

Downing Street,
1 July, 1852

No. 58

Sir,

I have received your dispatch No.24 of the 31st of January last, on the Regulations to be observed with regard to Probationary Ticket of Leave Holders who are henceforward to be designated by the name of Passholders.

The only point which seems to call for any special decision from me is the question of endeavouring to enforce a money-payment from Convicts, as an equivalent for the cost of their transport by means of deductions from their wages. This question appears to have been the subject of a protracted correspondence between my Predecessor and yourself, which I have perused with attention. Lord Grey considered it proper in itself and likely to be productive of salutary effects, that the convict should be compelled to repay the cost of transporting him to the Colony before he could obtain a Conditional Pardon:- you, and the Comptroller General of Convicts, have both submitted, repeatedly, the most decided opinion that the measure is one which it would be impossible to enforce.

I may remark that in Western Australia the plan as yet is understood to work successfully, but then it must be admitted that the number of men to whom it can apply there is for the present insignificant.

A more important consideration is, that since the time when first you urged your objections, labour will have become much scarcer in Van Diemen's Land, by reason of the discovery of gold in the adjacent Colonies, and that consequently the wages of labour must be presumed to be much higher. This should make it easier for employers to pay, and for the convicts to be able to bear the proposed deductions from their wages. But still the multiplicity of accounts, the passive resistance of all concerned, and the intense difficulty of enforcing payment from

such a great number of Debtors for small amounts, will remain. The representations on this subject contained in your present dispatch, and its enclosure, are certainly most weighty.

Whilst therefore I have thought it right to advert to the two foregoing topics, I am bound to state that if you consider the measure impracticable, I am not prepared to urge it in the face of the formidable difficulties pointed out by yourself and the Comptroller General.

In other respects I have no objection to the Regulations which you have adopted.

*I have the honor to be
Sir,
Your most obedient
humble servant
JMS Pakington*

*Lieutenant Governor,
Sir William Denison
&c &c &c*