'A WORKING MAN'S PARADISE' – ENGLISH AWARENESS OF EMIGRATION AND NEW ZEALAND IN THE AGE OF SAIL[1]

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Migration was a major phenomenon in the demographic history of 19th Century Europe. It is estimated that some forty-four million people left their homelands in search of a better life. More than a third (sixteen million) left the British Isles – ten from England, Scotland and Wales and six from Ireland[2] and this, in turn, was but a part of a wider British internal migration (both permanent and seasonal) that transformed Britain from a rural society to an urban one. Emigration had never taken place on such a scale before and a series of particular 'push' and 'pull' factors appear to have been at work throughout the 19th Century. These included rural unemployment and rising population – two 'push' factors and technological/industrial development and the growth of European colonies in other parts of the world as 'pull' factors. The relative contribution of each factor is a complex and continuing historical problem. Recent studies in history and the social sciences have shown that the volume of emigration will increase when both 'push' and 'pull' factors are operating. In Britain unemployment, and the resulting unrest, was considered a major social problem along with its consequent costs in terms of Poor Law relief. After the reform of the Poor Law in 1834, unemployed countrymen were 'encouraged' by reductions in 'outdoor relief' to move elsewhere to find work – either in new urban industries or abroad. This 'push' factor was reinforced by the 'pull' effects of expanding industries,

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[1] Attributed to Julius Vogel, Colonial treasurer and architect of New Zealand's emigrant policy in the 1870s.

[2] R. I. Woods, *The Population of Britain in the 19th Century in British Population History, from the Black Death to the Present Day*, ed. M. Anderson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 309.

often with better wages and the greater mobility offered by steam railways after 1830 and steamships (at least in the Atlantic) after 1851. Another 'push' factor after 1873 was the long agricultural depression brought about as a result of competition from imports from USA, Canada, Australia, Argentina and New Zealand.[3] The continuing debate on 'the state of the poor' was also coloured by the writings of Malthus who at the end of the 18th Century argued that food supplies could never keep pace with rising population and the surplus people must emigrate. The increasing number of English colonies (some admittedly acquired to deny them to European rivals) were seen as a solution and a source of wealth. As an anonymous writer of 1834 pointed out, 'The transmarine possessions of England are a mine as yet partially explored, inexhaustible in its treasures, requiring only population with a moderate amount of capital to become of immense importance and wealth to the Mother country.'[4]

Whatever the macro causes of migration, what motivated individuals were matters of belief and perception. People believed that they would be better off if they moved. Migration occurred as a result of decisions made by individuals in the light of what they perceived the objective world to be like. 'It did not matter if the migrant held an erroneous view (and many did) – it was that erroneous view that was acted upon rather than objective real-world situation.'[5] So information was the key to an individual's evaluation of whether to emigrate and where to emigrate. Such information took many forms such as recollections of past visits, letters from past migrants, conversations with friends, books, newspapers and pamphlets; and what this paper attempts to explore is how potential emigrants got to know about emigration – especially to New Zealand. It is an anecdotal approach rather than quantitative. Such is the fragmentary character of the sources.

Before embarking on an examination of how the British found out about New Zealand, it is important to recall the chronology and numbers involved. Twenty to twenty-five years after Cook's discovery, New Zealand saw the start of unorganised settlements of whalers, fishermen, shipwrecked mariners, escaped convicts, followed by traders and missionaries. Numbers grew slowly, perhaps

[3] P. Matthias, *The First Industrial Nation. An Economic History of Britain, 1700–1914*, London: Methuen, 1969, pp. 340–341.

[4] *Anon. 1834,* quoted in A. Briggs, *The Age of Improvement*, London: Longmans, 1959, p. 388.

