioners.

W. GISBORNE.

### Enclosure in No. 2.

Mr. J. KNOWLES to the Hon. W. GISBORNE.

SIR,—

Wellington, 2nd December, 1869.

I do myself the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, in reference to the appointment of Secretary to the Home Commissioners, which the Government have been pleased to confer upon me.

The Government may rest assured that I shall do all in my power to merit the confidence reposed in me.

I purpose leaving for England, *via* Melbourne, in the "Rangitoto," to sail on the 3rd instant.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. W. Gisborne, Colonial Secretary.

JOHN KNOWLES.

### No. 3.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to the NEW ZEALAND COMMISSIONERS.

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Wellington, 23rd December, 1869.

GENTLEMEN,—

I have the honor to enclose a Memorandum addressed to you by the Prime Minister, containing the instructions to you from the New Zealand Government on the subject of immigration to this Colony.

The Government are anxious to be enabled by you, if possible, to submit to the consideration of the Legislature next Session, some practical proposals for establishing a continuous system of immigration combined with settlement in the Colony. The delay which has unavoidably arisen in your departure has considerably curtailed the time available for your collection of the necessary information, especially when it is considered how much the main object of your mission must occupy your attention; but the Government hope that the services of Mr. Knowles, your Secretary, whose former connection with New Zealand immigration and intimate knowledge of the Colony especially qualify him to assist you in the details of this work, will still enable the object in view to be attained.

The Hon. F. D. Bell and the Hon. I. E. Featherston, M.D.

I have, &c.,

W. GISBORNE.

### Enclosure in No. 3.

MEMORANDUM by the Hon. W. Fox.

The attention of the New Zealand Commissioners is urgently directed to the following passage in the Financial Statement delivered by the Colonial Treasurer during the last Session:—

"I feel, Sir, that in dealing with questions which intimately affect the future as well as the present of the Colony, I should ill discharge my duty if I failed to make the House acquainted with the sentiments of the Government on the great question of immigration. We recognize the large effects which in the past have resulted from direct immigration from the mother country, and it is certain that in the present comparative cessation of immigration we have cause for much thought, much consideration and regret. But whilst we admit that the subject requires to be dealt with, we do not see our way to deal with it this Session. Something more is needed than merely attempting to induce immigrants to come; it is highly desirable to be able to base the inducement on tangible grounds. The great variety of the climate and resources of New Zealand should make it a suitable field for immigration for a vast variety of persons, and we are persuaded that, but for the Native disturbances, New Zealand would be once more a favourite field. But it is idle to suppose that, with so many colonies and countries competing for immigrants, something more than merely asking immigrants to come is not necessary to obtain a number sufficient to do justice to the progress in colonization which the country ought to make. A great part of this Island yet remains to be colonized; whilst for colonizing the last portion of the Middle Island still remaining unsettled, a Bill has been carried through the House this Session by the Superintendent of Otago. We have seen, in times past, what results may spring from a nucleus created by a few score of hardy, energetic, enterprising settlers; and we know that the continued maintenance of immigration has largely contributed to further progress. But the problem is only partly solved. It meets us in this form—What shape should assisted immigration continue to take? I can only lay down some conditions: amongst them, first, I would class an exceedingly careful selection of suitable persons. We are here brought to the conclusion that the proposal which has found favour in some quarters, of a scheme of immigration conducted by the Imperial and Colonial Governments jointly, is not likely to be successful. The interests of the two Governments are entirely diverse. It is the interest of the Imperial Government to rid the country of the worse part of the population: it is that of the Colony to obtain the best. Again, we have to consider that assisted immigrants should not find themselves landed on our shores without some one to look to for guidance and employment; and I will go further, and venture to lay down as a principle, that it is exceedingly desirable that the assistance rendered to the immigrant, in respect to his passage or otherwise, should be by him faithfully and rigidly repaid. But it is in the last degree objectionable to establish direct relations of a pecuniary character between the Government and a large body of individuals; it follows that, in theory, the most desirable system of immigration would be one in which all pecuniary transactions were conducted by some body or association intervening between the Government and the immigrant, but in which, as respects selection or approval, the Government should have much discretion left to it. Now, Sir, I will ask the House to accept one more proposition; that such body or association should be able to base its calculations on a computation that out of a certain number of immigrants so many will be successful, so many, from various causes, the reverse. Here are abstract considerations which still remain to be forged into shape. I lay them before the House that it may be understood on what principle the Government come to the conclusion I am about to announce. That conclusion is, to invite, outside as well as within the Colony, not only every information obtainable, but also a number of specific offers and proposals for carrying out a continued scheme of immigration, allied with settlement, and of laying them before the Assembly next Session, together with carefully prepared recommendations based on them.

