

1879.

## NEW ZEALAND.

## FALMOUTH AS A PORT OF EMBARKATION

(LETTER FROM THE AGENT-GENERAL RESPECTING THE SUITABILITY OF).

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

## No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the HON. R. STOUT.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 23rd April, 1879.

For some time I have felt that it would be a great advantage to the Government of New Zealand to have a depôt of its own in which to house the emigrants before they depart. Without such a depôt we are less able to control the emigrants, to keep them back when it is not desirable they should sail, and to allow them to arrive in advance of the vessel sailing when it is expedient they should do so.

Lately it has been represented to me that if we made Falmouth the port of departure, the Dock Company would place advantages in our way of an important character. Falmouth would possess many advantages. The harbour is excellent; the ships could come alongside of the pier, saving a great deal of expense, trouble, and hardship to the emigrants; they would much sooner get clear of the Channel; and, inasmuch as the change would be very welcome to the people of Falmouth, a great many facilities would be afforded in Falmouth which in Plymouth are wanting, the people being comparatively indifferent to our remaining there. Another advantage would be that we should be independent of the arrangements of the other colonies. At present we have to time our ships so as not to conflict with theirs. For example, I have just received a note from the owner of the depôt, warning me that the New South Wales Government would require the use of the depôt for ships to be despatched as follows: May 12th, June 9th, July 7th, July 28th, August 25th. This is for one colony only. If illness broke out amongst the emigrants for the other colonies the whole of our arrangements would be blocked.

If such a project were carried out, it would be desirable that you should send home, to take charge of the depôt, some one accustomed to a similar charge of an immigrant depôt in New Zealand. If you will telegraph me the word "Falmouth," I shall understand that you wish me to enter into negotiations, but that the arrangement is not to be carried out until I submit it to you either in writing or by cable.

The nature of the arrangement I should contemplate would be to rent a suitable depôt from the Dock Company on favourable terms, and also to make favourable terms with the railway company or companies. I think there would be little difficulty in doing so, for their interests would be largely concerned.

I enclose two letters of Mr. Smith on the subject. Also, separately, I send plans. I doubt if it will cost ships more to call in at Falmouth than Plymouth. A large shipowner gave me to understand otherwise. On the contrary, he said, all things considered, ships would have less expenses at Falmouth. The question of railway passage will be one of arrangement. The advantage to the Irish emigrants will be very great. For our steam line, also, Falmouth will be especially suitable, as the carriage of the mails will be expedited many hours. Finally, having the place comparatively to ourselves, we shall be able to do our business more expeditiously than at Plymouth, where an Australian steamer takes precedence of everything.

I have, &amp;c.,

JULIUS VOGEL,  
Agent-General.

The Hon. R. Stout, Wellington.

## Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

Mr. E. A. SMITH to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Falmouth, 22nd April, 1879.

In pursuance of your instructions I have visited this place and examined, as far as possible, its adaptability for the despatch of emigrant ships.

I enclose a small plan on letter-paper of the docks, and I will send you a larger plan to-morrow. They are in a very unfinished state, but on the Dock Company's property there is a fine site for a depôt. The railway runs right into the docks, and although there is no wet dock at present for ships to enter, there is a pier—which you will see in the plan with the word "lighthouse" at the end—on either side of which a vessel could lie and take in her emigrants, there being 21 or 22 feet alongside at low water.

The approach to the port is well marked and lighted, and when a ship is clear of the Lizard, which is only about 12 or 13 miles S.S.W. of Falmouth, she may be said to be clear of nearly all Channel dangers.

Sir Julius Vogel, K.C.M.G.,  
Agent-General for New Zealand.

I have, &c.,  
EDWD. A. SMITH.

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### Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Mr. E. A. SMITH to the AGENT-GENERAL.

DEAR SIR,—

Plymouth, 23rd April, 1879.

With reference to my report of yesterday respecting Falmouth, I have now the pleasure to furnish you with sundry information, &c., which I obtained respecting the port, my limit of inquiry being restricted by your not wishing my errand to be known there.

The harbour dues are one halfpenny per ton, the dock dues are threepence per ton: both these dues would have to be paid by any ship using the pier to embark passengers. There is only a charge of one shilling per ship at Plymouth, called "salt ash dues," but there is a charge of, I believe, ninepence per statute adult for every passenger embarked in the Sound: this is for the steamer which takes them on board. The comparative cost for, say, a 1,200-ton ship embarking 300 passengers would be—at Plymouth, £11 6s.; at Falmouth, £17 10s. The charge for pilotage would, I believe, be about the same at both ports.

The difference of mileage by land is  $65\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and the extra cost is 5s.  $5\frac{1}{2}$ d.—that is to say, the railway-fare from London to Plymouth is 18s. 8d., and from London to Falmouth £1 4s.  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.; and the extra time occupied in the journey is about three hours.

There is a second line of railway projected—a continuation of the South-Western—which is completed as far as Holsworthy, and requires only a few miles to be laid to connect it with mineral railways already in existence, which would then bring the South-Western and all the narrow-gauge system in direct communication with Falmouth.

The difference of mileage from London by sea is about 50 miles, and the time occupied would be about six hours. There is, of course, a saving of sea voyage for the emigrants coming from Ireland.

There is 22 feet of water alongside the pier at low water, and there would be great advantage in the people being able to walk directly aboard the ship instead of being transhipped from a steamer; the people landing from the Irish boats would only have a very short distance to walk to the depôt, and the railway terminus adjoins the docks, in fact there is a wicket-gate leading from the terminus directly into the dock premises through which the emigrants could be passed.

There is a block of warehouses, marked in the plan, which I send you by this post, A, which might possibly be converted into a depôt, but I was unable to ascertain its fitness for such a purpose without betraying the purport of my visit. As far as I could learn it is generally occupied, and therefore the Dock Company might not be disposed to alienate it from its present use, though if it could be made available for a depôt the Dock Company might build sheds which would answer the purpose of warehouses, as they have already a number of such sheds. These are marked in pencil on the plan.

Altogether Falmouth would be a very desirable port for emigration, if you did not consider the extra railway journey objectionable. It is not a garrison town as Plymouth is. There is a splendid site on which a depôt could be built, if either the Railway or the Dock Company would entertain the question; and if the projected line of steamers to New Zealand were to be established, there could be no better place for a port of call than Falmouth.

Sir Julius Vogel, K.C.M.G.

I have, &c.,  
EDWD. A. SMITH.

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### No. 2.

Sir G. GREY to Sir JULIUS VOGEL.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 22nd July, 1879.

DECLINE your proposals Falmouth.

Vogel, London.

GREY.

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By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBUXY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1879.