

EXTRACTS FROM THE IMMIGRATION PAPERS.

It appears that the Dublin agency was not opened by Dr Featherston on his own motion, but upon the instruction, described in another letter as "not discretionary, but absolutely imperative" contained in the following telegram from Mr Waterhouse, then Premier, sent on the 4th November, 1872.

"Insufficient immigrants. Division between Provinces not according with instructions pointed out by Memorandums 114 and 115. Consider following instructions absolute:—Open immediately central Irish Agency in Dublin. Send fair proportion emigration therefrom. Place Scotch Agency on original footing of efficiency. Send Scotch emigrants from Glasgow. Complete with utmost despatch number emigrants specified in Gisborne's memorandum 25th November last, exclusive of nominated and Brogden's, and if necessary make terms more liberal."

Writing in January 1873 Dr Featherston replied:—I have the honor to inform you that I proceeded to Dublin on the 14th December, where, in accordance with the instructions conveyed in the Hon. Mr Waterhouse's telegram, I at once opened a Central Immigration Office, appointing as Chief Emigration Agent Mr W. Mason, a merchant of considerable standing, and highly recommended to me as one who would devote himself with zeal and energy to the work allotted to him. I gave him full authority to select trustworthy local agents in all the counties in the southern half of Ireland, and fixed his remuneration (including expenses of office) at the rate of £400 a year. The arrangement to be determinable by either party at the end of six months.

At Belfast I met Mr Farnall, and requested him to lose no time in increasing the number of local agents in all the northern counties, and at the same time instructed him personally to visit all local agencies as often as possible, with the view of ascertaining whether the agents were really discharging the duties expected of them.

Mr Waterhouse in another reply expresses himself thus:—Your letter of the 4th of October last, covering a report by Mr H. W. Farnall who has apparently been acting as emigration agent at Belfast, has been duly received.

I cannot but regard the feeble attempt that has been made under the management of Mr Farnall to open up a supply of immigration from Ireland as eminently unsatisfactory. That gentleman appears to have been nearly three months in Ireland, and the result of his labors as shown in his correspondence, is that during that period he has forwarded twenty-three emigrants. What has been the total expense connected with the introduction of these twenty-three emigrants it would be hard to calculate, and probably painful to contemplate if calculated. The Government are thoroughly satisfied that an adequate supply of immigrants is procurable from Ireland.

If you are unable yourself or by your officers to obtain the supply that is required, I have to instruct you to put yourself in communication with Her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners, with a view to ascertaining upon what terms they will undertake to forward the number of emigrants required to be supplied from Ireland.

It is understood that Her Majesty's Commissioners have agents in all parts of the United Kingdom, and it will be well for you to consider whether their services cannot be turned to much greater account than has hitherto been the case. Personally, the conviction is forced upon my mind, partly from observation of working of the existing system, and partly as the result of experience in Australia, that our supply of immigration would have been greater, the character of the immigrants certainly not inferior, and the shipping arrangements far superior, if the co-operation of Her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners had been obtained.

In directing Dr Featherstone to forward 8,000 immigrants in the year 1873, Mr Waterhouse writes on the 27th November 1872:—

I trust that the arrangements made regarding the conveyance of these immigrants will be of a superior character to those which have hitherto prevailed. It is very unsatisfactory to the Government, as it must be to the Agent-General, to have the repeated complaints which have arisen in connection with the conduct of emigration. The Government can see no sufficient reason why the arrangements as regards the introduction of immigrants to New Zealand should be less perfect than were those of the English Emigration Commissioners at the period when, under their auspices, such a large stream of immigration was flowing into Australia. I believe such a continuous repetition of complaints as regards the character and accommodation of the vessels in which emigrants are being forwarded is without precedent of late years. The risk in which they would appear to have been involved is not fair to the immigrants themselves, whilst it exposes the Colony at large to the possibility of the introduction of fatal forms of disease.

The Government are very anxious to hear of the establishment of the Scotch and Dublin Agencies. The failure to open the Scotch Agency has led to much inconvenience, and will involve the Colony in many claims for compensation. The Government are beset with complaints from persons who, having nominated friends on the assurance that arrangements would be made to enable emigrants to embark from Glasgow, find that the friends so nominated are required to undergo the expense of a journey to London, or forego the voyage altogether.

Doubtless the instructions of the Government upon this point will already have been given effect to; but with a view to the prevention of any further mistakes, I deem it well to add, that the Agent-General is requested to consider the instructions as regards the opening of these agencies not of a discretionary, but of an absolutely imperative character.

Mr Waterhouse also writes:—With regard to the ensuing year 1873, I have most urgently to request that no exertion may be spared to forward at least 8,000 statute adults, exclusive of nominated immigrants and of those sent out under arrangement with Messrs Brogden; this number to arrive within the year. The absence of a proportionate supply of Irish in the Government immigration hitherto has been unfavourably commented upon in the Colony. You are therefore requested to take the necessary steps to secure that the emigration from that part of the United Kingdom shall be proportioned to the population of

Ireland as compared to that of Great Britain. You have already been instructed by telegram to open a central agency at Dublin. I trust that this has been done, and that henceforth a fair supply of Irish immigration will be secured.

