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1864.

T A S M A N I A.

I M M I G R A T I O N.

R E P O R T O F T H E S E L E C T C O M M I T T E E.

Brought up by Mr. Perkins, and ordered by the House to be printed,
16 August, 1864.



REPORT from the SELECT COMMITTEE upon IMMIGRATION.

THURSDAY, 14 JULY, 1864.

Resolved, That a Select Committee be appointed to enquire as to whether any means could be devised whereby Immigration might be encouraged with increased advantage both to the Emigrant and the Colony; with power to call for persons and papers. (*Mr. Perkins.*)

Then the following Members were nominated to be of the said Committee:—

MR. ALLISON.
MR. JOHN LORD.
MR. DODERY.
MR. HODGSON.

MR. SHERWIN.
MR. DAVIES.
MR. PERKINS.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

- No. 1. 20 July, 1864. *Present*—Mr. John Lord, Mr. Davies, Mr. Sherwin, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Dodery.
No. 2. 22 July, 1864. *Present*—Mr. John Lord, Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Sherwin, Mr. Dodery, Mr. Perkins.
No. 3. 27 July, 1864. *Present*—Mr. Perkins, Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Sherwin, Mr. Dodery, Mr. Allison, Mr. Davies.
No. 4. 29 July, 1864. *Present*—Mr. John Lord, Mr. Sherwin, Mr. Dodery, Mr. Perkins.
No. 5. 5 August, 1864. *Present*—Mr. Sherwin, Mr. Allison, Mr. Hodgson, Mr. John Lord, Mr. Perkins.
No. 6. 11 August, 1864. *Present*—Mr. John Lord, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Sherwin.
No. 7. 16 August, 1864. *Present*—Mr. Sherwin, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Dodery, Mr. John Lord.
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WITNESSES EXAMINED.

Charles Gould, Esquire, Government Geologist.
John Thomas, Esquire, District Surveyor.
Ernest Marwedel, Esquire, Merchant.
William Boys, Esquire, Merchant.
James Ralté, Esquire.

R E P O R T .

THE Select Committee appointed on the 14th July, 1864, to enquire as to whether any means could be devised whereby Immigration might be encouraged, with increased advantage both to the Emigrant and the Colony, having examined many competent Witnesses, and having carefully deliberated on the subject, have agreed to the following Report.

Your Committee commenced their enquiry with a full sense of the vital importance to the best interests of this community of an influx of agriculturists and small farmers, who could be induced to settle down and cultivate the "Agricultural Areas" contemplated by the "Waste Lands Act, 1863."

Your Committee, therefore, kept in view the adoption of some plan, untried in Tasmania since the abolition of Free Grants in 1831, by which a population could be encouraged to settle on the Waste Lands; and after having the evidence of a number of Witnesses (copy of whose evidence your Committee annex to their Report), they have decided to recommend to your Honorable House the following plan:—

That Free Grants of small Locations shall be made to Emigrants in proportion to the amount expended by them in bringing themselves and their families to Tasmania; and Grants to be limited to certain areas, and to be conditional on actual residence and cultivation. No Grant Deed to issue until the required conditions had been fulfilled.

The class of Emigrants with whom this scheme might first be tried is, in the opinion of your Committee, that known in Germany as small freeholders, who possess sufficient means to emigrate at their own expense. They are known to be a moral and industrious race; and your Committee have before them the fact of such a class having proved highly useful Emigrants in South Australia.

If located in Communities, they would form the nuclei of large and thriving Settlements, in those neighbourhoods where the Policy of the present Ministry proposes to establish Reproductive Works.

Your Committee confidently anticipate that some such scheme as that now propounded would further the interests of the Colony; and one of its greatest recommendations would be the absolute absence of any expense.

JOHN PERKINS, *Chairman.*

Committee Room, 16th August, 1864.

EVIDENCE.

CHARLES GOULD, *Esq.*, examined.

By Mr. Perkins.—I examined part of the County of Dorset, as represented in the map before the Committee.

