

"Finding that there was no emigration going on, except in miserable dribbles to Canterbury and Otago, I immediately employed agents to ascertain to what extent you might depend upon a stream of emigration from England and Scotland, availing myself of the services of the Revs. Peter Barclay and David Bruce, in Scotland; and of Mr. C. R. Carter, in England, directing him first to visit Cornwall, where I had been given to understand large numbers of labourers were disposed to emigrate. I also went myself, by invitation, to Aberdeen, with the view more especially of promoting the emigration of single women. I met a committee of ladies and gentlemen connected with the Industrial Institutions, but I soon found that the institutions could supply very few suitable female domestics, and that there was a disposition on the part of many of the ladies to get rid of the inmates of their Reformatories. The boys in all the industrial establishments were too young, and were not being taught any trade or calling that would be useful to them in a Colony. The same may be said of similar institutions in Edinburgh.

"From the reports of the Rev. Peter Barclay, who has gone into the work with great zeal and enthusiasm, and of Mr. Carter, who is peculiarly qualified, from his personal knowledge of New Zealand, and of the condition of the working classes in the United Kingdom, for the mission intrusted to him, you will gather that the prospects of any large emigration from England and Scotland at present, under the terms offered, are not encouraging.

"Having, during my former trip to Scandinavia and Germany, satisfied myself that some portion of the large stream of emigration which annually flows thence into America might be diverted to New Zealand, I determined to pay a flying visit to those countries, and I have no reason to be dissatisfied with the result. I only regret that my visit was not made two or three months sooner, as the emigration season closes about the beginning of December, both at the Hamburg and at the Scandinavian ports."—[16th November, 1871.]

"I may, however, mention that these regulations were only adopted after a full discussion of two days at a conference held here on the 1st and 9th December, 1871, and at which Mr. Auld, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Ottywell, Rev. P. Barclay, and Mr. C. R. Carter were present. Those gentlemen were unanimous in opinion, 1st, that it was quite impossible to carry on emigration on the scale contemplated by the Government, unless a uniform system was adopted; and, 2nd, that it was utterly beyond the power of the class of emigrants desired, to contribute any considerable amount, if indeed any, towards the cost of their passage in cash; and that, therefore, the adoption of the promissory note system was an inevitable necessity. The Sub-Agents have all given testimony to the same effect."—[8th February, 1872.]

These letters show clearly that at that time the Agent-General had but faint hopes of being able to secure a sufficient stream of Emigration from Great Britain, and I will not disguise from the House the great anxiety the Government felt upon the subject; for, Sir, we hold the success, or otherwise, of the Public Works Policy depends upon the Colony securing a large and continuous stream of suitable immigrants. Much stress has been laid upon the action of the Agent-General, in having had recourse to other countries than the United Kingdom for emigrants; but, under the circumstances stated in his letter of the 16th November, the Government consider that he acted for the best in making the arrangements he did for securing emigrants from Germany and Scandinavia.

It should be borne in mind that, at the time referred to, the Agent-General had the assistance of Mr. Auld and other gentlemen, who from their experience were fully qualified to form correct opinions, and give reliable advice to the Agent-General as to the probability of securing sufficient emigrants from the United Kingdom.

It is gratifying, however, to learn from later advices that the prospects of securing suitable emigrants from the United Kingdom are good, and the Agent-General's letter of the 21st May, which I will read, shows that he is fully alive to the necessities of the Colony in respect to Immigration, and is doing his utmost to secure what is required. In the letter I have referred to, he states—

"I trust that the apprehension which has apparently been excited, if not in the mind of the Government, at any rate in that of many of my fellow-colonists, by the arrangements I have entered into for the promotion of emigration from Germany and Scandinavia, will have been completely allayed by the advices you will have subsequently received of the prospects of emigration from the United Kingdom.

"During the three months, commencing on the 1st of April last, and ending the 30th June next, there will (I estimate) have been despatched from the United Kingdom a number of emigrants equal to at least 2,000 statute adults, and from Germany and Scandinavia not more than 700.

"The contracts or agreements for the sending out of Germans and Scandinavians to the number of 6,000 adults will determine at the expiration of two years from the date at which they were entered into, when emigration from Germany and Scandinavia and all other foreign countries may be altogether suspended, should the Government deem it advisable or expedient to do so.

"I myself should deeply regret such a step, not only because I regard New Zealand as a field capable of profitably absorbing any amount of immigration, but also because I am satisfied that many industries, such for example, amongst many others, as the culture of the vine, the manufacture of sugar from beet, and of paper from wood, and the preparation of desiccated milk, can only be successfully established in New Zealand by means of emigrants from the countries in which those industries are thoroughly understood, and have been long carried on.