

since the latter required a constant superintendence during the period of the deferred grant, and on failure of the Settler before he received it involved to him the sacrifice of his intermediate labour, and the transfer, without remuneration, of his improvements to another, while the simple operation in the case of a neglected allotment of compelling its transfer on sale of the improvements ensured the continuance of these without prejudice to the original settler, who might have failed from loss of health or change of views after severe and continued exertions.

A free concession of fifty acres may be considered as merely a nominal premium to the hardy Settler who first encounters the wilderness, and by his labour confers on the land its *sole value*, and to exact from him the payment of a price for that which is valueless, is in reality to impose a severe tax on those to whom encouragement should be given, and which it would be more just and politic to impose on the owner of the neighbouring lands who speculates on its improved value, from the industry of others.

In these views I have since considered that it would be more just to defer the payment of *interest* as well as *principal*, and to allow the whole charge to be redeemed by labour at the convenience of the Settler, for experience has shewn that the payment of the smallest sums for interest, and still more the instalments of principal, in situations where there are no markets, and where the Settlers require employment to enable them first to subsist and subsequently to provide the comforts of life, is attended with extreme difficulty, and that it is more to the interest of the country to allow the money he may possess to remain with the Settler, who may thus apply all his resources to improvements, and if he fails, be enabled to transfer his allotment without loss to another who may be willing and able to carry them on, and to pay for those improvements which really constitute a valid security for the debt. I would further consider that if at the period when free grants are usually conferred on fulfilment of the conditions, the debt were to be altogether remitted to the industrious Settler, that it would be not more than an equitable encouragement to his industry.

By the Regulations of the 11th May, 1843, Your Lordship will also observe that in the same view, the punctual discharge of the instalments when due have not been required; but no settlements have hitherto been formed under those Regulations.

I have entered into these details in order that the principles which I have from long experience found to be the most practicable in the prosecution of plans of systematic Colonization should be elucidated to Your Lordship, and in which I have endeavoured to guard against the most prevalent errors, owing to which much capital has been sacrificed in abortive projects, which have operated to the discouragement of others, which might have been more successful. I am fully impressed with the correctness of Your Lordship's views that such undertakings are most effectively promoted by the stimulus of private enterprise, and that the aid of the Government may more appropriately be given to persons of competent resources, who engage in them on principles that may be approved.

In this Province however the opening of Roads and construction of Bridges are beyond the ordinary means of individual proprietors of wilderness lands where dense forests must first be penetrated, and hence the importance I have attached to an improvement of the system of Road Appropriations, in a country, the settlement of which has been retarded by such works being wholly dependent on the sums that can annually be spared from the fluctuating resource of a commercial revenue.

The enclosed Gazette, containing the appointments for expending grants for Bye Roads for the present year,* will at once exemplify to Your Lordship the system which prevails, operating as it does, to discourage all enterprise in the people, and leading too often to the misapplication of the small sums which are granted without reference to any surveys or estimates of what is required. In the last year an able Road Maker, with an experienced Surveyor, were appointed to the sole charge of the Bye Roads in the Northern Counties, and whose reports, which I enclose, were laid with those of other Commissioners before the Assembly; but although the value of their labours and observations were appreciated, it has been found impracticable to carry out a system of reform without Legislative assistance, as the expenses of these Commissioners have been insufficiently remunerated.

If however the Legislature should be induced by granting funds in aid of local appropriations, to introduce a more efficient system, the settlement of the Province would be greatly accelerated, and an effective control applied, which is at present limited to the Audit of the Accounts of the numerous Commissioners who are appointed on application, but for the most part without any knowledge on the part of the Government of their qualifications, or even of the situation of the roads they are appointed to make. In such a system of appropriations, the Government, though called on to appoint the Commissioners, can hold itself in no way sufficiently responsible, neither can such responsibility be exercised by the Assembly. From the manner in which the roads are described, and the description of them varied from year to year in the Road Acts, it is impossible to ascertain their situation where there are no means provided for their inspection, except by the numerous Local Commissioners who are thus appointed.

I enclose an abstract of the appropriations of the present year, from which your Lordship will observe, that a sum of £15,000 has been distributed in 1053 Grants, averaging from £14 to £15 each,

* See Gazette, May 19, 1847, pages 3208 to 3284.

and many as small as £5; besides £7250 equally distributed in Special Grants.

