

themselves how to make the cultivation of the soil profitable, and it is this class that the reduced rate of passage has encouraged. That the New Zealand Government are well aware of the advantage of having settlers of that description, the policy which has of late years been adopted sufficiently shows.

Some years ago the system was adopted of the Government giving £5 towards the passages of persons such as those to whom we refer, and when you yourself came to England as Agent-General one of your first steps was to urge the Government to resume that system.

The Government, however, did not see their way to offer any pecuniary assistance towards the passages, and after some negotiation it was arranged with the New Zealand Shipping Company to grant, under certain conditions, passages at reduced rates to persons approved by yourself, and for two years the system has been in operation.

We feel you will agree with us that this system thus adopted has proved successful. While the numbers of such persons going to other colonies has materially diminished, the number going to New Zealand has not decreased to anything like a proportionate extent. But the fact that some seven hundred or eight hundred people have gone out under this system with capital of at least £100,000 is, we think, sufficient evidence of its success. We also believe that these people have, with few exceptions, proved valuable settlers, a credit to themselves, and a credit to the colony to which they have gone.

As you are aware, this system is to be continued for another year by the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company and the New Zealand Shipping Company. We need not recapitulate the special difficulties which had to be met in making the necessary arrangements—they have been overcome for the present; but, in view of what will probably occur on the expiration of the present agreement with the two companies, we think it would be very desirable that the New Zealand Government, through their representatives, should, as far as possible, be placed in possession of the circumstances of the case, in order that they may consider whether, in the interests of the colony, they could support in a more material way than at present a system which, as regards all classes of the community, is, we believe, of great advantage.

We would therefore ask you to arrange so that a deputation of those interested in the matter may wait upon Mr. Ward and yourself, with a view of representing to the Government the importance of their doing their utmost to enable the present system to be continued, if possible, on more favourable conditions than it is at present conducted.

We are, &c.,

T. B. WESTRAY and Co.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, 13, Victoria Street.

DEAR SIR,—

13, Victoria Street, S.W., 21st May, 1895.

I am in receipt of yours of 17th instant, in which you ask for an interview with the Hon. J. G. Ward and myself, on the subject of assisted passages to the colony.

I have conferred with Mr. Ward on the subject-matter of your letter, and he wishes me to state that he is in full sympathy with the proposal made in your letter, and on his return he will lay the matter before his colleagues.

Mr. Ward regrets that he cannot spare time to meet the deputation as you propose.

I propose, therefore, forwarding a copy of your letter to the Premier, reporting what action has been taken, and on my own behalf recommending the matter for favourable consideration.

I am, &c.,

W. B. PERCIVAL.

Messrs. T. B. Westray and Company, 138, Leadenhall Street, E.C.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,

24th February, 1896.

SIR,—

Referring to my letter, No. 408, of the 16th April last, I beg to inform you that I have renewed for another twelve months the existing arrangements with the New Zealand Shipping Company and the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company, under which persons with capital, approved by me, are provided with passages to New Zealand at reduced rates.

I attach hereto a statement showing the number of persons who have received passages under this system, by which you will see that within the three years 1,110 persons have gone out, taking with them £131,089 declared capital.

In many instances, however, the people availing themselves of the reduced rates contented themselves with giving the minimum amount of capital required under the regulations, so that the actual amount of capital taken no doubt considerably exceeded the declared amount. It may also be noted that some of those who went out were possessed of fixed incomes, which is in addition to the amount of declared capital.

I am inclined to think that the system, as worked for the last three years, has resulted in bringing to the colony a number of good working settlers, to their own advantage, and also to the advantage of those already there.

I have, &c.,

W. B. PERCIVAL.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.