Some of the land referred to in that locality is well adapted for small farmers.

Mr. Perkins.—Give such information to the Committee as you can.

There are two areas of agricultural land in the country represented on the map—Scott's New Country and Ringarooma.

Scott's New Country in part is suitable for occupation by small farmers, as the distance from the coast is not great, and facilities are now being suggested for conveying produce to Bridport by a road. That will depend, of course, upon the construction or not of a proper road. Already a considerable population is settled in Scott's New Country; and a few years may witness the establishment of shops, postal communication, &c. The population there at present is about 150: thus there is established a favourable foundation for an agricultural settlement.

A portion of good land is still available. I estimate the quantity of first-class land at 2000 acres, and of second class at 5000 acres. I can, however, only venture at an approximate to the area on account of the dense scrub.

All the country between Bridport and the settlement is composed of inferior swampy land, but well adapted for road-making, having an even and gradual fall towards the coast.

About 140 families might each occupy 50 acres in this country; but, of course, not all on adjoining blocks. I think my estimate as regards the area of available land is tolerably accurate.

The land towards Launceston, going from the settlement, is quite unoccupied until you come to Patter-sonia, where a few settlers have located themselves.

By Mr. Allison.—I do not know the land at the back of the Eddystone Bonnet, but I have heard that there is good land near Mr. Foster's run.

I do not know the Muscle Roe Country. I do not know the Ringarooma land inward from the mouth of that river, but I propose to visit that region shortly.

There is a large tract of land in the Ringarooma District, but it is 32 miles from a shipping-place, and would not therefore be, in my opinion, well adapted for small settlers. Mr. Tully has reported large tracts of good land north of the ordinarily termed "Ringarooma District." The distance from the mouth of the Ringarooma is about 16 miles. A road has already been contemplated and surveyed.

There are also other portions of good land on Hall's Tiers (about 5000 acres) within a convenient distance from a shipping place. I noticed it lately as being very superior land in my Report. The only want that exists is as regards roads; but, as the soil is gravelly and composed partly of quartz, these would not be very expensive. Part of this area is above, and part below, Hall's Tiers.

I have seen the country on the Piper River. I do not consider it to be so good as that about Hall's Tiers.

By Mr. Sherwin.—Scott's Country is heavily timbered, and very scrubby. The cost per acre for clearing it in the rough way of ringing, &c., is estimated as ranging between £3 and £6; but it is said that the former sum is nearer the actual average than the latter, where the ground is not excessively timbered.

I have never seen land there which has been thoroughly cleared, except perhaps small patches for home-stead gardens. These may have cost as much as at the rate of £40 per acre.

The proposed road to Bridport passes through a moderately scrubbed country, afterwards through heathy plains and quartz gravel, easy for road-making. Occasionally a small creek would require bridging, and parts of the road corduroyed, for which sufficient timber exists.

The timber on the scrub lands I believe to be very valuable. I am not botanist enough to describe the exact kind of gum-trees to be found there. I think it resembles swamp gum, having a smooth bark and straight barrel. The people there call it the stringy gum.

The character of the country from Scott's to Ringarooma, so far as I have travelled, is as follows:—On the existing track from Boon's Selection to Forester's River the distance is about 5 miles, but has not been surveyed. Of this the first mile passes through good land, scrub and timber, but not equal in quality

to that defined as basaltic in Scott's Country. After that, the road passes close under a granite range called Mount Stronach, and the country is gravelly and inferior. Near the Forestier's River there is some good land. Leaving the Forestier's River, you cross spongy plains and inferior land, which extend to, perhaps, the 11th mile from Scott's New Country, reaching up the Tiers: at that point the land improves, and continues to do so until the margin of the first-class land is reached in about 5 miles. The total distance by this circuitous road, from Boon's selection to Mr. Scott's farm, is estimated by me at 18 miles.

