

The charge is, that two men have asserted on their arrival in the colony that they were not aware it was necessary to obtain a certificate from me to entitle them to a free grant of land until it was too late to call for it. I should like to know how I am to enforce information upon all emigrants going to New Zealand that they will obtain free grants of land under that Act in such a way as at the same time to limit the advantages of the Act to those only who, in the words of your despatch now under reply, "otherwise might not have been disposed to emigrate" to the colony. The two men (whose names are not recorded) were persons, I may assume, who had determined to emigrate without any reference to the advantages of the Act, and who were therefore, according to your despatch, disqualified to claim my certificate. It is their loss; it can hardly be my fault that they failed to place themselves in a position to enter upon possession of £40 worth of public land on their arrival.

6. The next case is that of "Marmaduke Black. The Agent-General writes that this person applied for the certificate, but was unable to appear at the office. He recommends his application, if made in the colony, be favourably entertained."

Marmaduke Black was apparently misled by the terms of your notice stating that persons registering their names at my office would be entitled to free grants of land in the colony, and so evidently did not conceive that it was absolutely necessary he should present himself at my office. It was a case which I thought, and which I still think, might have been favourably considered.

7. The same remark applies to the group of cases which are classed together in the following way in the *précis* :—

"The Agent-General forwards, with favourable recommendation, letters applying to take advantage of the Act by the following persons :—

"R. G. Roberts, 78, James Street, Rugby. On behalf of his brother passengers by the ship 'Hereford.' April, 1874."

"A. Kennedy, Midland Grand Hotel. Was to sail for Auckland. States that Mr. Buller promised to send the certificate after him."

"R. H. Hawkins, Heath Villa. States he paid £83 for a passage to Auckland *via* New York and San Francisco. Speaks of his intention to settle in New Zealand."

"Baxter Bruce. Cabin passenger per 'Countess Kintore,' April 1874. Asks for land order, although no immediate use for the land."

"Joseph Martin. On behalf of W. Noakes, agriculturist, who sailed in the 'Agnes Muir,' in October 1873."

"The Agent-General forwards, for consideration of the Government, application by Mr. W. Hope Smith, on behalf of his son, a settler of ten years' standing in Otago."

All these persons alleged or had credible representation made to me that their intention of taking advantage of the Act influenced them in emigrating to the colony; that they intended to settle in New Zealand, and to cultivate, or cause to be cultivated, such land as should be assigned to them. They seemed to me to be persons who might fairly be, in the words of the Act, "permitted to acquire land free of cost in proportion to their expenditure in immigration," and to whom, if they had come before me, I should have had no hesitation in giving my certificate. As they had failed to do so, I could only submit their cases, with such recommendations as I had received, for the consideration of the Government.

8. The case of the U'Rens reappears, I hope for the last time, in the following form :—

"Agent-General forwards further correspondence *re* application of Mr. U'Ren, which matter has been finally dealt with by Government declining to entertain the application."

This is the case of which it is stated in your despatch of 1st July, that it contained evidence, if evidence were wanting, that the orders of the Government have failed of effect from want of due exertion on my part. No doubt your attention had not then, and has not since, been drawn by the official who prepared the *précis* of the case, to the fact that the U'Rens had emigrated to New Zealand three months before the first copy of the Land Act reached England. I might as reasonably be accused of want of due exertion in regard to the people who went to New Zealand with Captain Cook. What I did in the case of the U'Rens, I could hardly have refused to do. It was to forward a correspondence in which they were strongly recommended to the consideration of the Government by a member of Her Majesty's Privy Council, who had been some time a Minister of the Crown. Neglect of the orders of the Government, as regards this case, was upon my part a matter of sheer impossibility.

9. The last paragraph of the *précis* runs as follows :—

"A few immigrants are now turning up having the necessary certificates; their applications are received and duly registered. The Agent-General, however, has granted certificates to persons manifestly not intended by the Act, *e.g.* Mr. Passmore, and another gentleman who called upon me here, who is father-in-law of the new Head Master of the College."

The case of Mr. Passmore is a peculiar and quite exceptional one. That gentleman had come home with letters from the Government recommending him to my good offices, in relation to certain inquiries which he was about to institute, which he hoped might be beneficial to the railway interests of the colony. He informed me that he had paid his own passage home. I assisted him in his inquiries by introductions to leading engineers and railway managers. When he was about to return, he told me that, as he was again paying his own passage, he thought he might fairly claim to be recouped at least part of his expenses by a free grant of land under the Act, and that, if I should give him my certificate, it was his intention to have whatever land might be assigned him cultivated according to its conditions. I thought under the circumstances I might accede to his application, leaving it to the Government, on its presentation, to decide on his claim to be so entitled. In regard to the only remaining case, which is mentioned in conjunction with that of Mr. Passmore, and in respect of which I have again to complain that I am not furnished with the names of the persons presenting my certificate, the writer of the *précis*, speaking in his own person, raises an objection to an act done by me in my discretion under the Act as Agent-General—an objection which, I must say, I regard as simply preposterous. He objects that the holder of my certificate was father-in-law of the Master of the College. The relation of father-in-law is nowhere mentioned in the Act, and nowhere indicated in your