

Chestnut House

St. Peters. Kent.

14 August 1856.

Sir. In thinking out the problems of the future of our increasing population it has occurred to me that the policy of all our great Colonies should be directed to secure the following results.

1. Efficient irrigation of all lands not watered by lakes or rivers.
2. To stop the grant or sale of large estates to one person or company.

Considering the splendid river systems of North West Canada the irrigation works there would no doubt resemble those of India, and could probably be effected at comparatively small cost.

The question of irrigating <sup>the interior of</sup> our great  
Australian Colonies is rendered  
difficult owing to the absence of any  
large lakes or rivers, and could  
probably only be secured by means  
of tanks or reservoirs.

Such irrigation works, in my opinion,  
are of greater importance than Railways.  
And the question presses for action.

In the United States, in Canada,  
and in Australia, the best land  
has been taken up, and that which  
remains is of second class value only -  
simply because it is <sup>or distant from a</sup> distant from a good  
water-supply.

The pressure of population requires  
that such land should now be prepared

for colonization in the near future --

First prepare the land for emigrants,  
then colonize it -- Railways can  
afterwards be made for use by the  
settlers.

And that brings me to the second  
question. -- It is manifestly impolitic  
to grant very large estates to one  
individual or company -- If that  
policy is continued there will remain  
in future years but a small quantity  
of distinct second class land for use  
by settlers. --

I have read of one estate in Australia  
belonging to one person only of 60,000  
acres, and occupying the entire  
length of a fertile & well watered  
valley 12 miles long!

Now if that land had been

properly parcelled out, it would have given five grants of 30 acres each to two emigrants!

I suggest that <sup>a free grant of</sup> 30 acres of first class land or 50 acres of second class land to each adult male emigrant would be amply sufficient. And in case of land purchase, no one should be permitted to buy more than 500 acres. And all leases of grazing land should be determinable at 3 years notice, so that such land might be made available for settlers as it is needed.

The United States are beginning to recognize the unwisdom of large and wasteful land grants, and are endeavoring to revoke such grants in cases where they have been made to unfinished railways.--

There can be no doubt that a  
wisely considered set of land laws  
would tend very much to secure  
the colonies in future years from  
serious and difficult questions. -

I shall feel obliged if you can  
present these suggestions to any  
of the sections of the approaching  
meeting of the British Association -  
or otherwise give them publicity  
for the benefit of the colonies. -

I am Sir

Your obedient servant  
Thomast Roffe.

Sir J<sup>m</sup> Dawkins.

Woffey  
Kingston Hill  
July 1856