

## EMIGRATION.

EXTRACTS FROM PAPERS RELATIVE TO EMIGRATION TO THE  
BRITISH PROVINCES IN NORTH AMERICA,  
Presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty.

[Continued from page 3400.]

(No. 38.)

Copy of a Despatch from Sir W. M. G. Colebrooke to Earl Grey.  
*Fredericton, N. B., May 13, 1847.*

MY LORD,—In my Despatch, No. 33, of the 27th April, I explained to your Lordship, at some length, the measures by which a settlement of the forest lands of this Province might be progressively effected. Being aware that a considerable number of emigrants from the United Kingdom were likely to come out, chiefly consisting of the class of small farmers, I felt anxious to meet your Lordship's inquiries, as to the degree of encouragement that might be reasonably held out to them in the prosecution of any extensive plan of systematic colonization, by pointing out the inducements and facilities which might be calculated to render such an undertaking successful.

Since the date of my Despatch, overtures have been received from some extensive proprietors in Scotland for the purchase of large tracts of Crown Land, with a view to the settlement of emigrants upon them, and some discussion has also been raised upon a plan which has been promulgated for the formation in these Provinces of extensive settlements of emigrants from Ireland. Notwithstanding that the views of those who have projected these undertakings are patriotic and benevolent, it nevertheless becomes my duty upon this, as upon former occasions, to express my conviction that such plans which contemplate the removal of large numbers of the most indigent class of labourers with their families with a view to their settlement in this country are altogether delusive.

In my Despatch, No. 77, dated August 29th, 1845, I had occasion to point out the consequences which had resulted from a number of poor persons of this class having been sent out who became dependent during a long and severe winter on parochial support; and the failure, some years ago, of the New Brunswick Land Company in an undertaking to settle a large body of cottier emigrants from Scotland, who, after the disbursement on them of a large capital, abandoned their locations, affords sufficient evidence of the impracticability of all such projects.

The limited extent to which persons of that class can obtain employment in the Province has hitherto discouraged them from coming out in any numbers; but as the parochial charges for relief have chiefly arisen from their destitution, and as their inability to perform any kind of labour in the woods during the long winters which prevail in this climate would deprive them of this resource if they should emigrate in any numbers, the Legislature, however liberally disposed, would be called on to amend the Provincial Poor Laws, and to appeal to Her Majesty's Government to obtain indemnification for the charge to which the community would become liable, and which it would be wholly incompetent to sustain.

Even to the small farmers, who for the most part emigrate to these Provinces, the undertaking of effecting a settlement in the forests is most arduous, and the most prosperous of this class would be unable to afford any material assistance to their indigent fellow countrymen in such circumstances.

The prosecution of extensive works, such as the drainage of marsh lands, the opening of roads, and the construction of rail roads, while conducing to the prosperity of the Colonies, and facilitating the settlement of the vacant lands, would not render it less imprudent to take any direct measures for promoting the emigration of the most indigent class; for although some part of the labour of such works might be performed by them, the systematic colonization of the lands adjacent to such works, and which ought simultaneously to be promoted, would depend upon others, and when the work had been completed, or at the approach of winter, when it would be suspended, the greater number of such labourers would probably disperse in search of employment to other quarters, or repair to the towns for support.

The practice elsewhere adopted of holding out the prospect of high wages, and thereby attracting large numbers of labourers where works are in progress, in order to obtain a reduction of the rate by a competition against the labourer, ought not to be followed in such undertakings, where by assembling them in larger numbers than they could be employed at remunerating rates, they would be divested of every resource and exposed to much suffering.

Contracts for work are often executed by the old settlers at reduced rates in the neighbourhood of their homes, but it is only from their possession of other resources that they can afford to undertake them.

If, therefore, my Lord, emigration is to be a resource by which a beneficial change may be effected in the rural economy of those parts of the United Kingdom where distress has so unhappily prevailed, I beg leave most emphatically to express to your Lordship my conviction that the removal to this Province of the most indigent class, either with a view to their immediate settlement on wilderness lands, or even for their temporary employment on public works, ought not, by any measures of the Government, or the proprietors of land, to be directly promoted, and that any undertaking of this kind on an extensive scale, while it would be productive of

great suffering to the emigrants, would entail burthens for their support, the responsibility for which would not equitably be imposed on the Colonies.

