

1892.

NEW ZEALAND.

“GENERAL” BOOTH’S OVER-SEA COLONY

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives, dated 28th July, 1892.

Ordered, “That there be laid before this House a return of all letters and telegrams which have passed between the Government and the Agent-General, “General” Booth, or other persons, in reference to “General” Booth’s over-sea colony.”—(Mr. MOORE.)

No. 1.

MEMORANDUM for the Hon. the PREMIER.

I HAD an interview with “General” Booth on the morning after his lecture on “Darkest England.” I gave him particulars of the system which exists in New Zealand under Act of Parliament and Orders in Council for the establishment of farm-homestead and village-homestead settlements. I promised that the Minister of Lands would supply him with the necessary papers to explain the system in detail, and I have written a memorandum for his guidance to the same effect, embodying also the views which I have formed of the conditions necessary to secure success.

I suggest that the following papers be sent: First, the last report of the Crown Land Department; second, Mr. March’s paper read at Christchurch 12th June, 1891; third, the regulations which appeared in the *Gazette* of the 12th March, 1891; fourth, Mr. Copley’s report on New Zealand village settlements; fifth, a copy of the Land Act of 1885.

In my opinion it is highly desirable that the Government should give General Booth an opportunity of putting his scheme to a practical test. The main features of it do not materially differ from those of the village-settlement system. If it should prove a failure, the worst that can happen is that the New Zealand Government will have incurred some expenditure in road-making, perhaps in building a school, and will have to set against that and any advances which may be made their land in a more or less improved condition.

The eyes of England and the whole Empire are on the attempt which General Booth is making to solve the hitherto insoluble problem of England’s superfluous and unemployed population. The fact that the scheme is to be tried in New Zealand will direct the attention of the whole world to that colony, and the attempt to be made there. Its progress will be watched and reported upon by the press, both English and colonial, and public attention will be favourably drawn to New Zealand as a field for settlement. The Salvation Army itself forms no unimportant body of possible colonists.

I think that the Government should stipulate for two conditions in granting any exceptional facilities to the Salvation Army: (1.) That the first batch of emigrants shall have first undergone some probation on the farm-colony in England, and have proved that they are physically able and willing to enter upon the business of land cultivation and settlement. (2.) That a guarantee should be given that, to the best knowledge and belief of the officers most capable of judging in the Army, none of those first sent have been convicted criminals; and that the widest possible publicity should be given to that undertaking.

I think, further, that the settlement should consist of persons chosen from all ranks of the Army, and that the system of discipline should be observed in the settlement as completely as it is in the Army in cities. If General Booth is ready to comply with these requirements, I suggest that the Government should inform him that they will submit proposals to Parliament to set aside a block of 5,000 acres of land in a bush country, to be selected and approved by some person on behalf of General Booth; that they should, at the same time, undertake not to throw open for sale or selection for a limited period of years a further area of 5,000 acres adjoining, which the Army might take up within the specified time. I suggest that, in lieu of a rental of 5 per cent. on the value of the land, a peppercorn rent be exacted for the first thirty years.

Were it not that I think it would be waste of time to urge the point, I would strongly put before the Government the advantages which, in my opinion, a power to acquire the freehold has in stimulating a man to the utmost exertion in the cultivation and improvement of his holding, and I would put before the Government suggestions for so doing, while at the same time guarding the settlers from becoming the prey of money-lenders, and the State from being the victim of land speculation. The publicly-expressed views of the Government have been so distinct that I do not propose to follow this course. The Government might, however, consider how far they could relax the existing conditions of valuation at the end of thirty years, so as to give to the settlers a share with the State of the unearned increment of value in their holdings.

The Army will have to incur considerable expenditure in passage-money, and in maintenance for the first one or two years of their settlers. This they expect ultimately to recoup. The Government might consider how this should be secured on the land as a second charge after any rent or interest due to the Government.

The success which has attended the Canterbury Settlement at Waimamaku, in the Auckland Province, where the settlers chose their own companions, are banded together for a common purpose, sent their own representative to select the land, and, above all, to cultivate the land in such a manner as to grow nearly everything they eat leads me to hope that, under similar conditions, a Salvation Army settlement will not be less successful.

