

MIDDLE ISLAND.—REPORT ON IMMIGRATION.

No. 1.

Mr. MARCH to the Hon. W. REEVES.

SIR,—

Immigration Office, Christchurch, 1st July, 1872.

I have the honor to transmit herewith Report and Statistics of Immigration for the year ending 30th June, 1872.

The total number of Immigrants introduced during that period has been 1046 statute adults, classified as under:—

145 Families	=	365 Statute adults.
331 Single Men	=	331 " "
350 Single Women	=	350 " "

Of this number 628½ were brought to Canterbury and 417½ to Otago. (See enclosure No. 1.)

No difficulty was experienced in finding suitable situations for the Immigrants, the demand for single women especially, and for single men accustomed to general farm work, has been much greater than the supply.

I append return showing nationality, trades and occupations of those introduced. (Enclosure Number 2.)

A considerable number of the Immigrants having been nominated, joined their friends on arrival in the colony, and thus reduced the number of those who were for engagement. This particularly refers to single women, and consequently the demand for domestic servants is still very great.

The Assisted Immigrants have been well selected, and suitable for the wants of the colony.

The arrangements on board ship for the accommodation and provisioning of the Immigrants has been on the whole satisfactory. I append copies of Commissioners' Reports on the different ships. (Enclosure Number 3.)

With regard to Barracks, I have to report that at the time the General Government assumed the management of Immigration the accommodation for Immigrants was found, in most cases, to be temporary and unsuitable.

From answers received to circulars sent by the Government to the Superintendents of the several provinces, I have compiled the following information:—

Marlborough.

The Barracks in this province are situated in Picton. The accommodation is very limited, and the buildings are unsuitable. I have ascertained that repairs and alterations to the extent of £100 are required, but even then they would not accommodate more than about sixty persons.

Canterbury.

The Immigration Barracks at Christchurch afford ample accommodation for about 300 Immigrants, but double this number could be accommodated on an emergency.

The Barracks are divided into three separate compartments, containing day-rooms, dormitories, kitchens, wash-houses, bath-rooms, etc., together with quarters for the Barrack Master and Matron. Certain repairs and additions were found necessary, and these are now in progress. The work has to be completed by the 6th instant, and the cost will be £945 14s.

The present Quarantine Barracks at Camp Bay are very unsuitable, both as regards accommodation and position. I forward copy of my report on this subject.

The Government having decided to erect new buildings on Ripa Island, tenders were called for the work. The lowest tender was that of Messrs. Roach and Martin (Dunedin), £3748, which has been accepted. The buildings are to be completed in December next.

At Timaru the Barrack accommodation is sufficient for the number of Immigrants likely to be sent there for the next year.

Dunedin.

The Immigration Barracks in Princess street were found to be unsuitable, especially from their position, being in the heart of the town. A site at Caversham having been decided on by the Government, plans for new Barracks were prepared by the Colonial Architect, and tenders were invited for the erection. The lowest tender, that of Mr. J. Smith (Dunedin), for £4500, was accepted, and the work is now being proceeded with. These Barracks when completed will afford accommodation for 400 Immigrants, and will be commodious and well arranged. They will also be in close proximity to the line of Railway.

The buildings on Quarantine Island have been thoroughly repaired. Certain additions which were found necessary are being made. When this work is completed, the Barracks will afford ample accommodation for a shipment of Immigrants, should it be necessary to place them in quarantine.

Invercargill.

There is Barrack accommodation here for about fifty Immigrants. Certain necessary repairs and improvements are now being proceeded with.

Stewart's Island.

Plans have been prepared for the necessary Barrack accommodation for shipments of 150 to 200 Immigrants.