

1852.

V I C T O R I A

E M I G R A T I O N .

Ordered by the Council to be printed, 4th August, 1852.

C. J. LA TROBE,

Message No. 15.

Lieutenant Governor.

The Lieutenant Governor directs the accompanying Letter from the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, dated 14th May, 1852, to the Colonial Secretary, to be laid upon the table of the Legislative Council, as His Excellency is desirous that the Council should be in possession of the latest information as to the views and intentions of Her Majesty's Government on the important subject of Emigration.

Government Offices,

Melbourne, 4th August, 1852.

MELBOURNE :

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Colonial Land and Emigration Office,
8, Park Street, Westminster,
14th May, 1852.

SIR,

I am directed by the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, to take advantage of the departure of the first steam vessel from England to Australia, to put you in possession for the information of the Governor, of a brief statement of the proceedings which they have adopted and propose to adopt, with the view of meeting the urgent demand for labor in Victoria, consequent on the gold discoveries which have taken place in that Colony.

2. In the spring of last year the Commissioners had taken measures to accelerate the Emigration to New South Wales. These measures, however, (which are necessarily slow in their operation) did not take effect till the autumn, at which time the news of the gold discoveries at Bathurst furnished a fresh motive for increasing the emigration to Victoria, which appeared likely to be drained of its population.

It will accordingly be seen by the enclosed table, that in November and December last 1412 emigrants were sent to that Colony, being a considerably larger number than had been dispatched in any previous two months of the year, and that from that time to the end of April, the emigration was kept up to the average of two ships a month.

3. The same table will shew the ship dispatched, or intended to be dispatched, between the 1st of November last and the 30th of June next, with the number of people they will have conveyed and the contract price per adult in every ship already taken up.

4. You will perceive, that up to the end of this month, about 5400 emigrants will have been dispatched; and the Commissioners confidently hope, that the present increase in the number of applications for free passage consequent, partly on the reduction of deposits, partly on the relaxation of their rules in favour of large families and mechanics, and partly perhaps, to the growing knowledge of the gold discoveries, will enable them to dispatch nearly 3000 more in June.

This they are particularly anxious to effect, as they are aware of the great importance of forwarding as large a number as possible in time for the shearing season.

5. For the remaining six months of the year, the Commissioners propose to dispatch about 1,500 emigrants per month, being as many (including the nominees of land purchasers) as the funds now at their disposal, which amount to about £173,000, will enable them to send out at the present rates of freight.

6. Adverting to the opinion expressed in the Lieutenant Governor's despatch to Earl Grey of the 20th of December last, that it would be desirable in the selection of emigrants that "preferably the introduction of artisans and mechanics should be secured as far as possible," the Commissioners have modified their regulations so as to reduce the payment on mechanics and artisans from five pounds to two pounds a head. I enclose a Circular issued to the several select agents of the Board, shewing the modifications on this head.

7. By the terms "artizans and mechanics," used in the Lieutenant Governor's Despatch, the Commissioners presume that nearly every class of workmen (including tailors, shoemakers, weavers, and all persons engaged in the building trade) are comprised, and they propose accordingly to extend their selections to these classes.

At the same time, they intend to send out as few single men as possible, since this is the class most likely to resort to the gold fields on arrival.

Some, however, must be taken, in order not to break up families, and to enable the Commissioners to fill the additional number of ships which are now to be dispatched to Victoria and the other Australian Colonies. On those not accompanying their parents, the deposit has been raised from two pounds to three pounds each.

8. With regard to the remark of the Governor in the despatch above alluded to, that the whole sum of £50,000 therein mentioned, might with advantage to the Colony, be expended in female emigration, I am to observe that, with every disposition on the part of the Commissioners to meet this urgent want, they fear from their past efforts, that it will be almost impracticable to obtain from England and Scotland any considerable body of single females of good character, even although the further qualification of being trained domestic and farm servants be dispensed with.

Respectable single women are generally unwilling to emigrate unless with their natural protectors, and as the female orphans heretofore selected from the Irish Unions, have been objected to by the Colonists, the Commissioners apprehend that this resource being cut off they may not succeed in considerably augmenting the proportion of single females which they have hitherto been enabled to forward to the Colony. They will, however, use every endeavour to procure as large a number of this class of emigrants as practicable.

9. With this view they propose in the emigration from Ireland, which country is at pre-

sent in advance of her proportion, calculated in the ratio of the population of the three divisions of the United Kingdom to take only those families in which two-thirds at least of the members are females.

10. With the modification which has taken place in the rules, and with the assistance of a large staff of selecting agents scattered throughout the United Kingdom, and of two or three private associations, and the numerous clergymen and country gentlemen now in correspondence with the Board, the Commissioners hope to increase the emigration to Australia to the full extent which the funds at their disposal, and the instructions which they hold will admit.

No. I.