On the other hand, if encouragement should be given to the emigration of a more efficient class of settlers from all parts of the United Kingdom by the prosecution of such useful works, not only would the Provinces but the settlers themselves be greatly benefited. At the same time I should earnestly hope that by a judicious system of "Home Colonization," aided by such public and private employment as may be held out, not only may the present distress of the more indigent classes be alleviated, but their condition be gradually improved; and by training them in the skillful management of small portions of land, and inspiring them with a taste for superior comforts and conveniences, that they might be prepared in their turn to become enterprising and useful settlers in the Provinces, if under such circumstances their numbers should be found to be redundant. These remarks are indeed applicable to all parts of the United Kingdom, where large numbers of the labouring or operative classes are occasionally subject to distress from the failure of employment and the ordinary means of subsistence; and as the property of the country must, in such cases, be necessarily chargeable for their maintenance, it is to be regretted that they should be encouraged, without preparation, to look as a resource to the Colonies, rather than, by the adoption of judicious measures at home, to train and prepare them for so arduous a mode of life. It is hence that, while the small farmer who emigrates rarely fails to succeed as a settler, the labourer or the operative encounters difficulties which he finds himself unable to subdue, and which is precisely the consequence of his engaging, without preparation or training, in the most arduous of all enterprises, in which habits of self-dependence, powers of endurance, and practical acquaintance with the arts adapted to his situation, are indispensable; even with these, it is necessary that he should possess the means of supporting himself during the struggle inseparable from a life in the wilderness, in the acquisition of which he may, doubtless, be much facilitated.

The execution of useful and reproductive works in a situation where he may obtain employment without neglecting his location, may be considered to be essential to him, not only as a means of subsistence at the outset, but to enable him to husband his own resources, and to liquidate the charges incidental to a first settlement.

In a closely wooded country, the necessity of associating with others is also apparent, not only from the sufferings and privations to which single settlers in the wilderness are exposed, but as a means of effecting those improvements and ameliorations which it is of the first importance to his welfare to provide for. It is in this view that I have recommended that encouragement should be given to the formation of such associations of emigrants, and their incorporation, in order to preserve to them the means of carrying out to the colonies those improvements which would conduce to their own future benefit, and to that of the public.

Amongst the advantages which a new settlement thus organized would possess, would be the opportunity of acquiring corporate property, the value of which would augment with its resources; and in a country where it has hitherto been found to be impracticable to establish those relations by which the owners of land are enabled to maintain on their property a prosperous tenantry, such arrangements are indispensable to enable the local communities to acquire those habits of dependence on their combined exertions which are necessary to their social improvement.

The endowment of churches and schools has, to some extent, obtained in this province, and although the diversity of sects has operated unfavourably on these institutions, no jealousy has heretofore arisen to prevent a fair participation in these advantages.

One of the first Acts passed by the Loyalists who settled the province in 1786, (26 Geo. III, cap. 4,) was to "preserve the Church of England as by law established, and to secure liberty of conscience in matters of religion;" and in maintaining the principles which led them to incur such great sacrifices, they have, by successive Acts, manifested every liberal disposition towards those of other denominations who have settled amongst them.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

W. M. G. COLEBROOKE.

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

Enclosures in Despatch No. 33—See Gazette, page 3398.

EXTRACT, JOURNALS, HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, March 19, 1847.

A Message from His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor.

The Honorable Mr. Baillie, a Member of Her Majesty's Executive Council, by command of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, delivered the following message:—

"NEW BRUNSWICK.

"Message to the House of Assembly, March 19, 1847.

"W. M. G. COLEBROOKE, Lieut. Governor.

"The Lieutenant Governor, referring to his opening speech, and to his despatch of the 29th December, 1846, and the despatch of the Secretary of State for the Colonies of the 29th January last, copies of which, with other papers, accompany this message, invites the Assembly to co-operate with Her Majesty's Government in such measures as may be calculated to accelerate the settlement of the province, and the development of its great natural resources.

"W. M. G. C."