

No 1 to No 30 of this Newspaper
rather scarce and contains many interesting
things and much valuable information

For Louder's Book ~~See~~ ^{See} ~~See~~ ^{See} ~~See~~
Norris Books 1846 -

D. Mitchell.



Rep. Davis, Esq.
with Hephner's Ambulance

THE

South Australian Colonist,

AND SETTLERS' WEEKLY RECORD OF BRITISH, FOREIGN, AND COLONIAL INTELLIGENCE.

Vol. I.—No. 1.]

TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 1840.

[PRICE 6D.]

COLONIAL LAND BOARD.

Copy of a Commission under the Royal Sign Manual, appointing T. F. Elliot and Robert Torrens, Esquires, and the Honourable Edward E. Villiers, Land and Emigration Commissioners.

VICTORIA R.

Victoria, by the grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith:—To our trusty and well-beloved Thomas Frederick Elliot and Robert Torrens, Esquires, and Edward Ernest Villiers, Esquire (commonly called the Honourable Edward Ernest Villiers), greeting:—Whereas there are within divers of our colonies, plantations and possessions abroad large tracts of waste land vested in us in virtue of our royal prerogative, and subject to alienation at our pleasure: And whereas by various commissions under the great seal of our said United Kingdom, addressed to the respective governors of our said several colonies, plantations and possessions abroad, we have authorized and empowered the said respective governors, in our name and on our behalf, to sell and dispose of such lands, subject nevertheless to all such rules and regulations as are comprised in our instructions under our royal sign manual and signet, accompanying our said respective commissions, or which might be comprised in any further instructions to be issued by us in that behalf: And whereas we have judged it expedient that provision should be made for carrying into effect the powers so granted as aforesaid by the said several commissions and instructions to the said respective governors, by the establishment within this our United Kingdom of a board of commissioners, duly authorized by us in manner hereinafter mentioned, to act in the premises: Now know you, that we, reposing especial trust and confidence in the loyalty, integrity and ability of you, the said Thomas Frederick Elliot, Robert Torrens, and Edward Ernest Villiers, have thought fit to constitute and appoint, and do hereby constitute and appoint you, the said Thomas Frederick Elliot, Robert Torrens, and Edward Ernest Villiers, to be our commissioners, during our pleasure, for the purposes hereinafter mentioned, under the style and title of "The Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners." And we do hereby authorize and require you to execute this our commission in such manner and under and subject to all such instructions as shall from time to time be addressed to you for your guidance therein by one of our principal secretaries of state; or by our commissioners of our treasury for the time being: And we do hereby authorize and empower you, subject to such instructions as aforesaid, in our name, and on our behalf, to contract with any person or persons for the sale of any such waste lands as aforesaid, and subject to such instructions as aforesaid, to apply the monies arising from any such sales towards defraying the expense of the removal of emigrants from this our United Kingdom to any colony, plantation or possession abroad wherein the lands so sold may be situate: And we do further authorize and require you, subject to such instructions as aforesaid, to be aiding and assisting to the said respective governors of our said respective colonies, plantations and possessions abroad, in applying towards the removal of emigrants from this our United Kingdom to any such colony, plantation, or possession, any monies which may be raised by any such sales of land effected by any such governors within any of the said colonies, plantations or possessions, in pursuance of any such their said respective commissions, and the instructions under our royal sign manual and signet as aforesaid: Provided always, and we do hereby declare our pleasure to be, that nothing herein contained shall alter or affect, or shall be construed to alter or affect, any appropriation now made, or hereafter to be made, by law, or by the authority of our said commissioners of our treasury for the time being, of any monies which may be produced by the sales of any such lands as aforesaid: Provided also, that nothing herein contained extends or shall be construed to extend to interfere in any manner with the due execution of any law made or hereafter to be made by the legislature of any of our said colonies, plantations or possessions abroad in respect of the sale of waste lands therein situate, or in respect of the appropriation of the proceeds of any such sales: Provided also, and we do further declare our pleasure to be, that nothing herein contained shall extend or be construed to extend to interfere with the execution of the statutes made for the colonization and government of our province of South Australia, or with the execution of the commission which we have addressed to you, the said Thomas Frederick Elliot, Robert Torrens and Edward Ernest Villiers, as commissioners under the said statutes. Given at our court at Windsor, this tenth day of January, 1840, in the third year of our reign.

By her Majesty's command,
(Countersigned) J. RUSSELL.

Thomas Frederick Elliot and Robert Torrens, Esqrs.
and the Honourable Edward Ernest Villiers,
to be Land and Emigration Commissioners.

Copy of Instructions addressed by Lord John Russell to the Land and Emigration Commissioners.

Downing-street, 14 January, 1840.

Gentlemen,
I herewith transmit to you a commission, under the royal sign manual, constituting you to be commissioners for the sale of the waste lands of the crown throughout the British colonies, and for applying the proceeds of such sales towards the removal thither of emigrants from this country.