In fact, Mr. Scott's New Country is bounded only at the back by mountains. Ringarooma, on the other hand, is in a basin, and is separated from the coast by a range over which Mr. Thomas has found a road. Ringarooma lies higher than Scott's New Country, from which there is a gradual descent to the coast.

By Mr. Allison.—The climate is very fine. I was there as lately as May last. I have seen the land belonging to Mr. Headlam and Mr. Brewer, on the Great Forestier River; it is, although good and marshy, not nearly so rich in quality as that I have just described.

All the settlers on Scott's New Country are sanguine, and appear to be doing well. They have only been 5 years located there, and look upon a road for the purpose of produce conveyance as the only thing required to ensure their success.

Bridport is only adapted for small crafts under 40 tons. There is a shifting sand bar there; and some rocks have become exposed in it, about 25 feet from the shore. However, this interval might be filled up with granite rocks lying about, and thus cause a better and deeper channel over the sand-bar.

I have been informed that the Brid, Forestier's, and Ringarooma Rivers are about equal as regards the draught of vessels.

I know nothing about the Eddystone Port, and cannot speak as to the nature and quality of the land adjacent.

I have no doubt but that the majority of the settlers in Scott's New Country would prefer having their produce conveyed to the coast for shipment,—but stock would, of course, be sent by land.

By Mr. Perkins.—I think all the lands within 14 miles of those Ports, which I have stated to be of good quality, would be well adapted for small agricultural settlers.

By Mr. Allison.—Settlers on their blocks of land could not clear their farms at a much less expense than that attending such work if carried on by employers.

MR. JOHN THOMAS, *District Surveyor, examined.*

By Mr. Perkins.—I have found vacant crown land at the Ringarooma well adapted for small agricultural farms. I cannot state the exact quantity, but I should say about 100,000 acres.

There is no road at present to Bridport. The journey by the horse-track is one of the most frightful I have experienced, and very dangerous; the track is totally unfit for the conveyance of produce.

The country from Scott's New Country to the Avon River, a distance of 9 miles, is barren, but after you cross the river the land is good.

I beg to hand in an estimate of the cost of a road between Scott's Country and the Ringarooma. (Paper put in).

There is no other possible means of conveying produce from that locality except *viâ* Bridport, where crafts of about 40 tons can float.

There are other unalienated lands in the County of Dorset besides Ringarooma which might be applied to agricultural area purposes, namely—Gould's New Country, 12 miles from George's Bay, where there is a draught of 20 feet water. At Jason's Gates I think this new tract forms a portion of the Ringarooma District; it is very heavily timbered. Of this about 3000 or 4000 acres are similar in quality to the Ringarooma land, being free from underscrub, and bearing immense fern trees, gum, and silver wattle trees, about 5 or 6 to the acre.

From George's Bay up to this land the soil is worthless, but being of granite formation, well adapted for road-making.

At a rough estimate, I should say that £300 would suffice to make a fair dray road, including culverts and crossing the George's River. 3000 or 4000 acres of this country are good, and adapted for small agricultural farms.

The expense to Mr. Scott for grubbing, clearing, and sowing his land is £2 per acre.

By Mr. Davies.—The establishment of a settlement in remote places, such as I have described, would of course add to the public expenditure, as regards the items of police, churches, schools, &c.

I consider it of the highest importance that the Ringarooma should be connected with the George's Bay Survey; and I propose (if necessary, at my own expense) working my way across during my next visit to that District.

MR. ERNEST MARWEDEL *examined.*

By Mr. Perkins.—I am a merchant in Hobart Town. About eight years ago I called upon Mr. Sprent, the Surveyor-General at that time, suggesting that German Immigrants might be got out by offering them, for the passage money they paid themselves, an equivalent in land, in such a locality to enable them to cultivate partly their own land, and by obtaining employment from other sources. I gave the Surveyor-General a proper plan at that time. I am still of opinion that the small farmers in Germany would be induced to emigrate to this Colony, provided an offer was made that they should, in consideration of defraying their own passage, receive a grant of so many acres of land adapted for agricultural purposes,—such grants to be issued in the course of five years, on certain conditions to be hereafter named.

