

I pointed out then that the previous habits of life and the general character of the Norwegians, eminently fitted them to undertake the work of pioneers in bush country; while the Danes, on the other hand, showed less aptitude for the work of colonization than the average of English immigrants.

I also directed the attention of the Government to the evident want of care for the interests of the Colony shown by the Agent at Copenhagen in the selection of immigrants.

Further experience, both of the Palmerston party and also of immigration ex "England" (second voyage), confirms me in the opinion then expressed, both as to the relative character of the two classes of immigrants, and also as to the difference in the action of the Colonial Agents at Christiania and Copenhagen.

As a rule, the Danes are physically unable to contend with the hardships of a pioneer settler's life; and while the Norwegians house themselves comfortably with the rude materials at their command, are able to make good wages immediately on setting to work, and surround themselves with many simple comforts, and are, moreover, cheerful and contented as a rule, the Danes are shiftless, thrifless, unable to work with the axe and not very eager to learn, and are therefore unable to earn nearly as much as their neighbours, and, as a result, are discontented, unreasonable in their expectations from Government, and ready to magnify every little unavoidable difficulty into a great grievance.

Nothing can be more marked than the contrast presented at the Masterton camp between the two nationalities. The temporary huts of the two parties are erected close together, the Danes on the one side of a sort of street, the Norwegians on the other.

The houses of the Norwegians are comfortable, exquisitely clean, and in most cases even tastefully decorated, their inhabitants clean, cheerful, and contented. As the result of two months' work, the Norwegian party have paid their store account for their two months' supplies, in full, and they have to draw for one month's work besides, which will probably, most of it, be paid to the Government in partial liquidation of their debt for passage, &c.

The Danes, on the other side of the street, are comparatively poorly housed; there is no sign of comfort or thrift about their rooms,—their houses and persons are filthy. They are heavily in debt to the storekeeper, and though they have had, per head, nearly 50 per cent. more food supplied than the Norwegians, they complain that they are not allowed to run more heavily into debt.

Having in view the additional difficulty which must result to the Government in recouping itself advances for passages, &c., made to the latter class of men, and the fear that a large number of them will merge into the "loafing" element of the community, I desire to suggest the desirability of encouraging the Norwegian and discouraging the Danish immigration as far as possible, and of exercising a far more stringent supervision over the selection of the latter immigrants, than has obtained in the case of the two shipments already made.

I desire also to point out that the mixed emigration of Norwegians and Danes is a mistake, in consequence of the existence of a very bitter national feeling of animosity between them, which prevents their co-operating in anything, however much it might be to their mutual advantage to work together.

A. FOLLETT HALCOMBE,
Immigration Officer.

No. 46.

MEMORANDUM for the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

(No. 94, 1872.)

Public Works Office, Wellington, 6th July, 1872.

REFERRING to the memorandum of 22nd December, No. 66, in which I enclosed copy of a provisional agreement made with Messrs. Brogden and Sons, for the construction of railways in New Zealand—but under which a short length of the Auckland and Waikato Railway has been the only work executed, I have now to inform you that arrangements have been entered into with that firm for the construction, at fixed prices, of the following lines, namely, Auckland and Waikato, Wellington and Hutt, Picton and Blenheim, Dunedin and Clutha, and Invercargill and Maitaia; the line from Napier to Pahi Pahi, and a continuation of the Wellington and Hutt to the Upper Hutt, being still under consideration.

As these arrangements are now being put into legal form, I am not able to send you complete particulars, but will forward copies of the contracts immediately on their completion.

J. D. ORMOND.