It now becomes my duty to convey to you such instructions as are necessary for your guidance, in the discharge of the duty which her Majesty has thus been graciously pleased to confide to you.

The result of my inquiries into the present system of managing the crown lands in the colonies, and into the plans hitherto pursued in aid of emigration, has been to convince me of the necessity for some new arrangement at once more comprehensive and more efficient. Until now

this service has been undertaken in this country, partly by the South Australian commissioners, and partly by the Agent-general for emigration. The first step to improvement has appeared to me to consist in the consolidation of these establishments. Three commissioners, devoting their time exclusively to this employment, will necessarily form a far more effective body than the more numerous board of nine, who have hitherto acted as South Australian Commissioners, but eight of whom, having served gratuitously, have been able to devote but a small part of their leisure to this employment. In the office of the Agent-general for emigration, on the other hand, the difficulties have unavoidably arisen from a single person being charged with extensive functions, incapable of even a temporary delegation, and executed without the benefit of the counsel and support of any colleague; but the disunion of the two offices has led to other and more evident evils. They have unavoidably been competitors with each other, to the disadvantage of the public revenue, for the hire of shipping of a peculiar class, and not readily obtained. The fact, also, of the existence of distinct offices, both under the authority of the government, may have given, unintentionally, some colour to the rival representations of irresponsible agents interested in the resort to separate colonies, and thence have contributed, though indirectly, to the evil of exaggerated appeals to the public, upon the merits of different settlements.

Having for these reasons thought it right that the two offices should be consolidated, I am, for the present at least, relieved from the necessity of entering into any explanation of the duties which will devolve on you as Colonization Commissioners for South Australia, because whatever is immediately necessary on that subject has already been so fully executed by my predecessors in this office, and by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, as to leave me nothing to state, except that the acts of parliament and the instructions which have been addressed to your predecessors in that capacity, will form the rule for your own guidance.

In your other capacity of a General Board for the sale of lands and for promoting emigration, your duties may be conveniently arranged under the four following heads: first, the collection and diffusion of accurate statistical knowledge; secondly, the sale in this country of waste lands in the colonies; thirdly, the application of the proceeds of such sales towards the removal of emigrants; and, fourthly, the rendering of periodical accounts, both pecuniary and statistical, of your administration of this trust. Of each of these in their order.

First. There is no subject on which misapprehension and fallacies are more easily propagated, or with more fatal success, than in reference to the state, resources, and advantages of those numerous dependencies of this kingdom which are spread over every region of the American, African, and Australian continents and islands. Nor is there any subject on which the public at large can with equal reason demand that the Government should, as far as may be possible, supply the ignorant and unwary with authentic and unexaggerated intelligence. When the crown, in the person of its officers, undertakes to dispose of lands at so vast a distance, and to remove emigrants thither, it is not competent to them to decline the duty of imparting a faithful account of all the material circumstances by which the choice of emigrants, especially of the poorer class, should be determined. The Executive Government cannot in this case, as in transactions confined within the limits of the United Kingdom, refer those with whom it has to treat to the ordinary sources of popular intelligence, knowing that those sources are often perverted, and unworthy of confidence, and that they are to be correctly appreciated only by laborious study. We have no right to interpose actively to promote emigration, and at the same time to leave the ignorant and helpless to explore, as chance may determine, questions so deeply affecting their future welfare. On the other hand, in undertaking to impart information for the guidance of men on such an occasion, we subject ourselves to a formidable responsibility. No diligence or sagacity can effectually guard against misconceptions, more or less material, as to the real state and prospects of colonies so numerous and so remote; and they to whom any erroneous statement may be made on such a subject by officers acting under the authority of the crown, will ascribe to those errors any disappointment, from whatever cause arising, and will prefer claims for compensation, which it might be at once difficult to resist, and impossible to admit.

It is therefore to be considered as a first principle of your official conduct that you are at once to be prompt in affording to all applicants the most easy access to all authentic means of knowledge, and resolute in abstaining from giving on behalf of the Government any pledge or warranty as to the accuracy of the information which you may so impart. Nor will it be enough to abstain from such assurances. Every capitalist or emigrant with whom you may be brought into communication as an applicant for statistical knowledge for his guidance, must be distinctly warned that you cannot warrant the exactness of the intelligence with which you may furnish him, nor be held responsible for more than for the communication of the truth according to your own apprehension of it, and that it will be his own duty to satisfy himself as to matters of fact of this nature from every other accessible quarter, before embarking his capital or his person in so serious an enterprise. The same precautions must be strictly enforced on all your subordinate agents, and must be carefully observed by them. Yet, with your utmost caution in this respect, you will recollect that information given to the poor and ignorant by a Government officer respecting distant countries, will unavoidably be received in most cases with implicit confidence; you must therefore weigh and compare the statements you receive, and sift them scrupulously before you stamp them with any sort of authority.

Subject to the preceding qualifications, it will be your duty to diffuse, either by oral or written statements, a distinct and compendious account of whatever relates to the agriculture, the commerce, the natural pro-