

No. 1.

Colonial Land and Emigration Commission.

As this Commission has only been recently constituted, it may perhaps be useful to give a short outline of the nature of its powers and duties, in order that the public may be the better aware in what manner and to what extent it can avail itself of the establishment.

The Board was appointed by Commission under the royal sign manual, and its proceedings are directed by instructions from the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department.

The practical duties of the Commissioners may be divided under three heads:—

1. Sale of Colonial Lands.
2. Superintendence of Emigration.
3. Diffusion of Information in respect to the Colonies.

1. The Commissioners are enabled to contract for the sale of waste lands in certain of the colonies. They furnish the parties depositing money in this country with certificates of payment available for the purchase of land in the colony, and apply the money to the conveyance of emigrants nominated by the depositors. They have, however, no authority to perform this office in respect of lands situated in the North American colonies.

2. Whenever persons of the labouring class proceed to the colonies at the public expense, it is intrusted to the Commissioners to see, as far as possible, First, that they have not been induced to emigrate by publications improperly representing the advantages which await them. Next, that they are of the description required in the colony to which they are going. Thirdly, that they are forwarded in vessels fit for the voyage, and having on board a sufficient supply of provisions, water, and all other articles requisite for the health and comfort of the passengers. On the other hand, when the expense of emigration is defrayed by private funds, it belongs to the Board, as far as possible, to protect the poor from imposition, and from the effects of improvident arrangements on their part; and to see that the provisions of the Passengers' Act are duly carried out and enforced.

3. It is the province of the Commissioners from time to time to make public any authentic information which they may receive on matters connected with the settlement of waste lands in the colonies, and affecting the interest of any description of persons who propose to settle in them. They likewise answer all applications from individuals, and afford them, so far as may be in their power, such information as may be adapted to their particular cases.

The office of the Commissioners is at No. 9, Park-street, Westminster, and all communications should be addressed to their secretary, Stephen Walcott, Esq.