3rd November, 1891.

ONSLow.

No. 2.

The SURVEYOR-GENERAL to MESSRS. BAKER BROTHERS.

Wellington, 27th October, 1890.

I ENCLOSE the map of Waimarino, showing the Government lands. There is, in all, about 400,000 acres. Some parts of this country the Government would not part with for settlement purposes as it contains valuable timber suitable for milling, but, in the event of anything being arranged with the Government, the boundaries must be a matter of after arrangement.

Messrs. Baker Brothers.

S. PERCY SMITH.

No. 3.

MEMORANDUM for His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

In reference to the memorandum of His Excellency of the 3rd instant, Ministers have considered the question, and submit the following:—

Ministers agree that an opportunity should be afforded to "General" Booth to give his scheme of a colony a trial in New Zealand, and are prepared to ask for a general power in a Land Bill to be submitted to Parliament next session, to set aside, say, 5,000 acres of land, with an adjoining 5,000 acres to be reserved for the same purpose. Ministers also agree that the following stipulations should be observed, namely:—

1. That the first batch of emigrants shall have first undergone some probation on the farm-colony in England, and have proved that they are physically able and willing to enter upon the business of land cultivation and settlement.

2. That a guarantee should be given that, to the best knowledge and belief of the officers most capable of judging in the Army, none of those first sent have been convicted criminals, and that the widest possible publicity should be given to that guarantee. The proposals to be submitted to Parliament would be of a general character, enabling any other organisation than the Salvation Army to take up a similar area upon the same condition. Ministers also think that the tenure should be a perpetual lease, but that with regard to the price or rental special privileges should be granted, and that the full value should not be exacted.

The question as to whether the rent should be perpetual, or for a longer term than thirty years, is one the Government has at present under consideration, with the view to legislation next session. With respect to the unearned increment, Ministers would point out that if the term is sufficiently long, say for fifty years, the settlers would share with the State a very large portion of the unearned increment, as during the larger portion of that time the unimproved value of the land would be largely enhanced.

With respect to the Army being able to secure passage-money upon the land, they will have the right under the ordinary special settlement conditions to make their own regulations and by-laws, under which the end desired would be attained. Ministers concur with His Excellency in thinking that the principle of settlers choosing their own companions, as embodied in our special settlement regulations, is the secret of successful settlement, and they desire to extend it in the direction of co-operation, by which organizations like the Salvation Army shall have the opportunity of carrying on the work of colonisation. The papers mentioned by His Excellency are forwarded herewith.

I have, &c.,

Premier's Office, Wellington, 10th November, 1891.

J. BALLANCE.

No. 4.

Mr. W. F. PEARSON to the Hon. the MINISTER of LANDS.

Castle Street, Dunedin, 18th February, 1892.

SIR,—

When "General" Booth, the head of the religious organization called the Salvation Army, recently visited Dunedin, I waited on him with the view of calling to his attention the advantages proffered by Stewart Island as a locality in which the experiment of settling a portion of what he

terms the "submerged tenth" of London might be carried to a successful and advantageous issue. After considerable conversation on the subject, the General said he was inclined to think, so far as he could grasp the position, that the subject was worthy of earnest consideration, and that if I would ascertain the views of the Government in regard to any concessions it was prepared to make in the shape of a free grant of land, would put in writing the arguments I had verbally adduced as to the natural and peculiar advantages of the locality for settlement such as he proposed, and forwarded them to him in London, he would give the matter his most serious attention, and he would be very grateful for my services.

Knowing the locality—Stewart Island—so intimately as I do from years of practical exploration and careful study when I was Commissioner of Crown Lands for Southland, gauging the difficulty of securing ordinary settlement, and fully appreciating the advantage to the colony likely to accrue from its being peopled on a comprehensive and systematic principle such as that foreshadowed by General Booth, I trust you will pardon me for trespassing on your valuable time and attention in bringing the subject before you and soliciting your favourable consideration of the scheme.

There was a block of some 50,000 acres set aside on the eastern frontage of Stewart Island some years ago for special settlement by Shetland Islanders. This, owing to the failure of the scheme, remains untenanted, and, speaking from a personal and intimate knowledge of its position and capabilities, I am certain that it is peculiarly adapted to the system of agriculture particularly favoured by General Booth—namely, spade cultivation in small areas.

