

1878.

NEW ZEALAND.

IMMIGRATION.

(FURTHER LETTERS FROM THE AGENT-GENERAL.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The Hon. the MINISTER for IMMIGRATION to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Immigration Office, Wellington, New Zealand, 12th August, 1878.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th of June last, No. 517, with reference to the expenditure of the Agent-General's Department in the United Kingdom, and in reply to transmit, for your information, copy of the estimates for the financial year 1878-79, from which you will learn that it is proposed to obtain a vote of £4,000 for the purpose, that sum being charged against consolidated revenue, instead of loan as heretofore.

I have, &c.,
ROBERT STOUT.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

No. 2.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER for IMMIGRATION.

(No. 517.)

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 18th June, 1878.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th April, No. 66, in which you direct me to further reduce the expenditure of this department, and in which you indicate some of the officers from whom I may choose those whose services can be dispensed with.

I am sensible of the fact that it is my duty to defer to the wishes of the Government, and if merely dispensing with certain officers would give effect to your wishes I should have nothing to do but to obey your instructions. But you throw on me also the responsibility of maintaining the efficiency of the department, so that, in effect, beyond making the reductions, the discretion as to their nature falls on me. You will not therefore, I hope, think it unreasonable that I should take some little time to consider a matter of so much importance; and, in order to do so, I propose postponing an answer to your letter till next mail, when I hope I will be able to lay before you fully the plan I propose to give effect to your wishes.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL,
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Minister for Immigration, Wellington.

No. 3.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER for IMMIGRATION.

(No. 634.)

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 17th July, 1878.

In continuation of my letter No. 517, of the 18th June, I have now the honor to further reply to your despatch No. 66, of the 5th April.

I first anxiously considered the time when any reductions which would have to be made should commence, and came to the conclusion that it would be very injurious to the interests of the colony to do anything to disturb the prevailing arrangements during the present emigration season. All the plans for emigration during this season are fixed, and every officer in the department is very much occupied. If the reductions commence after the emigration season is over, we shall be able to make different arrangements next season—indeed the only mode of reducing which I can see, without entailing disastrous results, depends upon alterations which I propose in our emigration system, which alterations it would be impossible to bring into force during the present season.

In considering the reductions which it is possible to make without totally impairing the efficiency of the department I first estimated the practicability of dispensing with the services of the various officers to whom you specially refer, viz., Mr. Kennaway, the chief of the department under myself; Mr. Cashel Hoey, my private secretary; Mr. McKellar, the accountant to the department; Mr. Smith, the despatching officer; and Mr. Otywell, the secretary to the Scotch Department.

Respecting Mr. Kennaway, I have to submit that it would be in the highest degree undesirable to dispense with his services. He has a thorough knowledge of the business of the department in all its branches, and his assiduity and devotion to work cannot be too highly extolled. In addition, his judgment is excellent. You will readily conceive that in carrying on the enormous operations of this agency with its many and varied responsibilities, delicate questions constantly arise which call for the exercise of much discretion and judgment. It has been my good fortune since I have held the office of Agent-General not to have incurred the disapproval of the Government of the colony in any one single particular that I can call to mind, whilst in dozens of cases in which I have exercised discretion I have received from the Government an indication of their approval. I do not mention this with any view to self-glorification, but to enable me to say that I have derived the greatest possible advantage in being constantly able to discuss with Mr. Kennaway all subjects relating to the department, and in obtaining from him his views of the same. I cannot reconcile it to my duty to the colony to dispense with Mr. Kennaway's services.

Concerning Mr. Cashel Hoey I have to say that my predecessor, the late Dr. Featherston, was allowed the services of a private secretary, and the Government that appointed me did not intimate their desire to withdraw from me a like advantage. Mr. Cashel Hoey had everything to recommend him for the position, and I deemed myself fortunate in being able to secure a continuation of his services. It is idle to deny that he has been of great assistance to me, and that I shall greatly feel his loss. But since a question arises of dispensing with officers, it seems to me that my duty to the colony calls upon me to submit to a loss which will specially fall on myself rather than to one which would more directly fall on the colony. In other words, I must myself make up the loss of Mr. Hoey's services. Impelled by these considerations, I have, with great regret, given Mr. Hoey notice that his services will not be required after the end of November next.

With regard to Mr. McKellar, I cannot see that it is feasible to dispense with his services. Mr. McKellar, besides being an excellent accountant, has a thorough knowledge of the special mode of dealing with New Zealand accounts necessitated by the colonial laws which regulate them. He is entirely trustworthy, and is constantly engaged in duties concerning which it is necessary to repose large confidence in him. The amount of payments passing through this office is enormous, and accounts of a complicated nature have to be regularly rendered. Even if another accountant could be obtained for a little less salary, I am sure the economy would be a false one.