"We make no doubt that, within as well as without the Colony, persons will be found willing to undertake to form settlements in this Island on land which the Crown, without violation of any rights, or without proceeding to any fresh confiscation, will be able to place at their disposal. Such offers have, in more than one instance, been made respecting the Patea District, and proposals of the kind are even now maturing at home. Even the settlers already located in some of the out-districts would find it a benefit to be able to associate together for the purposes of self-defence, and of framing, within limits, bye-laws to govern and unite them, and to aid the promotion of the industries in which they are engaged. One cannot fairly estimate what combined efforts at settlement, such as have proved so successful in the past, may yet do in this Island. It need scarcely be said that the duty of self-defence, and the clear exemption of the Government from compensation risks, will have to be the guiding condition of such settlements; but these are details into which I will not now enter. It must not be supposed that we consider to this Island only should national efforts to promote immigration be confined. Much that I have said applies to both Islands; and it is the intention of the Government to propose next year a comprehensive plan which, without violating constitutional conditions, will extend the benefits of regular and systematic immigration to the Colony throughout its length and breadth."

The Commissioners will observe that the Government are pledged to the Assembly “to propose next year a comprehensive plan, which, without violating constitutional conditions, will extend the benefits of regular and systematic Immigration to the Colony throughout its length and breadth.”

The promise has also been made to invite “not only every information obtainable, but also a number of specific offers and proposals for carrying out a continued scheme of Immigration allied with settlement, and of bringing them before the Assembly next Session.”

It is hoped that the Commissioners will see their way to obtaining this information. To guide them, I propose to indicate, as well as the limited information at my command enables me to do the nature of the proposals which would seem to be best suited to the circumstances of the Colony, but without, in doing so, desiring or intending to fetter the inquiries or the action the Commissioners may deem it advisable to take. I must observe, however, that into whatever negotiations the Commissioners may enter, they must recollect that the Assembly has not yet sanctioned the final adoption of any terms. They, therefore, must not bind the Colony to any undertaking: all they can do is to submit for the approval of the Assembly any proposals which they consider are likely to be favourably entertained.

1. I am not at all disposed to any scheme which has for its basis the ridding Great Britain or any other country of its unemployed population. No doubt we are only likely to obtain emigrants from a country possessed of a redundant population; but this does not make it advisable that the purpose of the immigration should be ostensibly to reduce the excess. For, were this admitted, it would logically follow that from the ranks of the unemployed immigrants should be chiefly sought. Broadly, it seems to me that the unemployed represent the portion of the population least suited for employment. It is the interest of the country parting with population to get rid of the unemployed; the country seeking population would rather look to the employed, as affording a better guarantee of fitness. The distinction is very important, for it involves the whole question of securing the pick instead of the refuse of the population for the purposes of immigration. There is, I understand, a wide-spread desire at home to what is called “aid” the colonies with emigrants composed of persons with whom a philanthropic Government might well be willing to part. From what I have written, you will observe that there seems to me such a disparity of interest between the country parting with and the country acquiring population, that I doubt whether much good would result to the Colony from co-operation with any person or persons whose primary object was to get rid of the pauper population of the United Kingdom.

2. Any proposal which did not leave to the New Zealand Government a large share in the choice of immigrants, would be wanting in an essential feature.

3. Since co-operation is to be invited, and as it is not to be sought on the ground of finding an asylum for population of which those who co-operate desire to rid the country, the question arises, on what basis should the co-operation depend? There is but one other at all likely to have much weight, namely, a basis of profit. In other words, the co-operation should be rendered as a matter of business.