The wealth of the soil and suitability of the climate for the successful and abundant growth of cereals, root crops, and garden produce is amply attested by the locations of the Maoris, half-castes, and fishermen carved out of the bush in Horseshoe and Half-moon Bays, and some portions of Paterson Inlet; while in Cooper's Island, or Alloa, in the last-named inlet, there is a flourishing plantation of tropical and semi-tropical trees, such as bamboo, Lord Howe's Island palms, the nikau, karaka, neither of which will grow in the open or the mainland south of Nelson, planted by the late Mr. Charles Trail; the arum lily, geraniums, and many other flowers which die if exposed to the winter's frost in Christchurch or Dunedin, flourish all the year round. In fact, the climate is warmer in summer, all along the east coast of the island, than it is at Invercargill, while the sea air in winter tones down the cold of the season materially.

Irrespective, however, of the ordinary sustenance derivable from the cultivation of the soil, the intelligent and energetic settler on the island has the opportunity of obtaining material assistance to his means of living by developing the valuable fisheries, and entering systematically into the artificial cultivation of the oyster. Louis Napoleon, the late Emperor of the French, after restocking the Bay of Arcachon with oysters, obtained a revenue for the Government of hundreds of thousands of pounds. Stewart Island will be the source from which all the Australian Colonies will draw their supplies of this esculent; while the export to Great Britain in time might be swelled to very large dimensions. I consider there is a fecundity of wealth looming in the future from this industry alone.

The immediate exploration of the Antarctic Ocean will doubtless discover prolific whaling and sealing grounds. No better harbours than those of this island for commanding such can exist. Such a settlement as that contemplated by General Booth will have organization to direct labour to its proper channels, so that there may be no waste of endeavour, while it will possess sufficient means to carry judicious effort to practical success, and prevent the possibility of its dying of inanition.

Before being sent to the field of future exertion, the settler will be doubtless trained to fill his part. Some will learn the mysteries of the artificial cultivation of oysters at some of the numerous establishments in England; others will acquire knowledge of fisheries, fish-curing, &c. Some will be taught ship- and boat-building, and so forth. In any case, if the settlement be entertained, it will, I have no doubt, be a success. Unlike the ordinary special settlements under Governments, where each settler paddles his own canoe irrespective and unsympathetic of the necessities or desires of his neighbour, and too often with insufficient means, which exhausted, results in financial death, General Booth's settlements will have efficient organization at starting, authoritative control when started, and sufficient finance to carry them to a successful issue.

What I have the honour to ask is,—

1. Will the Government give General Booth a free grant of the 50,000 acres at Stewart Island, previously referred to, for the purpose of establishing a settlement of his people on it?
2. The conditions the Government will require the General to implement, should the grant be made?

If you will be good enough to let me have an early answer it will be esteemed a favour.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Lands, Wellington.

WALTER H. PEARSON.

No. 5.

Mr. F. E. RUTLAND to the Hon. the MINISTER OF LANDS.

DEAR SIR,—

Calcutta, 11th January, 1892.

During "General" Booth's visit to Christchurch, and after the interview which he had the pleasure of having with His Excellency the Governor and the Premier (Mr. Ballance), learning that you were in the city, the General requested me to call upon you, as, owing to his many engagements, he found it impossible to do so personally. I made several attempts to catch you, but to my regret I was unsuccessful. The object that I had in view was to obtain some fuller informa-

tion regarding the land at the disposal of the Government, its location, description of soil, &c. You will doubtless be aware of the terms of the memorandum submitted to the Premier by the Earl of Onslow, and of the nature of the result of the deliberations of the Cabinet thereon.

The General is writing by this mail to the Premier upon the matter; but, as the question of land is your special department, I write to say that it would very materially assist the General in arriving at a decision if, on his return to London, he could have before him some fuller information as to the nature and locality of the lands still remaining in the hands of the Government, the more especially if some indication could be given as to the district, &c., in which the land to be set aside for the trial of this scheme is situated, that this, of course, always premising that the measure receives the sanction of the House.