Concerning Mr. Smith, I unreservedly express the opinion that it will be a great misfortune to lose his services. There are thousands of emigrants now comfortably placed in New Zealand who owe to his intelligence, special knowledge, and determination much comfort and a considerable amount of safety on their voyage to their distant home. We depend on Mr. Smith for approval of the vessels and stores offered to us by the contractors; with him rests the suggestion of such alterations as may be desirable to make the ship safer or more comfortable; he is responsible for the stowage arrangements; and on his tact and experience depend the smoothing over the difficulties which constantly arise when emigrants are embarking. I should indeed be much concerned to lose Mr. Smith's services, but I have made him a proposal by which they would in part be available to the department when required. The nature of this proposal is, that he attends to the shipping of plant and material, for which we now pay the shipping agents a considerable sum yearly, and that for his emigration services we pay a small salary. He has not yet told me whether he will entertain the proposal, and meanwhile I have told him we will dispense with his services after the end of November. I should point out to you that the contract made with the New Zealand Shipping Company requires that we provide an officer to approve ships, stores, &c., in short to perform the duties which Mr. Smith so ably discharges.

Mr. Otywell is an excellent officer, able, intelligent, and hard working; but the Scotch Agency is by no means a pressing necessity. I arranged to remodel it because of its previous existence, and as remodelled it has worked well. But the applications considered at Edinburgh could as well be considered here, and I have given Mr. Otywell and his clerks notice that we will not require their services after the end of November next. I have not yet decided whether to ask Mr. Andrew to continue to act as Commissioner. He would have, in such a position, no special function. Of course, in doing away with the Scotch Agency we should have to depend on the Albion Shipping Company for seeing to the departure of emigrants and for providing fitting vessels and accommodation. I understand that your long experience of the Albion Company makes you willing to do this; indeed, you incidentally suggest that they might select emigrants. It is just possible I may be able to make some provision of this nature. I have spoken to Mr. Galbraith, and if he can secure Mr. Otywell's services, we paying some part of the latter's salary, I think he would be disposed to aid the selection. I am to speak with him further on the subject. The difficulty is the acceptance of the responsibility of making the selection, but some way to make this work smoothly may be found. Mr. Otywell has undoubtedly been of service in looking after the comfort of emigrants about to embark.

I notice your suggestion in your letter No. 76, of 23rd April last, to dispense with the services of local agents. The proposal falls in with my own views. The agents occasion a great deal of expense and much extra work in the office. Unless you largely increase the number of emigrants you require yearly I think we may obtain those you want without the aid of more than a very few agents, especially if you will let me know by January what are your requirements for the coming season. Half the difficulty we have in making selections is that I am not informed of the intentions of the Government till very shortly before the emigrants are required to sail. The better the class of emigrants, as a rule, the more reluctant are they to hurriedly rush away; and you will, I hope, excuse my strongly urging that in future I be advised of the Government requirements for the coming season not later than the beginning of January. With this proviso I think I can save the Government

£800 a year in agents' fees, and probably £200 extra in incidental charges, such as clerical duties, printing, &c. The clerical duty of the office, heavily taxed for examining agents' accounts, will be lessened.

Finally, I may say I hope we shall be able to let one or two of the rooms now occupied, and dispense with the services of one or two clerks.

To sum up, the positive reductions will amount as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
The Scottish Establishment, exclusive of Mr. Andrew	600	0	0
Mr. Cashel Hoey	400	0	0
Mr. Smith, say	200	0	0
Saving in Agents	800	0	0
Contingent „	200	0	0
Clerks	100	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£2,300	0	0

Contingent.

Mr. Andrew	285	0	0
Rent	100	0	0
Mr. Holloway	150	0	0
Travelling expenses, ditto	100	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£635	0	0

I really do not see that I can do better than this, and I am not disposed to recommend that Mr. Holloway be altogether dispensed with, especially as I observe that you think well of such labours as Mr. Holloway pursues, as you have recommended to me for similar employment in lecturing and personally seeing agricultural labourers a gentleman on his way home from the colony.

It is not necessary for me to give you again the statistics of the office. It will suffice that the correspondence is enormous, and the duties most varied and responsible. In addition to shipping out during a short season a large number of emigrants selected from a very much larger number of applicants, we purchase and ship plant and material to a very considerable amount, and we discharge numberless duties for almost every department of the Government service in the colony.

In conclusion, allow me to say that you appear to think we can find sufficient emigrants from those that are nominated. But, as I have previously pointed out, the number of nominated emigrants willing and eligible to emigrate is small in proportion to the number nominated in the colony, and very much less than the number of emigrants I have to send out.

The Hon. the Minister for Immigration,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL,
Agent-General.

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Price 3d.]

