

extensively published, and the public have largely availed themselves of the system. A reference to the Return of Nominated Immigration, already on the Table, shows that the total number of passages applied for and secured to the 30th of June was 1,514, of which number $900\frac{1}{2}$ are for the Middle Island, and $613\frac{1}{2}$ for the Northern Island. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the success which has attended the promotion of this class of Immigration, or on the value it must prove to the Colony.

I will briefly refer to what it has been found necessary to do in the Colony to secure the proper receipt and distribution of the immigrants. Where feasible, the officers who were formerly employed by the Provincial Governments have been transferred to the service of the Colony, and in other cases the best and most economical arrangements open have been made. Barrack accommodation has been or is being provided, and the House will be asked to vote the cost. In the Province of Canterbury, the barracks formerly in use were handed over to the Colony free of charge; whilst in most of the Northern Provinces the old military barracks are being made available at small cost. In connection with Immigration, steps are being taken in the principal ports to provide Quarantine Barracks. The cost will be considerable, but the importance of the subject was too great for the Government to hesitate incurring the necessary expenditure, which the House will be asked to vote.

Considering the great difficulties met with in first starting Immigration on a large scale, from the causes before mentioned—that delays have necessarily arisen from the time occupied in communicating with the Agent-General—that the whole system had to be arranged and given effect to since Parliament was last in Session, I think that large allowances may be made for objections which no doubt can be urged in respect to more than one particular. For, Sir, the Government are not so arrogant as to come down to the House and assert that there is nothing in the system of Immigration, or indeed in that of Public Works, to which some exception might not be taken. In regard to Immigration, the correspondence shows that the Government have deemed it necessary to give specific instructions to the Agent-General on some points, and on others to urge his attention strongly to views they entertain. For example, the Agent-General has been instructed to maintain that agency which has proved so valuable to Otago—the Edinburgh agency—in all its previous efficiency. He has been instructed to keep up a line of ships from Glasgow, and not to send immigrants from Scotland by way of London. He has also been urged not to enter into contracts having for their tendency the maintenance of the injurious monopoly which has done so much to raise to oppressive rates the freights to and from Great Britain. I wish the House to understand, that whilst the Government consider the energy and zeal of the Agent-General beyond all praise, they recognize it to be their duty to regulate his actions by instructions from time to time; and they are aware that now and for some time to come much remains, and will remain, to be done to place the whole system of Immigration upon a thoroughly satisfactory footing.

PAYMENT TO ROAD BOARDS.

With respect to the sum of £100,000 which was last year authorized to be taken from the Public Works Loan for subsidies to Road Boards, the House will remember that in the Payments to Provinces Act it was provided that, on the application of the Superintendent of any Province, one-half of the Road Board Allowance allotted to such Province was to be expended in payment of the cost of Permanent Works in such Province. Advantage was largely taken of this provision;—all the Provinces, with the exception of Auckland and Hawke's Bay, claimed the full half of the sum allotted to the Road Boards. In the case of the Province of Auckland, only £7,718 was expended on Permanent Works, whilst £16,608 18s. was distributed among the Road Boards; and in the case of the Province of Hawke's Bay, £1,031 on Permanent Works, and £1,333 among the