

THE MEETING AND TRANSHIPMENT OF IMMIGRANTS ON ARRIVAL.

The reception of the immigrants in the country of their adoption, the information required, the handling and quick despatch to their different destinations after a long sea-voyage, are all points which have been carefully considered by the Department. In order to give effect to this method of dealing with the new-comers the following system has been adopted :—

- (1.) The Immigration officers proceed to the vessel with the Port Health Officer.
- (2.) Letters from friends, together with instructions from the Department, are handed to each immigrant as he passes for health inspection.
- (3.) Railway and boat tickets are issued in lieu of contract tickets.
- (4.) Accommodation allotted if required.
- (5.) Employment given, or particulars taken.
- (6.) Wires taken for despatch to friends or employers.
- (7.) English money changed to New Zealand money at par.
- (8.) Any further information given if required.
(This work is all completed before the vessel berths.)
- (9.) Immigration officers attend and assist immigrants to get their baggage passed by the Customs, and, in the case of domestics, undertake the whole of this work.
- (10.) Connecting boats and trains are attended by departmental officers.

HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT OF IMMIGRANTS.

The method adopted by the Department in fulfilling these two important functions has proved singularly successful notwithstanding the fact that there has been a shortage of residential houses and accommodation. I am able to report that not in one single case of assisted or overseas-settlement immigrants can it be said that the Department was unable to supply accommodation immediately upon arrival and to offer employment within forty-eight hours of entrance into the Dominion. It was early realized that, with the prospect of a large influx of immigrants under the Imperial scheme, who had neither friends nor employment to proceed to, the two most important factors in dealing with this class were—firstly, accommodation, and, secondly, employment. As the Department has no branch offices, it was found necessary, at other than the port of arrival, to make provision for meeting the new-comer at his destination and conducting him to suitable accommodation. This work was entrusted to the Salvation Army, whose organization is not only established in the towns, but also penetrates every country district. The thoroughness with which its officers carried out their part of the work, under my supervision, contributed mainly to the above-stated result, and placed the Department in the position that it could readily deal with any accommodation emergency. The Departmental Employment Register, together with the assistance of the Auckland Branch of the Farmers' Union, proved sufficient to enable every immigrant who required it to be offered suitable employment.

SHIPPING: PASSENGER RATES AND BOOKING-PORTS.

There has been considerable improvement in the shipping situation during the year, although conditions are still far from normal. The shipping available for the large number of immigrants wishing to proceed to New Zealand was not sufficient to meet the demand—in fact, the congestion became so acute that the High Commissioner found it necessary to make special arrangements for putting on additional ships, and his action had the effect of affording some relief, although there are still several thousand intending immigrants awaiting passages to the Dominion.

The question of passage rates and the limitation of ports of booking recently imposed by the shipping companies for Government assisted passengers is one of the most important concerning immigration to-day. Even taking into consideration the extra expense of running ships as compared with pre-war times, it is evident that the companies concerned seem to have overlooked the enormous amount of passage-money received annually from this source of revenue, and also that their homeward freights are obtained from the Dominion. Negotiations are at present proceeding to procure more favourable and satisfactory terms for the Government.

DOMESTICS.

Owing to the shortage of shipping accommodation the number proceeding under this heading has been small, but the outlook for the ensuing year gives promise of a constant flow of this class of immigrant, the High Commissioner having already received 1,500 applications for passages under this scheme.

IMMIGRATION LITERATURE.

During the war and the long period of repatriation of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force there was no necessity for the encouragement of immigration, consequently the literature available to intending emigrants from England was limited and became out of date. Urgent requests for suitable up-to-date literature were received from the Hon. Sir James Allen upon taking up the position of High Commissioner for New Zealand in London, and a comprehensive plan of publicity was approved by you, a portion of which has already been carried out.

The scheme of immigration literature provides for the issue of an attractive general booklet on New Zealand, containing all the information required by an intending immigrant in regard to conditions of living in New Zealand, educational facilities, social life, productive activities, and the general character of the people and country. This booklet is suitable as a reply to all inquiries from intending immigrants, and it is printed in an attractive style, comparing favourably with the literature circulated among this class by other countries seeking immigrants.