4. There are several ways in which co-operation might be made profitable. For instance, owners of ships would find it suit them to enter into a contract with the New Zealand Government to provide passages for immigrants; and no doubt you will be able to meet shipowners willing to contract on favourable terms as regards the mode of payment. Whilst such offers might very properly be submitted to the Assembly, I have to point out to you the objections to a scheme of this kind:—

The cost of defraying the entire passage of the immigrant would be too great for the Government to undertake. If the immigrant had to find part of the passage-money, the inducement, in the face of the cheap passages to Canada and elsewhere, would be insufficient to secure many immigrants. If the Government were to defray part or all of the passage-money on the agreement of repayment by the immigrant at some distant time, the very objectionable feature of the Government becoming the creditor for small amounts of a large number of persons would be the consequence.

Lastly, a plan which went no further than to simply land immigrants in the Colony would fail to provide them with the means of employment, and might result in their immediately leaving for another colony.

5. I have dwelt on these objections because they naturally lead me to the statement of the conditions under which I consider immigration, when not conducted directly by the Government, may most beneficially be encouraged.

The immigrant's passage, if he require it, should be paid, and perhaps some little assistance for outfit be given to him.

Very easy terms of repayment should be allowed to him.

He should be sure of employment on landing, or, if he desire it and have capital, an opportunity of acquiring land.

Whilst, for convenience sake, I speak of immigrant in the single number, I think a considerable proportion of the immigrants should be composed of families rather than of single men without relations.

6. If in any way the Government commence a system of giving encouragement to immigration, unless the receipt of such encouragement is to involve loss of caste, the immigrant who is able and willing to pay his own passage might naturally expect some consideration to be accorded to him. It is a result springing out of a system of assisted immigration, that unassisted immigration is unlikely to continue concurrently to any large extent.

Immigrants paying their own passages may be dealt with in several ways:—

1st. A bonus may be paid them on landing.

2nd. Which would be much preferable, a bonus after staying in the Colony some stated period.

3rd. A grant of land.

4th. Favourable terms for securing deferred annuities, or for insuring their lives.

5th. Loans, through some organized societies, to enable them to enter into farming or other directly productive pursuits.

6th. Preferential employment.

7. All of these would involve the necessity of careful selection and approval at home. Your inquiries at home will, however, enable you to ascertain if any of them, or any other plan which may be suggested to you, would be likely to eventuate in regular and extensive immigration. The same remarks apply to a modified system of assisted immigration, such as would be involved by the payment at home of a portion of the passage-money.

8. There are many ways in which it might answer the purpose of Companies or Associations to undertake immigration on a systematic scale.

9. The principles of insurance are just as applicable to the chances of the immigrant's success in a new colony as to other risks. It could be calculated with nicety that, out of every 1,000 immigrants, so many would be successful, and redeem whatever payments they contracted to make; so many unsuccessful.

10. A Company which provided passages on deferred payments to immigrants (for convenience sake I continue to call them immigrants, although to English Associations they would be emigrants) would require, besides interest, to add an amount sufficient to cover the risk of bad debt. Such a Company, if it extended its operations to the neighbouring colonies, could, by means of agents, keep such an accurate registry of the whereabouts of its debtors as to practically very much reduce its risks. It would be easy to arrange with the Company to give to it a bonus for every immigrant it landed. The bonus would have to be small, unless there was a good guarantee that the immigrant should remain—such as employment being open to him; still I do not hesitate to say that a bonus of a substantial nature would be available. If the Company were to advance the whole of the passage-money, the fact of its agreeing to trust the immigrant would be to some extent a guarantee. A larger bonus could be given if it took the shape of an annual payment, over a term of years during which the immigrant remained in the Colony. For instance, the Colony might well afford to pay £1 a year for seven years. With such a bonus it would be necessary for the Company to charge the immigrant but little for risk. The liability of an immigrant who brought out a family would be large; still it would probably better suit the Company to deal with such immigrants, for there would be a minimum risk of their leaving the Colony. To guard the Company against risks from death, arrangements could be made to effect life assurances by the New Zealand Government under the Act recently passed, entitled "The Government Annuities Act, 1869," in respect of the immigrants prior to their leaving home. Instead of an annual payment, a bonus could be given at the expiration of a stated period after the immigrant arrived in the Colony. This would be the most favourable shape of bonus to the Colony. I do not refer to payments by land to a Company of the kind I am now discussing; such payments would be better suited to a Company the nature of which I proceed to describe.

