

3. *At work in Gangs.*

I found 79 Men and Boys at work in Gangs. They are all poorly clothed for this inclement season of the year, and more especially so for out door work. Some of the men are aged and infirm, one nearly blind, and others partially disabled by frost bites.

In my interview with the Railway Company Directors, the responsibility of the Company with respect to these Emigrants was discussed, and their intentions stated.

Lord FitzWilliam, by whom these Emigrants were sent out, appears to have acted in good faith; and the correspondence which was submitted to me, shewed that the Company had been careful not to hold out better prospects than the nature of the case would seem to warrant.

While the Company, in consenting to receive 100 men, under a pledge of the means of affording employment to them for three months, at the rate of 2s. Sterling per day, might naturally expect 100 men without the encumbrance of families, His Lordship, on the other hand, might have felt justified in sending out, with the able bodied, such a number of aged, infirm, and young, as would not in Ireland or in Great Britain be considered an excessive burden.

Of the number shipped, it was stated that 374 souls were landed on the Quarantine Island, a large portion of whom were ill with fever, either at the time of leaving the vessel, or whilst they remained at Quarantine, and a number died. Of those taken into the service of the Company, some were aged and so infirm as to be almost past labour; one or two over seventy years of age, and one nearly blind; all enfeebled by the passage and sickness; not over one half could be rated as able bodied men. They were all poorly clothed, and destitute of bedding. The term during which his Lordship expected they would be employed, expired on the last of September, up to which period, such as had been employed by the Company, were paid 2s. 6d., Currency per day. Foreseeing in some measure the difficulty of Winter maintenance, and as they were not found to be profitable labourers, the Company then discharged them, and advised them to make their way to the United States. A few left, but soon returned, and the whole were again set to work at the same rate of wages for working time.

The President further stated that the Company had exhausted their available means; that they had incurred much unanticipated expense on account of these people, as well before they went to work as afterwards, and under these circumstances the Company intended to employ them no longer than the 1st of next April.

This intention however was rescinded at a meeting of the Company held on the 26th, and their Resolution not to employ any of the parties after the then next week, was communicated to me by letter from the President, received while on my journey to Fredericton; the letter is annexed to this Report.

On the 24th instant, in company with Mr. Robert Ker, the working Commissioner of the Parish Poor, I visited the Alms House. There were ten Paupers in it young and old; the apartments were warm and clean, and the inmates appeared to be comfortable; the Building and Farm belong to the Parish.

The present Keeper, Mr. Wheaton, has had the charge of the Establishment for about ten years, at present he receives 5s. per week for each pauper, children as well as adults, together with the use of the buildings and the profits of the farm attached to it; he furnishes wearing apparel and bedding, but does not keep the building in repair.

There are at present 39 out-door paupers, comprised in 11 families, chargeable on the Parish, each of which receives from 3s. to 12s. 6d. per week; I visited several of the families and found that their domestic habits conferred a much greater degree of comfort than was observable among the Rail Road Emigrants.

The funds of the Parish, independent of assessment, consist in an annual rent of £141, not very punctually paid, arising from about 1000 acres of cultivated Land near the Town, and owned by the Parish; the proceeds of the Tax on Dogs, generally about £4 per annum; and fines collected by Magistrates under Acts of Assembly, averaging £10 per annum, making a total of nearly £155 per annum.

The assessment for the Parish for the year 1848, £100, was all collected, and £96 4s. 9. applied to pay off a balance due to the Commissioners prior to April last.

The Commissioner, Mr. Ker, received last year for his services £10, and various sums have been expended in Law charges, and in assisting indigent persons to remove from the country.

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