[5] P. E. White & R. I. Woods, Foundations of Migration Study, in *The Geographical Impact of Migration*, London: Longman, 1981, p. 21.

from fifty in 1800 to 1000 by 1839.[6] 1840 saw the first effective organised immigration with the landing of immigrants at Port Nicholson (Wellington) and by the first census in 1851 the total European population had risen to 26,707, more than doubling again by 1858 to 54,413. By 1864, after the discovery of gold at Otago in 1861, it stood at 171,009. Most of this was fuelled by immigration rather than a natural increase. 1863, the peak year, saw 45,730 arrivals. After a downturn in the late 1860s Vogel's vigorous promotion of subsidised immigration saw another peak in 45,965 arrivals in 1874. This was followed by a tailing off in the 1880s, although the stimulus to agriculture by the introduction of ship refrigeration for meat exports staved off serious decline until 1886. Between that year and 1891, 11,900 more people left than arrived. This was also the time when sailing ships began to be supplanted by steamers in the emigrant trade. It was a predominantly British migration. By 1886, 40 per cent of the European population were English, Scottish or Irish, mainly from labouring and lower middle-class backgrounds; many were small town and country dwellers. Then there were cultural minority groups: Germans, Scandinavians and some Chinese. Finally, there were migrants from other colonial societies, notably goldrushers from Australia and California.[7]

Emigration was a universal topic in Britain. It was inescapable, especially from the 1840s which saw the mass exodus from Ireland as a result of the disastrous failure of the potato crop between 1845 and 1847, and then the miraculous get rich stories coming back from California in 1849 and then Australia in 1851. But even before these three events, consciousness of emigration was high both at government and individual level. There was a widespread belief that emigration would not only relieve population pressure and consequent unemployment and unrest, but it was also seen as a huge potential market for British goods, a method of opening up new areas for investment, and a God-given command to his chosen people to 'Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the Earth and subdue it.'[8] The 'encouragement' to migrate was embedded in the 1834 Poor Law Act. However, the Government shrank from direct encouragement of emigration alt-

[6] A. U. McLintock, ed., *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, vol. 2, Wellington: The Government Printer, 1966, pp. 130–139.

[7] J. Graham, Settler Society, in W. H. Williams with B. R. Williams (eds), *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, Oxford & Wellington: Clarendon Press, 1981, p. 116.

[8] Emigrants Penny Magazine, Plymouth 1850–1, quoted in C. Coleman, *Passage to America*, London: Hutchinson, 1972, p. 38.

hough it was concerned about the predominance of emigrants going to The United States of America – a foreign country and potential rival. A new solution to the problem of assisting emigration to the colonies was proposed by Edward Gibbon Wakefield who argued that the existing system of granting away colonial lands to almost anyone prepared to organise a settlement was wasteful and hindered development. Instead, he proposed that British colonial lands should be sold and the income applied to support large-scale emigration. Wakefield's proposals were attractive because they were above all cheap and simple. In 1837, T. F. Elliot was appointed the first Agent General for emigration. In 1840 government involvement was extended by the appointment of the Colonial Land & Emigration Commission. It was also obliged to enact a series of Passenger Acts from 1832 to try and set minimum standards of diet and accommodation for emigrant ships. Many other groups were involved in encouraging emigration either by direct financial support or by propaganda. The Mormons, for example, arranged parties of the faithful to sail en bloc on their own chartered ships and spread the word through their own news sheets. The topic also received coverage in the national and local newspapers of which there were a growing number. Between 1826 and 1850 forty provincial newspapers were launched and after the abolition of Advertisement Tax in 1853 and Newspaper Stamp Duty in 1855, a further 260 came into being.[9] These carried advertisements for sailings, reports of local groups of emigrants leaving, and letters on the subject. Some were in favour and some were warnings by the disillusioned. For example, The *Caernarfon Herald* of April 23rd 1853 carried the following, 'It is grievous to think that so many hard-working countrymen and women, physically worse off than the slaves of South America are to be found eking out a most miserable existence, half clad and half fed (in North Wales) who, if once in New Zealand, might fare sumptuously with a tithe of their present drudgery.' Or, by contrast, a letter from the *Macclesfield Courier* of January 27th 1855, Melbourne: 'Sir, we were astonished upon our arrival here to find all the golden accounts we had heard in England of the state of this colony, as far as regards the great want of labour, and the high rate of wages paid here, together with the flattering accounts of the gold fields, have been greatly magnified, and we are induced to write this letter, the insertion of which will confer a boon to the working men intending to emigrate hither.'

