

(No. 106.)



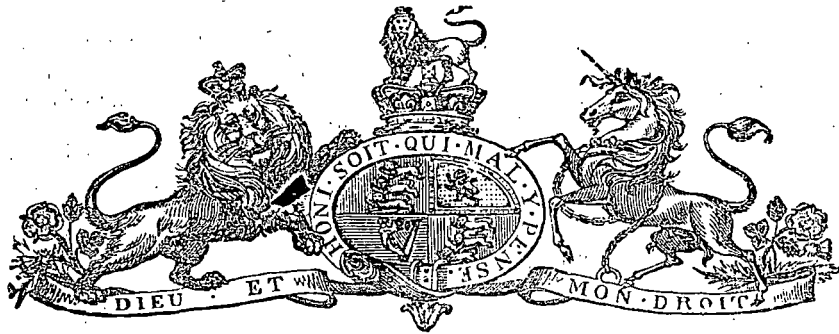
1870.

T A S M A N I A .

C A S T R A .

LETTERS FROM COLONEL CRAWFORD.

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands and Works, and ordered by the House to be printed, September 29, 1870.



New Town, 29th July, 1870.

SIR,

ADVERTING to Act No. 27 of 31 Vict., by which the District of Castra has been reserved for a period of three years "for the settlement of Europeans who may come or intend to come from India to Tasmania for the purpose of settlement," and to the fact that the said Act will expire on the 10th October next, I have the honor to request that you will kindly bring the whole subject under consideration of the Cabinet of which you are a Member; trusting that after review of the same Ministers may be induced to submit the case to Parliament, with a recommendation that the reserve of the District named may be extended for one year, to admit of the objects of the Act being more fully attained.

I will not occupy your time by detailing the many obstacles that have arisen to retard the settlement of Castra: suffice it to say that they have now been mostly overcome, that confidence in the enterprise appears now to be rapidly gaining ground in India,—as evinced by the fact of my having been already commissioned to take up on behalf of various Officers and others 8051 acres,—whilst Immigrants from India to the number of sixty—adults and children—have actually arrived, and have received among them certificates for land under the provisions of Act No. 26 of 31 Vict. to the extent of 980 acres. I am likewise in receipt of advice of sixteen additional Officers who have intimated their intention of taking up land within the Castra limits to the aggregate amount of 5120 acres, making a grand total of 14,151 acres either sold, granted, or likely so to be disposed of by Government, if only a little additional time be allowed as necessary to the carrying out of the arrangement.

At this present date 6791 acres in the northern part of Castra have been marked off by the District Surveyor or are in process of survey; and my employers have placed me in funds to take up at once 1740 more acres so soon as I can find good land in sufficient area to meet their requirements. Most of them desire blocks of 320 acres each, and of course as far as possible of good soil throughout. To obtain allotments of such size and description I shall have now to resort to the southern portion of the District, access to which is at present restricted to one narrow track. To open up the good land there available, additional tracks to the extent of about ten miles should be cut; and to execute that work, and then to examine the ground and lay off the various purchases, could not possibly be effected in less than another season.

I am naturally most anxious to ensure the perfect fulfilment of the project of settlement in Castra as I originally sketched it out; and although the same has hitherto been greatly delayed by many unforeseen circumstances, I do trust in due time to see my object realised,—a numerous body of gentlemen comfortably and prosperously settled; a district permeated by good roads and thriving with many industries, and that shall serve as a stepping-stone for further advance and occupation of waste land in the direction of the Vale of Belvoir and the unsettled Districts beyond.

In this hope I earnestly ask for the extension of the reserve of Castra on behalf of European Immigrants from India for another year from the 10th October next.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

A. CRAWFORD.

*The Hon. H. BUTLER, Esq.,
Minister of Lands and Works, Hobart Town.*

New Town, 2nd September, 1870.

SIR,

IN reference to my letter of 29th July last, expressing my hope, for the reasons therein set forth, that the Ministry may be disposed and feel justified to recommend to the Legislature an extension of the period for which a reservation of the Castra District in favour of Settlers from India has been made under Act 27 of 31st Victoria, and as you have intimated a desire for a detailed statement of the probable further purchases of land that I may be able soon to effect on behalf of my constituents if the sanction sought be granted by Parliament, I have the honor to inform you that during the current year I have paid into your office the Survey Fees upon 6631 acres, and the Deposit Money—and in one instance the full price—upon 2591 of those acres the survey of which has been completed; and I now am instructed and hold funds to take up other allotments as follows:—

	<i>Acres.</i>
1. Lot of	320
2. Ditto.....	220
3. Ditto.....	320
4. Ditto.....	320
5. Ditto.....	320
6. Ditto.....	160
7. Ditto.....	320
8. Ditto.....	320
9. Ditto.....	160
10. Ditto.....	160
11. Ditto.....	320
12. Ditto.....	320
13. Ditto.....	240
14. Ditto.....	320
15. Ditto.....	320
<i>Total</i>	<u>4140</u>

but I am unable to fulfil the wishes of my correspondents pending further examination of the district.

I may add, moreover, that giving credence to the general tenor of the letters I receive from India,—some of which I should like to submit for your perusal,—the attention of Officers to the subject of settlement in Tasmania seems to be now thoroughly awakened, and needs only that a little consideration should be exhibited by the Colonial authorities to ensure the resort of numbers to our shores.

If to the 6631 acres on which I have paid the survey fees be added the above 4140, together with 490 given in free grants, an aggregate of 11,261 acres may be regarded as disposed of through the operation of the Act of Parliament the extension of which I now seek for a further period.

I may remark, that although this Act bears date 11th October, 1867, the general survey of the district, and the cutting of the first exploration tracks through it, were only completed by the middle of the past year: thus two-thirds of the time allowed by Parliament have been unavoidably consumed in these preliminary measures, and the settlement of the area and purchase of land therein have in point of fact only recently commenced.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

A. CRAWFORD.

*The Hon. H. BUTLER, Esq., Minister of Lands
and Works, Hobart Town.*