I consider that not less than fifty acres would satisfy them, taking the average number of each family to be five. I would advise that, in the event of this offer being acceptable, the emigrants on their arrival should be located in communities. I believe the German farmers to be sober and industrious, and a hard-working people. In their own country they have to commence work at two o'clock in the morning, whereas here they would only have to get up at six or seven to go to work.

MR. W. BOYS *examined.*

I am a merchant of this Town. I am also Consul for Hamburg. I have correspondence with that Country about twice every year. I am of opinion that a scheme of Immigration could be established between that Country and this Colony. I am of opinion that the small farmers in Germany would be induced to emigrate to this Colony provided the Government offered land in consideration of their passage money. I could not say what quantity of land would be equivalent to a family of five statute adults. With reference to the German immigrants, I think it would be desirable to put them in communities, and not mix them with the people of other countries. I am of opinion that the prosperity of this Colony depends greatly on the settlement of a population. I am of opinion that *The Waste Lands Act* of this Colony should be so amended that it would enable the Government to set apart certain portions of the unsettled Districts for the purpose of carrying out a scheme of Immigration. I think it would be advisable, if families were to emigrate, for the Government to assist them in building their homesteads. I consider that not less a time than five or seven years should intervene after the arrival of the Emigrant before a free grant should be issued.

By Mr. Sherrin.—The only agency I know of that could assist in carrying out such a scheme from Germany would be the ship-owners.

THE Answers of MR. RALFE to the Questions submitted to him by the Immigration Committee, 27th July, 1864.

1. Whether you consider it essentially necessary to the progress of Tasmania that Immigration should be encouraged? I consider a respectable Immigration not only essential to the progress of Tasmania, but as the only sheet-anchor by which we may now hope to raise her from out the "slough of despond" and ensure her future prosperity, and therefore should be promoted by every possible means.

2. Your opinion as to the character of the land in Tasmania, whether adapted for agricultural purposes? The lands of Tasmania decidedly rule as agricultural—the pastoral the exception—being very fertile under the genial influence of a very flattering likeness of the climate of England; abounding in forests of valuable timber, inexhaustible fisheries on the Coasts, from the winkle to the whale; as wealthy in mines of metals and minerals, in proportion to its size, as any of the Australian Colonies; and now only awaiting the sinews of an enterprising and industrious population to "plough long furrows" and make manifest the hidden treasures.

3. If so, what class of Immigrants do you consider most beneficial to the Colony? I am no advocate for making this Colony a depôt for paupers, or for surrendering it to monopolists for grazing purposes only; but rather a resort for medium capitalists, the husbandmen and mechanics of the United Kingdom, and such like of the distressed and oppressed populations of Europe, without ignoring the claims of the native youths.

4. In the event of the Committee recommending an unassisted Immigration, what plan would you recommend in reference to our Waste Lands; the inference being, that the Immigrants should receive so many acres of land in consideration of their passage-money—the grant in fee simple being issued after so

many years residence? I firmly believe that nature alone holds out in this Colony sufficient enticements to capitalists of all grades to come hither, if only the gates to her lands are thrown wide open to receive them, and all political obstructions to settlement removed, without any eleemosynary aid whatever beyond compensation in land to the Immigrant for his passage-money, and for such labourers as he may bring with him, in addition to the portion to which his capital may entitle him to receive.

