pensioners. I cannot help thinking that, if the members for this provincial district do but take this matter in hand, one thousand men with their wives and families might be located in this province within twelve months of this date.

I have, &c.,
BURTON J. DAVENEY,
Official Paymaster of Imperial Pensions.

The Chairman, Chamber of Commerce, Auckland.

Enclosure.

DEAR SIR,— Barracks of the Corps of Commissionaires, London, 7th July, 1887.

I have received your letter and enclosures on the subject of emigration of pensioners. I need hardly say that I entirely agree with you as to the advantages which would inevitably accrue to all ex-soldiers who are possessed of the necessary qualifications for the object you have at heart I have considered the subject thoroughly for some years past, and have already taken steps with a view of forming divisions of their corps in various parts of the Empire. I shall probably send out an officer this autumn to Sydney to commence operations, and if successful there (of which I entertain no doubt) it will only be a matter of time before we get to New Zealand.

I do not intend to ask any assistance from any Government, either at Home or abroad. It is better to keep clear of the politicians, and to consider the matter as one of pure business. The acceptance of assistance implies the loss of independence. At the same time, I should have no objection to enter into strictly business relations with any public authority; and if the Government of New Zealand, for instance, could give the "corps" a lien upon any allotment given to a pensioner, or enable me to recover the amount I might be disposed to advance to a pensioner on the security of his pension, I should be inclined to treat with them. In such a case the man selected must be under forty-one years of age, energetic, and with previous agricultural experience. His agreement to pay the loan must be approved of by the Pensions Department here, and give power to the paying officer in the colony to hand over the stoppages by equal quarterly payments, extending over a maximum of twelve years, with interest calculated at the rate of 4 per cent.

Knowing soldiers from a long and practical experience of forty-five years, I feel sure that out of every hundred good men there are not more than twenty at the outside capable of doing well as agriculturists, pure and simple. At the same time, there would be a very considerable number in addition to these twenty who would make very useful and intelligent colonists in various other ways, partaking more or less of a town character: the possession of a small village-allotment would be most advantageous to these men. . . . .

As far as the poorer classes in a colony are concerned, the introduction of a few hundred pensioners would be a very different affair from the influx of an equal number of ordinary emigrants: the latter bring nothing but their labour, but the former are capitalists, and therefore the best friends of labour, because their capital is the most sure means of employing labour. For instance, if I send a division of 130 men to a colony and their pensions averaged £25 a year, the capital of each pension at twelve years' purchase would be £300, and consequently I should be sending out £30,000. Looking at the matter in another point of view, there can be no doubt that a company of a hundred able-bodied and picked men, thoroughly trained and disciplined, would be worth any amount to the Colonial Government.

I think that the best class of men from the army as agricultural emigrants will be the "reservists." I have several hundreds of them, and when their engagements with the Home Government come to an end they will be a very valuable body of men. A reservist entering the corps at twenty-three years of age, and having eight years' reserve service, ought by that time, if a member of the corps, to have accumulated from £50 to £100. He will then be in the prime of life (thirty-one years of age), and have at least thirty years of good work in him. I have recommended all these men to emigrate, and if the Colonial Government have any sense they will give special but indirect encouragement to these men to transfer themselves to a country where their good qualities are better appreciated than they are at Home. You must bear in mind the fact that in many points of view the emigration of a good citizen possessing an income of £25 a year paid out of the taxes of this country is a considerable loss to England. You must not, therefore, expect many people here, especially the Government, to facilitate their emigration. It is the Colonial Government that will gain, and that, too, largely. It is consequently their affair, and much to their interest to get these men.

Your electorate, composed so largely of labouring-men and possessed of little capital till their energy has accumulated it, will not be particularly desirous of encouraging our men to come out, and I doubt whether they will consent to be taxed for any purpose which will promote the influx of labour. But, after all, these points will not determine a question which every one can decide for himself; and, if any responsible persons will give me an absolute security for repayment, I shall be quite ready to send out some good men, every one of whom shall be previously approved of by your own agent in London. . . . .

I have looked over all the printed papers you have sent me; and, should you write again, be so good as to direct to me at the barracks of the Corps of Commissionaires. I shall be happy to talk over the subject with any colonist paying a visit to England if he understands that I can only deal with it as a matter of business.

I have, &c.,
EDWARD WALTER,
Corps of Commissionaires.

Captain Daveney, Auckland.

PS.—Could you give me any returns embodying the following information: Number of pensioners in New Zealand on the 1st January, 1887, average age, average rate of pension, average rate of wages when not working for themselves?