11. You will observe from the accompanying table (Enclosure No. I.) that the contract price since the 1st November last has always been over twelve pounds per adult, and that since the 1st May, it has been but little under fourteen pounds; whereas in the first ten months of last year, the price for ships taken up previous to the receipt of the intelligence of the gold discoveries was only in one case over eleven pounds, while in the rest it ranged from £9 9s. 5d. to £10 18s. 0d. per adult. This rise in price is principally due to the fear entertained by the shipowners, of the desertion of their crews on arrival and the consequent detention of the vessels, at a loss in time and money that it is impossible beforehand to calculate.

12. So strongly do the shipping interest feel this evil that many suggestions have been made to the Commissioners on the subject. Amongst others that a military or police force should be placed on board each emigrant ship while in port, to prevent the desertion of the crew, or that the ship might be permitted to lie off at a distance from the shore, and the emigrants be landed by means of a steamer to be provided at the expense of the owners. The Commissioners have submitted this last suggestion to the Secretary of State in case he should think fit to forward it for the consideration of the Colonial Government.

I am however to observe that unless the desertion of crews should be arrested the rate of freight to Australia will doubtless continue to advance. Indeed on some recent occasions, owing to this cause, and partly to the long prevalence of east winds, the Commissioners have received only one or two tenders in answer to their public advertisements for shipping, and had they not consented to take some very large vessels at Liverpool, they would have had to pay much higher rates than those shown in the enclosure.

I have, &c. &c.,

(Signed)

S. WALCOTT.

Secretary.

[ENCLOSURE No. I.]

RETURN of Ships dispatched and to be dispatched to Victoria, from the 1st November, 1851, to the end of June, 1852.

Ship.	Date of Sailing, or appointed to sail.	Destination.	Contract Price.	Number embarked or estimated will be embarked.		Remarks.
				Statute Adults.	Souls.	
Joshua	5th November.	Melbourne.	£ s. d. 13 19 11	259	302	
Bride	13th "	"	13 7 9	195	227	
Camlodia	4th December.	Geelong.	12 19 6	275	313	
Lady Elgin	17th "	Melbourne.	12 15 9	258	288	
Calphurnia	30th "	"	13 4 0	259	282	
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Success	28th January.	Geelong.	12 16 6	191	224	
Mangerton	29th "	"	12 14 3	329	388	
Runnymede	20th February.	Portland Bay.	12 3 0	182	214	
London	5th March.	Geelong.	12 8 8	238	285	
Chowringhee	12th "	Melbourne.	12 14 9	272	327	
Emma Eugenia	23rd "	Portland Bay.	13 13 0	161	199	
Sir Robert Sale	1st April.	Geelong.	12 17 6	241	308	
Lady Macdonald	5th "	Melbourne.	12 13 0	234½	285	
Flora Macdonald	21st "	Portland Bay.	12 18 9	241½	302	
Garland	26th "	Melbourne.	12 10 0	293	364	
Priam	About 19th May.	Portland Bay.	14 0 0	227	273	
Bourneuf	" 15th "	Geelong.	13 10 0	678	say 808	} Equal to two or } dinary ships.
Warrata	" 4th June.	Melbourne.	13 17 6	648	say 777	
Europa	" 11th "	"	13 17 0		say 324	
Dominion	" 23rd "	Portland Bay.	13 17 9		say 247	
Araminta	" 16th "	Geelong.	13 17 6		say 367	
Marco Polo	" 21st "	Melbourne.	13 6 9		say 750	" " "
Ship		Geelong.			say 300	
Ship		Melbourne.			say 300	
Ship		Portland Bay.			say 300	
				8754		Total estimated number for June: 3365.

[ENCLOSURE No. II.]

Colonial Land and Emigration Office,
8, Park Street, Westminster,

4th May, 1852.

(Circular.)

SIR,

I am directed by the Board to acquaint you, that in consequence of recent advices from the Government of Victoria, and the urgency of the demand for labor in that Colony, of a description least likely to resort on arrival to the gold fields, the Board have decided to modify, in some respects, their regulations for selecting emigrants for Victoria, and to increase the number of Vessels which they will dispatch thither monthly.

The modification in the regulations will be as follows, viz :

1. To charge only £2 instead of £5 a piece for country mechanics and artizans, provided they are married, and to take a considerable number of this class.
2. To accept all single women of the working class, and of good character, on payment of £1 each, instead of domestic and farm servants only.
3. To increase the payment on single men not accompanying their parents to £3 a head, leaving the present charge of £2 for those who accompany their parents: but the Commissioners are not desirous of taking single men without their parents; and the few they may, as special cases except, must be balanced by an equal number of single women of good character from the same locality.

The 3rd of the above modifications is applicable to all the Colonies, but the two first are confined to emigrants for Victoria.

All applications received from you after this date, will claim the benefit of the new regulations. and the Commissioners would be glad to receive from you as many eligible candidates as you can send them.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,
S. WALCOTT,
Secretary.