The Honorable the Colonial Treasurer stated in the House of Assembly, only a few evenings since, that a common labourer by his consumption of dutiable articles contributed annually to the public Revenue (25s.) twenty-five shillings. I may therefore infer that a freeholder with his wife and family, and perhaps a labourer or two, would contribute four times that amount whilst carrying on his operations of clearing, building, and fencing; and, therefore, at the end of five years would reimburse the country for five and twenty acres of land at least: where then the necessity for exacting twenty or thirty shillings an acre in the first instance, when he requires every farthing to sustain him whilst effecting the above-named indispensable improvements? The man that makes one blade of grass or one ear of corn to grow upon a spot of ground where never one grew before, fulfils his mission and deserves every encouragement; and it is both unchristian in spirit, and false in political economy, to extort from his means when he is willing to devote them to the advancement of the country. Every one knows that this Colony was founded upon the principles of "cheap land" and cheap labour; and that when the latter was withheld from the mother country, the Imperial expenditure withdrawn, and coupled with the aggravation of an impost of (20s.) twenty shillings an acre upon the Waste Lands, the Colony from that moment gradually declined into its present state of collapse,—the natural consequence of pricing these deserts at four times that of any other British Colony, whilst situated at four times the distance from the United Kingdom.

All the Australian Colonies are, or have been, modifying their land policies to render them more attractive; whilst Tasmania, with too great odds against her, and over-weighted with agrarian impediments, is standing still, unable to compete in the race of colonisation.

The plan, therefore, that I would recommend is, that the sales of land be entirely dispensed with, and superseded by a more christianly and equitable system of free grants to such as will replenish the Island and subdue it, in proportion to capital,—a maximum and minimum for country lots being fixed; the title to be issued upon the completion of a certain amount of improvement at the end of three or five years.

A "productive population" is an indispensable preliminary to "Reproductive Works," either in roads or railways, mines or manufactures,—therefore the obtainment of such should be our primary object on which to concentrate all our energies and construct our schemes.

I beg leave to append a copy of a Land Bill I had printed and circulated in the pastoral Colony of New South Wales.

JAMES RALFE.

A LAND BILL FOR THE MILLION!

Commonage to be disallowed; except adjacent to Towns.

Squattage to cease as the leases expire.

One Tenure to prevail throughout New South Wales.

Every Proprietor to enclose his own Land and Stock.

Country Lands to be reduced to Five Shillings an acre without competition.

Grants to be issued for (99) ninety-nine years at (3d.) three-pence per acre, to be paid annually, one year in advance, redeemable at option, at (20) twenty years' purchase—that is, 5s. per acre.

Country Lots to be measured in blocks of *not less* than half a square mile, or 320 acres.

Frontages on Rivers and Streams to be as one to two—half-a-mile in front, two half-miles back; three-quarters in front, by one mile and a half back; one mile by two; two by four; three by six; and so on, up to a fixed maximum, say of four by eight. This rule respecting frontages to be held inviolable, in order to prevent the monopoly of the waters, or the engrossment of the narrow valleys, adapted for men of small means.

Priority of date of the receipt for one year's rental to give priority of Selection.

All the valleys to be portioned off immediately into oblong blocks according to the expanse or breadth of available Land, in conformity with the above rule respecting frontages to water. Boundary lines to be marked parallel to the cardinal points of the compass; to commence *anew* at the immediate confluences of

Streams, where a large tree, square post, or stone obelisk shall be permanently fixed, and its purpose engraved thereon.

Every applicant for land may select before Survey on either bank of a Stream in such Valley as will compass *only* the area or quantity he requires ; and, by measuring up the Valley from the confluence of its Stream, he may ascertain tolerably correctly where the lines of his selection will ultimately be fixed.

The Squatter may also, as soon as he pleases, either before or after the expiration of his lease, consolidate his run into an oblong, upon the terms above specified, on either side of the Stream on which his run is at present located.

By the Valleys being measured off into as large oblong Blocks as their different breadths will admit of, the cost of such measurements will not exceed Sixpence per acre.

Extremely narrow Valleys to be deemed cultivation lands.

Reserves to be made for Towns, Villages, and Suburban Allotments, with defined Commonage adjacent.

The Land Revenue to be devoted to Local Improvements.

After Two Years of arrears of Rent for any Block of Land, the same shall revert to the Crown.

Get the above Land Bill for the Million, and the *Great Eastern* will bring them out.