

— No. 4. —

(No. 42.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from Lieutenant-Governor Sir *Edmund Head*, Bart.,
to Earl *Grey*.

Government House, Fredericton,
24 April 1849.

Sir,

(Received, 15 May 1849.)

No. 4.

Lieut.-Governor
Sir E. Head to
Earl Grey,
24 April 1849.

Your Lordship may expect from me some account of the reasons why no apparent attempt has been made in this province to modify the Act of last year, imposing a duty on emigrants.

I brought the subject under the consideration of my Executive Council, and the member of that body who is supposed to have most influence in the House of Assembly, after making inquiry among the members, assured me that there existed an indisposition to diminish the tax on emigrants, so great as to make it doubtful whether a proposition to that effect would be carried.

In fact, the emigration of 1847 left a lasting impression on the mind of the Legislature here, and most unfortunately the condition of the emigrants whom I believe to have been sent from Earl Fitzwilliam's estate by the ship "*Star*,"* and who were consigned to the St. Andrew's and Quebec Railway Company last season, has been such as to increase any feeling of alarm.

These poor people were not properly selected in all respects; many were infirm, and a very large proportion arrived in a pitiable state of sickness. Whilst the Assembly was sitting, some of them came up to Fredericton to solicit assistance, as they were at that moment (about six weeks ago), turned off by the railway company. They had already received a great deal of aid from the province, and many of them are at this moment in urgent want, in the streets of St. Andrew's.

* See Despatches
No. 35, 5 June 1848.
No. 46, 19 June 1848.
(Pages 12 & 15 of Parl.
Paper, by Command, on
North American Emi-
gration, of July 1848.)
No. 52, 3 July 1848.
(Page 12, Papers on
North American Emi-
gration, by Command, of
August 1848.)
No. 76, 3 August 1848.
No. 77, 15 Aug. 1848.
(Page 59, Papers on
North American Emi-
gration, by Command,
February 1849.)

I have no reason to attribute to our agent there any want of proper caution, for I sent a person down a very short time since to inspect their condition, and his report coincided with the information already received.

In short, this one ship load of emigrants has already cost the province upwards of 600*l.* currency (500*l.* sterling), at least double what the ship paid as emigrant tax. Nor is the charge yet terminated; for, in consequence of a fresh account of their destitution, I yesterday directed a fresh advance to be made for their temporary relief. In the present state of commercial depression there is no work for them, and the legal conditions by which the Government is bound, prevent our settling them on land, even if such resource were of any avail (which it could not be), to meet their immediate wants.

There never was a more striking example of the fact, that incautious and ill-regulated emigration does more than anything else to throw impediments in the way of that which might be properly conducted. There is no doubt whatever that the circumstances attending these emigrants to St. Andrew's, have had great weight in indisposing members of the Legislature to diminish the emigrant tax.

After what has been stated, your Lordship will not be surprised at my saying that I hear with some alarm of another vessel being expected at St. Andrew's from the same district in Ireland. So far as Earl Fitzwilliam is concerned, I have every reason to believe that he acted with the greatest liberality and kindness towards the emigrants of last year. If the Railway Company expect that the Government here should provide out of the emigrant fund for labourers turned off by them, I think we ought distinctly to understand what obligations the company take on the sending of such persons. Probably, if any of the emigrants of this season come from his Lordship's estate, he would have no objection to inform the Commissioners for Lands and Emigration of the nature of the conditions (if any) entered into by the Railway Company. I have myself urged upon the Directors the necessity for extreme caution; and I trust the emigrant