The construction of a Railway through the Province, would, as I have before said, greatly facilitate the settlement of the wilderness lands, and to those who may engage in this important undertaking, and to whom concessions of land along the line may be made, the foregoing observations may be useful.

The main object to be kept in view, as it appears to me, is the planting of a moral and efficient Yeomanry in the Country, and the encouragement of those of a superior class who have been trained to the management of land, to associate together and to purchase on credit the first improvements which Emigrants cannot so well effect for themselves, and to aid them also in securing at the outset the advantages of instruction and communion, which if lost to themselves or their children, may in a single generation deteriorate their condition to their own permanent injury, and that of the country. The establishment of a class of proprietors who might possess the means of carrying on improvements might be simultaneously promoted, but till the Crown Domains should be fully conceded, and the price of wild land considerably raised,* the prospect of establishing an industrious tenantry cannot generally be entertained. Indeed in the progress of older countries the formation of a *Farming Class* has been mainly dependent on the previous establishment of a prosperous Yeomanry, who when the high price of land renders it impracticable to extend their possessions, and as their numbers increase with the population of the country, are content on secure tenures to employ their capital, intelligence and experience, aided by their moral, industrious and thrifty habits, in the improvement of the lands of larger proprietors. By encouraging the occupation of land on their estates, proprietors in the United Kingdom may contribute to train their peasantry to become useful settlers in the Colonies, holding out to them an enlargement of their occupancies, with improved tenures, in the settlements which they might easily form without breaking the associations of their tenantry. By this means not only would a bond of attachment be preserved which would contribute to the welfare, comfort and improvement of the Emigrant, but a sentiment of loyal attachment would be cherished instead of the repulsive feeling which the ejected tenant is too apt to carry out from his country; and considering the strength of the local attachments and the ties of kindred which are cherished by the peasantry, and the sacrifices which the early settlers cheerfully made to preserve the institutions of their country, Your Lordship will not fail to appreciate the importance of these as a bond between the two countries; indeed experience has shewn that there is no other on which any stable dependence can be placed, and it is therefore not too much to expect from the landed proprietors in the United Kingdom, that they will promote an undertaking calculated to benefit themselves and to secure these valuable Colonies as a British Possession.

In those ages when English proprietors took the lead in promoting such enterprises, and when it was the policy of the Government to encourage such a spirit by honorary distinctions, the advantage was fully appreciated of acquiring the co-operation of those who were content to await the slow progress, which must necessarily attend all successful agricultural operations, rather than by engaging in them as commercial speculators, to look to those immediate profits which cannot be realized, except in the harvest reaped by land jobbers and speculators, to the prejudice, and often to the ruin of the industrial classes.

The enclosed correspondence of 1842 was published in the Province from a desire to invite and promote discussion of the subject. I circulated at the time a plan, which is also enclosed, for the settlement of "Church Lands."

The prospect of finding tenants for such lands when cleared, would depend altogether upon the collateral advantages which such settlements would hold out to the respectable farming class in the United Kingdom, and especially to men with families, who might prefer to secure those advantages for their children, in such settlements, at least for a time, rather than risk the sacrifice of them, by settling at once independently on lands of their own in the wilderness. Such Colonies might thus be organized under the auspices, and with the influence of proprietors on their own estates, and amongst their tenantry and retainers, but it would be difficult at present in the Colonies to find persons who would take land on these tenures, where the farming on half shares, which is the usual practice, is rarely conducted profitably for the landlord.

I have, &c. W. M. G. COLEBROOKE.

The Right Hon. the Earl Grey, &c. &c. &c.

EXTRACT OF DESPATCH TO EARL GREY, NO. 50, DATED 10th JUNE, 1847.

In transmitting the duplicate Blue Book for 1846, I have the honor to submit such observations as are called for in reference to its details.

No alteration has taken place in the mode in which public works have heretofore been carried on, but the disposition of the Legislature to encourage private enterprise in the construction of Railways, and to co-operate with Her Majesty's Government in extensive undertakings of this nature, will lead to such a change, and

§ NOTE.—The maintenance of large tracts of Crown Reserves, is injurious to proprietors in keeping down the average price of land, no proprietor being willing to sell at the Government rate.