The General embarks at Bombay on the 23rd instant, Homeward bound, and he will feel much obliged if you would reply to this letter to him at 101, Queen Victoria Street, London.

I may add that any assistance you can give us in this direction will be treated confidentially. I must apologize on the General's behalf that this letter is not in his own hand, but I am sure you will fully understand how very much he is pressed for time.

I have, &c.,

FRANCIS E. RUTLAND, A.D.C.

The Hon. Mr. J. McKenzie, Minister of Lands, New Zealand.

No. 6.

The Hon. W. P. REEVES to Mr. F. E. RUTLAND.

SIR,—

10th March, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated Calcutta, 11th January, asking for some further information upon the nature of the lands and their locality still remaining in the hands of the Government.

In reply, I have to inform you that the land now at the disposal of the Government for settlement in such colonies as General Booth proposed are mostly situated in the southern part of the North Island; and their character may be briefly described as rough, bush-covered land, the quality of the soil being fair.

The Government has not any lands of an open character suitable for agriculture without draining, and this of limited quantity. The bush lands are those which the settlers mostly prefer. Such lands, of course, require clearing of forest, and are suitable for pastoral purposes only for some years or until the stumps rot out; and their broken nature makes them even then more suitable for grazing than for the plough. Such as they are, however, the settlers here select them eagerly and manage to make comfortable homes on them and a fair living, by industry, directed by experience and perseverance.

The accompanying maps will show generally the situation of the Crown lands.

I have, &c.,

W. P. REEVES,

For the Minister of Lands.

No. 7.

From "GENERAL" BOOTH.

(Received 21st May, 1892, from "General" Booth.)

(Telegram.)

APPROVE fully draft cable. Calling Monday.

Salvation, London.

No. 8.

Mr. WALTER KENNAWAY to "GENERAL" BOOTH.

SIR,—

13, Victoria Street, London, S.W., 16th May, 1892.

I am directed by the Agent-General to inform you that he has received a cablegram from the New Zealand Government, in which it referred to the action you are taking in respect to immigration to that colony. It is stated that, the conditions not having been complied with, no land has been set aside, and under these circumstances the Agent-General is instructed to ascertain what is being done in the matter.

The Agent-General will, therefore, be much obliged if you will be pleased to inform him what steps you are taking in the matter, in order that he may forward the information to his Government.

I am, &c.,

WALTER KENNAWAY,

Secretary, Agent-General's Department.

No. 9.

To the AGENT-GENERAL.

The Salvation Army, 101, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.,

17th May, 1892.

DEAR SIR,—

I am desired to state by General Booth to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, and to say that he is deputing one of his officers to call upon you on Thursday morning next at 11 o'clock, in reference to the matter contained therein.

Yours, &c.,

W. B. Perceval, Esq., 13, Victoria Street, S.W.

(Signed) —————

No. 10.

(Telegram.) (Received 16th May, 1892.) Wellington, dated 16th.
 “GENERAL” BOOTH’S action immigration colony not complied with. No land set aside. What being done?
 To Deputy, London.

No. 11.

(Telegram.) (Despatched 24th May, 1892.)
 BOOTH.—The question is still unsettled. The question is whether Africa or New Zealand. Probably emissary goes colony purpose endeavouring to arrange better terms.
 To Premier, Wellington.

No. 12.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.
 Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W., 24th May, 1892.

SIR,—

“General” Booth.

I beg leave to transmit copy of your cablegram received on the 16th instant, and copy of my reply thereto despatched this day.

I also attach copy of correspondence which has taken place in respect to the matter “General” Booth’s representative called here on the 19th instant, and informed me that nothing had been definitely settled as to sending out any of their people to the colonies, as they were hesitating between Africa and New Zealand; but they would probably send a Commissioner to our colony for the purpose of negotiating for better terms, and I drew up a draft cablegram to that effect with the understanding that General Booth would reply in writing to my communication of the 16th instant.

On the 21st instant, I received a telegram, copy of which is attached; and to-day, not having received any letter from General Booth, I decided to send you the information which I had obtained with respect to his intentions.

I have, &c.,

W. B. PERCEVAL.

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