

## No. 5.

The Hon. the PREMIER to Mr. HALCOMBE.

(No. 15.)

SIR,—

Immigration Office, Wellington, 24th January, 1874.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd January, in which, for a series of reasons stated, you ask the Government to make to the Emigrant and Colonist's Aid Corporation a special allowance, because a system of free immigration into the colony has been instituted.

In reply, I have to state that I am wholly unable to agree with you that the Corporation has any claim, either in law or in equity, for any consideration on account of the Government having deemed it desirable to introduce immigrants free of cost.

I am of opinion that a great deal of consideration for the Corporation has already been shown by the Government.

You are quite aware that the Corporation was not at all ready to fulfil the terms of its agreement: that in fact it was not prepared to put much capital into the undertaking, but that, nevertheless, the Government made large concessions. I am of opinion, also, that the Hon. Colonel Feilding succeeded in purchasing, at a very reasonable price, a very valuable block of land.

Even if it were the case that the Corporation has suffered injury through the Government having found it desirable, in the interests of the colony, to introduce immigrants free of cost, I should altogether deny any claim upon the part of the Corporation for compensation. It would be preposterous for the Government to admit the validity of any claim of the kind; indeed, it would be impossible to give effect to any measure for the good of the country if compensation had to be given to all persons who had previously made arrangements of a different character. Government have as good a right to suit their actions to the circumstances of the time as any private individual or association has. If it suited the Emigrant and Colonist's Aid Corporation to sell land at £3 per acre to-day, and two years hence to sell it for £2, the Corporation would be entitled to do so. If the claim now made were admitted, the Government would have equally to admit a claim for compensation on behalf of any person who paid for his passage to the colony.

Instead of the Corporation sustaining loss by the free introduction of immigrants, I believe that the reverse will be the case, for the larger the number of people in the colony, the greater will be the benefit to every person who has an interest in New Zealand. Apart from that, however, there was, at the outset, an important concession granted to the Corporation, that, namely, of being allowed to obtain a valuable block of land at a very reasonable price on deferred payment.

I believe there are corporations or associations, with capital at command, that would have been glad to have had the opportunity of purchasing land of the same character upon the same terms.

I am of opinion that it is a great advantage to the Corporation to be able to obtain free passages for its tenants or constituents, whether or not the Government give free passages to other immigrants.

For the reasons stated, I cannot hold out a hope that any claim of the kind made by you will receive recognition.

I have, &amp;c.,

JULIUS VOGEL.

A. F. Halcombe, Esq., Agent for the Emigrant and  
Colonist's Aid Corporation, Wellington.

## No. 6.

Mr. HALCOMBE to the Hon. the COLONIAL TREASURER.

SIR,—

Wellington, 27th March, 1874.

Referring to your memorandum of 6th September, 1873, a copy of which is enclosed (*vide* No. 2), I have the honor to request that the amount of £7,500, referred to therein, may now be released, and the Corporation which I represent be entitled to receive orders for Crown grants or land revenue receipts, under clause 12 of the Fielding Contract. (Parliamentary Papers, D. 11, 1873.)

I make this request on the ground that the *bona fides* of the Corporation is now sufficiently proved, the number of emigrants introduced being in excess of the requirements of its contract with the Government, and the expenditure of the Corporation in the permanent improvement of the block by road making, house building &c., besides the cost of English agency and survey of the block, being a sufficient indication of the intention to carry out the contract in the most liberal spirit. I may mention, in connection with this fact, that nearly one hundred persons are now fully employed at the sole expense of the Corporation, and that every family introduced to their settlement entails on the Corporation an advance of from £40 to £50 for house building, carriage, and for their temporary supply.

As I pointed out in a former letter, the action of the Government in granting free passages to all immigrants has practically deprived the Corporation of a most valuable privilege, secured to it under the Fielding contract, on account of which your Government ignores any claim on the part of the Corporation to compensation. I have no intention now of reopening this question, but I would respectfully submit that this is an additional reason why the utmost consideration should be shown by the Government to the Corporation in the initial stages of the undertaking; and I need hardly remind you that the locking up, even of £7,000 of capital, must to some extent act prejudicially to the interests of the Corporation.

I have, &amp;c.,

A. FOLLETT HALCOMBE,

Agent, Emigration and Colonist's Aid Corporation.

The Hon. Julius Vogel, Colonial Treasurer, Wellington.