

NEWFOUND-
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Despatch from Governor Sir A. Bannerman.

No. 4.
Governor Sir A.
Bannerman to the
Right Hon. H.
Labouchere, M.P.
8 December 1857.

— No. 4. —

(No. 95.)

COPY of DESPATCH from Governor Sir A. *Bannerman* to the Right
Honourable *H. Labouchere*.

Government House, Newfoundland, 8 December 1857.

(Received 29 December 1857.—Answered, No. 5, 28 January 1858, page 32.)

Sir,

Enclosure.

I HAVE the honour to forward to you the enclosed Minute of Council, praying for some relaxation of the provisions of the Passengers Act, 18 & 19 Vict. c. 119, which was passed, I believe, on the report of a Committee appointed at the instance of Mr. John O'Connell.

2. It appears that since the year 1847 emigration from Ireland to Newfoundland has declined rapidly, and is now nearly extinct, the cause of which was want of employment, and the inhabitants writing to their friends that many of them were in a state of extreme destitution. This was perfectly correct, but from one or two successful fisheries things have taken a very different turn: the want of labour and high price of wages are now severely felt. The Board of Works here, and several respectable firms, have been obliged to authorise Messrs James and Robert Kent, of the city of Waterford, and Mr. John Shea, of the city of Cork, to procure a number of labourers for Newfoundland, but which they say cannot be effected unless Her Majesty's Government will allow some relaxations in the Passengers Act, which are pointed out in the enclosed Minute.

3. I am not aware whether this can be done, but I observe that by the 96th section of the Act, voyages from colonies, if less than three weeks, are not subject to the same restrictions as for longer voyages, and I may here say that the passage from Ireland to Newfoundland is often made in less than three weeks.

4. Fisheries are precarious, and two or three bad seasons might bring along with them the same want of labour, and its consequences, which took place some years ago. I may, however, add that the discovery has recently been made of valuable minerals in this colony, opening a better prospect for labour than Newfoundland has yet experienced, and if the Passengers Act can be relaxed so as to give encouragement to the immigration of a few hundred labourers, I think the petition of the Council should, if possible, be acceded to.

I have, &c.
(signed) *A. Bannerman*,
Governor.