Mr O'Rourke writes on the 14th February last to Dr Featherston says:—I have looked over the list of sub-agents furnished in your letter of 4th October, 1872, and also the list of newspapers in which you insert advertisements concerning emigration to New Zealand. It appears that of your 116 sub-agents the apportionment is as follows:—To England, 34; to Wales, 1; to Ireland, 8; to Scotland, 73. Whether this is the most judicious apportionment that could be made for the promotion of emigration, I can only judge of by the results; and seeing that last year their efforts only secured one-half the emigrants the Colony required, I would strongly suggest a reapportionment of these officers. Your advertisements in the newspapers again are—In English papers, 75; in Welsh, 8; in Irish, 15; in Scotch, 28. I would have passed over this were it not for what appears a great oversight on your part. You advertise in six Belfast papers, five Londonderry papers, and a few papers in adjoining counties, to the exclusion of such places as Dublin, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Galway, &c. This is one of those things which gives rise to dissatisfaction out here, and it, to my mind, cannot be justified.

I am the more surprised at this, as you had an agent (Mr Farnall) for Ireland, for several months before the return was made up, who ought to have known that his duties as such should not have been limited to advertising in one particular district. I trust, however, that your having, in pursuance of instructions issued in November last, established a Central Emigration Agency for Ireland in Dublin, the objections here noted will have been removed. You have not informed the Government who your agent is in Dublin, or how he is working. I desire to be informed on these points in your reply to this Memorandum.

It has occurred to me that, if sufficient Irish emigrants offered to fill a vessel, it might be a saving of expense to ship them direct from the nearest Irish seaport; but while I mention it, I do not desire to interfere with the exercise of your own discretion with regard to the most suitable port of embarkation for such emigrants.

I mentioned in the early part of this Memorandum, that I was aware of the competition to which you were exposed in procuring emigrants for New Zealand. As an instance, I may refer to what came under my eye yesterday. In perusing a west of Ireland newspaper I read the Queensland Agent-General's advertisements, in which he offers "Free passages to agricultural laborers, married and single, and to female domestic servants, without undertaking to repay the cost of passage." With such competition as this, I can well understand the difficulties you have to contend with. Of course you have power under the instructions of November last to offer equally advantageous terms, but I do not suppose you will take advantage of that power so long as you can fill your ships with emigrants who are contributors to the cost of their passages.

Writing by the outgoing mail last April, Mr O'Rourke says:—I now desire to address you on general subjects relating to the present state of immigration to this Colony.

I regret to have to state that a feeling of very great uneasiness pervades not only the Government but the public at large at the paucity of immigrants arriving in comparison with the number ordered. I am very loth to have to make such frequent complaints on this head, but it is only right that you should be apprised of the difficulties which the Government foresee impending over the Colony unless it receives a large accession to its population by means of immigration during the present year. It is the opinion of the Minister of Public Works, as you will learn from a Memorandum drawn up by him and approved of by the Cabinet, that unless something like the number of immigrants are landed here this year, a stoppage of the public works will probably ensue, and you have been requested to acquaint the Government by cablegram, whether you are of opinion that you will be able to land the requisite number in the Colony during the year.

In order that there may be no doubt as to the number expected, I place it before, with the distribution among the Provinces. I think it also requisite to do this as the number has been increased since it was originally fixed at 8,000. It now nearly reaches 13,000, as follows:—

Auckland	...	...	...	8,500
Taranaki	...	...	...	150
Hawke's Bay	...	...	...	750
Wellington	...	...	...	1,250
Nelson	...	...	...	100
Marlborough	...	...	...	100
Canterbury	...	...	...	2,812
Otago	...	...	...	4,062
				12,724

Writing from such a distance, it is impossible for me to gauge the difficulties you have to contend with in inducing a stream of emigration to this Colony, but I am informed, by gentlemen recently returned from Australia, that the Queensland Government have no difficulty in procuring any amount of emigrants they require. A special cablegram has been sent to you urging upon you to offer as liberal terms, if not more so than they do, in the shape of free passages to suitable classes of immigrants. This authority was given to you five months ago, and has been repeated since; you have not hitherto availed yourself of it; and in now directing you to keep yourself on a level with competing colonization bodies, I have only this instruction to give you, that the grant of free passages should carry with it a very stringent supervision of the emigrants, with regard to capability of work, health, and character. In addition to this remission of cost of passages, the Government propose by the next Suez mail to submit to you a scheme of making free grants of land to the extent of £20 to those immigrants who pay the cost of their own passage. When the scheme is matured the substance of it will be sent to you by cablegram, so that you will be in a position to act on it by the time you receive this.