

1880.
NEW ZEALAND.

VINE CULTURE:

(SUGGESTED SPECIAL SETTLEMENT IN THE HOKIANGA DISTRICT).

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

The AGENT-GENERAL to the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 16th June, 1880.
I have the honor to forward, for the consideration of the Government, copy of a communication I have received from Mr. Galbraith, setting forth very fully his ideas with reference to a proposed special settlement in the North of Auckland for the Culture of the Vine.

Mr. Galbraith waited on me in the first instance, and I had a lengthened interview with him on this subject, the result of which was my suggesting to him to put his ideas into writing, and promising to forward them to the Government for the purpose named.

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

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

Enclosure.

Mr. GEORGE GALBRAITH to the AGENT-GENERAL.

The Hon. Sir Julius Vogel, K.C.M.G., Agent-General for New Zealand, 7, Westminster Chambers, London.

SIR,—With reference to the matter of a special settlement in the North of Auckland, for the culture of the vine, which I had the honor of bringing under your notice on Friday last, I now, in accordance with your desire, beg to submit, for the consideration of the New Zealand Government, reasons for encouraging a suitable settlement.

This is not a new idea. The *New Zealand Herald* of 21st July, 1879 (issue for Home circulation), says:—"The Waste Lands Board, at the instance of the Government, have reserved from sale a block of 26,000 acres in the Hokianga District, it being the object of Sir George Grey to establish there a settlement of skilled vine-growers, in order to regularly test the capacity of the colony for wine-production. It is of exceeding importance to ascertain as soon as possible what we are really able to do in this way. . . . The locality for the experiment has been well chosen, the climate of the northern districts of New Zealand being, of course, the most favourable."

Northern Auckland, being more broken and varied than the south, is more suited for gardens or small farms than for large farms, which, to modern ideas, are best suited for profitable occupation; and these northern districts are not likely to be soon settled by ordinary agriculturists, as they prefer the southern districts as more suitable; and until these have been filled up the country north of Auckland will probably remain unsettled, unless some special industry for which it may be better suited, as the culture of the vine and wine-making, be well introduced. The olive and silk would no doubt also do well here.

The culture of the vine, the olive, and perhaps also of silk, admit of, and, indeed, require a much larger population—probably from three to eight times more—than ordinary farming does; and such industries would not compete with existing New Zealand industries, but, on the contrary, foster these, and create new ones.

Dr. Jules Guzat, in his work on the "Culture de la Vigne et Vinification," says, in comparing the results to the wealth of France of ordinary farming and the culture of the vine:—"Bread and meat are consequences, and not causes (*principes*), of colonization; they constitute its necessities, and not its wealth: these being to populations what wages are to workers—an expense, and not the treasury which provides the pay. The vine, on the contrary, is at once the workshop and the banker of the *vignerons*: it necessitates and forces all around the production of bread and meat, it pays a large tribute to the State, it exports afar its product, and finds still means largely to remunerate its proprietor if he is a true cultivator."

To succeed in vine-culture and wine-making (as well as in olive and silk culture) skilled workers experienced in the industry would be required. Selected workers from the south of France would be able at once to commence operations with the best possible prospect of success.