11. The Company or Association last referred to would be one which went no further than lending money to immigrants, charging them for the risk. A Company which, in addition, undertook colonizing operations, would have a larger field of operation, and one with which it would very much better suit the Colony to co-operate.

12. Such a Company might invest a certain amount of capital in the Colony, and let immigrants have land on deferred payments, besides reserving to itself contiguous estates on which it would be able to employ the labour of immigrants. It could establish flax mills, saw mills, breweries, distilleries, woollen manufactories, found towns, which in time would become very valuable; make its own land highly remunerative through the progress of the settlers, and the position and value the land would acquire; in short, it could found special settlements. The Government might encourage a Company of this kind in various ways. It might give it a certain amount of land for every immigrant introduced, or a larger amount for every immigrant remaining in the Colony. It might, if the Company itself preferred to purchase land, give money bonuses, as previously described, either on the immigrant landing, or after a certain fixed period of residence, or by yearly payment. I need scarcely say that, in any agreement for paying a bonus either to the class of Company at present under consideration, or the class before referred to, the Government would have to be satisfied that fair terms were offered to the immigrant; in fact, that he was not subjected to exorbitant charge. It is possible to conceive, and it would be very much better, that the immigrant should participate in the bonus, whatever its nature. This could be done by a deduction off the debt of the immigrant, or by a money payment to him; or, in case the bonus took the shape of land, the Company might arrange that part or all of the land, after a certain term, should become his—say after he had paid off his liability. Companies undertaking colonizing operations should make provision for assisting immigrants with advances to improve their lands. In the transfer of any land for special settlements, the Government would of course have to make certain conditions for the protection of public interests, and for securing the due performance of the contract.

13. When such settlements were in disturbed districts, special arrangements for self-defence would have to be made.

14. The Government would esteem highly any proposals for special settlements which embraced, besides immigration, provision for the employment of the Maoris. This applies, of course, to the North Island; but I wish you clearly to understand that what I have previously written applies equally to both Islands.

15. Suitable settlers from Continental countries would be highly prized. Germans especially have been found to be valuable colonists. They keep together, and readily form associations. I think you would be able to obtain advantageous offers in respect to German immigrants, and I desire to direct your attention to them.

It would be well that you should be able to afford information concerning the astonishing inducements the flax industry offers. The establishment of factories to utilize the flax fibre, instead of sending it home, would be highly desirable.

16. It is not improbable that the Assembly may be favourably disposed to sanction an extensive system of railway construction, and you should endeavour to obtain proposals combining assisted immigration, the establishment of settlements, and the construction of railways. There will probably be a great deal of land available for the purpose, and undertakings of the kind, I am told, have

answered well in America. I would strongly urge that you should obtain every possible information concerning cheap railways. Especially should such inquiries be instituted in places where cheap railways are in use,—for instance, in several Continental countries, and in America. The Foreign Office would no doubt aid you to make such inquiries.

The question of constructing railways is of paramount importance. The expenditure of the money whilst the works proceed will relieve much of the existing depression: it will also offer great encouragement to immigration. When completed, the railway will open up country capable of supporting an immense population. In the North Island it would effectually settle the Native difficulty: in the Middle Island as well as the North Island it would enable industries to be prosecuted which, for the want of the means of easy transport, cannot now be undertaken: it would, in short, people the country.

I am inclined to think the peculiar circumstances of the Colony would make it expedient that the railway should be commenced simultaneously from a great many centres of population. Not only would the line, as it went on, become payable to some extent, but the advantages would be more equally distributed over the country.

