

EMIGRATION—CANADA.

(No. 34.)

DESPATCH from the Right Hon. Sir CHARLES BAGOT, G.C.B. to Lord
STANLEY.

MY LORD,

Government House, Kingston, 17th February, 1842.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of the Reports made to me by the emigrant agents for the two divisions of this province, and by the medical superintendent at Grosse Isle in respect to the emigration to Canada during the last season. These documents did not reach me until after my Despatches for the last packet had been sent off.

Your Lordship will observe that the result of the emigration during the season of 1841, was in every respect satisfactory; that there was less sickness or destitution than usual, notwithstanding the great increase in the numbers; and that employment had been found for all before the winter set in. The absence of sickness is to be attributed in great measure to the improvement in the habits of the class from which the great mass of the emigrants is drawn, and to a considerable extent also, to the favourable weather which most of the vessels met with. Much is also no doubt due to the stricter supervision latterly exercised over emigrant vessels by the Government agents both in England and in Canada.

My predecessor entered so fully into the subject of emigration in his Despatches of the 12th October 1840, and 26th January 1841, that there remains but little for me to suggest, either in respect to the improvement of the law or the manner in which it should be carried into operation. I would, however, draw your Lordship's notice to the suggestion of Mr. Buchanan, that the penalty for carrying more passengers than the law allows, should be calculated on the excess of the passengers, and not be imposed in one sum. According to the present system as Mr. Buchanan has pointed out, the infraction of the law may, notwithstanding the penalty, be very advantageous to the ship-owner, and more so, of course, in proportion to the extent of the infraction.

The emigration of the last year strikingly illustrates the advantage to the emigrant of an early departure from the British coast. Not only is he thereby enabled to settle himself more completely before the approach of the following winter, but he will generally experience a shorter passage, and arrive in Canada at a more healthy season. Your Lordship will observe that to this fact Doctor Douglas attributes to a considerable extent the absence of sickness among the emigrants.

The expenses of the emigration within this province during the past season did not exceed 6,000*l*. The greater part of this sum was employed in conveying destitute emigrants from Quebec and Montreal to places where their labour would be required, the remainder in defraying the salaries of the local agents with the exception of the agent at Quebec, who is paid from the Civil List. The vote of 3,500*l*. obtained from the legislature during the last session, and the sum of 1,500*l*. granted, as your Lordship informs me, by the Imperial Parliament, will nearly cover the whole of this expenditure. The remainder, which will not exceed 1,000*l*., will be provided for by the legislature at its next meeting.

I observe that the question of emigration is engaging much attention in England, and has been pressed on the notice of Her Majesty's Government from several influential quarters. I presume, however, that it would not be the intention of Her Majesty's Government to pay any part of the passage of emigrants proceeding to this province. The expense of such an arrangement would be very great, and I agree with Lord Sydenham in thinking that it would be neither necessary nor expedient. But the plan proposed by Lord John Russell, viz. that the Government should pay the tax on such emigrants as should come out under their auspices, appears to be both practicable and judicious. The fund thus created, together with the proceeds of the tax on those who come out without Government assistance, with the annual grant for agency, will probably suffice for the emigration and quarantine expenses of the present year. But, if not, I anticipate no difficulty in

Emigration.
CANADA.

Mr. Buchanan.
31st Dec. 1841.
(A.)

Dr. Douglas.
(B.)

Mr. Hawke.
1st Feb. 1842.
(C.)

For Lord Sydenham's Despatches of the 12th Oct. 1840, and 26th Jan. 1841, *vide* Correspondence relative to Emigration in Canada, presented to Parliament by Her Majesty's Command, 1841, pp. 36 and 71.