17. As I have already said, I am unable to authorize you to enter into any final agreements which are not subject to ratification or rejection in the Colony; but, to expedite the objects of this Memorandum, the Government empower you, if you think fit, to incur the following liability:—

Should any of the proposals made to you seem such as there is little doubt in your minds will be acceptable to the Colony, and should the person or persons or association making the proposals be of sufficient standing and responsibility, and be willing to despatch to the Colony an agent, with full powers to treat and finally enter into such arrangements, you are authorized to undertake that, in the event of the agent's mission proving fruitless, the Colony will pay his expenses. This authority extends to sending out three or four agents, representing as many distinct principals or associations.

Wellington, 20th December, 1869.

W. Fox.

No. 4.

The NEW ZEALAND COMMISSIONERS to the Hon. W. GISBORNE.

SIR,—

London, 23rd February, 1870.

We have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 23rd December, containing the instructions from the Government on the subject of Immigration.

This subject has, of course, received much attention from us since our arrival in England. Indeed, there is at this time a very important movement going on, not only in London but in many districts and centres of population through the country, for the promotion of emigration from this country on a large and comprehensive scale; and much anxiety has been expressed as to whether and to what extent the New Zealand Government might be prepared to undertake immigration. In the pressure of other work, we have, however, not been able to do more than refer generally to the question, in answer to the many inquiries that have been addressed to us.

We shall not fail to let you know by next mail whether, and how far, we can give effect to the object of your letter.

We have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, &c.

F. D. BELL,  
I. E. FEATHERSTON, } Commissioners.

No. 5.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to the NEW ZEALAND COMMISSIONERS.

Colonial Secretary's Office,

Wellington, 8th March, 1870.

GENTLEMEN,—

I have the honor to transmit for your information the accompanying copy of a letter, dated 4th December last, on the subject of inviting Colonial co-operation in enabling unemployed and distressed persons in London to emigrate.

The Hon. F. D. Bell and Hon. I. E. Featherston, M.D.,  
Care of John Morrison, Esq., 3 Adelaide Place,  
King William Street, London, E.C.

I have, &c.,  
W. GISBORNE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 5.

Mr. J. S. HALY to the Hon. W. GISBORNE.

British and Colonial Emigration Fund,

15 Cockspur Street, S.W., London, 4th December, 1869.

SIR,—

I am directed by the Committee to bring under your notice the enclosed Resolutions and copy of Circular recently issued by them.

The Committee find that there are already several local Emigration Committees organizing in different districts and parishes in the metropolis; and they believe that during the approaching winter a very general desire will arise amongst the unemployed for assistance in emigration, and for information as to the Colonies in which their labour would be most welcome.

Under these circumstances, the Committee have it in contemplation to open larger offices, establish registers, and form a department at which information may be afforded to intending emigrants and those desirous of assisting deserving people, respecting the Colonies, the rates of wages there, and the plan to be adopted in reaching them.

This, however, will necessarily involve the expenditure of a considerable sum yearly; and the Committee think it is probable that, in the interests of your Colony, and in the promotion of the emigration you require, your Government might be willing to afford pecuniary assistance in carrying out the plan.

If the various Colonies were to assure the Committee, say, £100 per annum each, for the establishment of such a central bureau in the metropolis, the Committee cannot doubt that the money would be well employed in respect to the promotion of eligible emigrants thereto.

I am, therefore, to request your consideration of the subject, and beg you to bring it under the notice of your Government.

The Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

I have, &c.

J. STANDISH HALY.

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Enclosure 2 in No. 5.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to Mr. J. S. HALY.

Colonial Secretary's Office,

Wellington, 9th March, 1870.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th December last, enclosing a Circular, with copy of Resolutions, issued by the Committee of the British and Colonial Emigration Fund at London, and requesting that the subject of emigration of the unemployed in London may receive the attention of this Government.

In reply, I have to inform you that copies of your letter and its enclosure will be sent to the New Zealand Commissioners in London, and also laid before the General Assembly.

J. S. Haly, Esq.,

Secretary of the British and Colonial Emigration Fund,  
15 Cockspur Street, London, E.C.

I have, &c.,

W. GISBORNE.

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