At a national level, newspapers increased in number, variety and circulation – the establishment of a national network of railways and the electric tele-

[9] K. Williams, *The English Newspaper*, London: Springwood, 1979, pp. 67–69.

graph made it possible to send the news to all major towns overnight and new types of periodical appeared with pictures for the first time. The *Illustrated London News* was the most important. To this day its influence on emigration studies is still present, because its powerful woodcuts of emigrants departing, scenes on board, new lands, shipwrecks etc. are an important pictorial source of evidence of this mass movement of people. Imagine its impact from the 1840's when availability of visual material was very limited. How those pictures must have been scrutinised! Emigration stories were even found in the new humorous papers – *Punch*, for example, established in 1844, carried a satirical piece on emigration for the Upper Classes – pointing a finger at the conservatism of the House of Lords. Newspaper stories, adverts and pictures supported a growing network of passenger agents both in ports and inland towns. These agents worked for major lines such as the Black Ball, Eagle & White Star to Australia but also for the Emigration Commissioners who took a special interest in supporting emigration to Australia and New Zealand. Plymouth, which by 1850 was the second most important port of departure for New Zealand had no less than seven agents. Country towns such as Tavistock in Devon might have a local agent. In that case this was Edward Turner who sold contract tickets to privately funded passengers at twelve and a half percent commission and also actively advised emigrants on where to go and what to take. What to take was always a major concern and it gave rise to what amounted to an emigrant 'goods industry.' Apart from the advertisements for sailings which appeared in newspapers, there were promotions of stocks of goods which could make the emigrant a good profit on landing; preserved food and clothing for the voyage; tents, portable homes and mining tools and insurance if things went awry. To take three examples: J. Linderwick advertised in the 1860s for the New Zealand gold diggings: 'Emigrants will find smoking pipes the most profitable article they can take to the Gold Regions' or the *Watkins' London Directory* of 1853 advertised: 'Bakers' antidote to seasickness. *The Times* newspaper in its impression of July 29th says 'No emigrant shall venture to sea without it.' R. G. Paget advertised 'Tents for emigrants, with a military bell tent, 30 feet round costing £2.10s'; while in 1860 the Western Life Assurance & Annuity Society insured 'Travellers, mariners and emigrants 'on moderate terms.'

But this plethora of information was of no use if there was no access to it either because of illiteracy or the expense. Those least likely to afford newspapers were the illiterate poor who stood to gain most from migrating. It is, in fact, very difficult to know what proportion of the population could not read or write.

E. P. Thompson pointed out in his seminal *The Making of English Working Class,* 'It is difficult to generalise as to the diffusion of literacy in the early years of the 19th century. The 'industrious classes' touched at one pole, the million or more who were illiterate or whose literary skill amounted to little more than the ability to spell out a few words or write their names. At the other pole, there were men of considerable literacy attainment.'[10] There had certainly been a growing concern for a provision of elementary education from the first Sunday schools in 1783 to the rapid advance of the church based National schools. The government was gradually drawn in to improve teacher training in 1839. By 1850 its educational budget totalled half a million pounds; but it was not until the 1870 Act there was universal elementary education available. Alongside the development of schools, albeit providing the basics only, was a high growth in adult education especially through the Mechanics Institutes' movement. From the first founded in Glasgow in 1799 it grew to 610 by 1851, with 600,000 members.[11] Churches, church schools and mechanics' institutions usually contained lending libraries and some at least reported that books on travels and voyages were among the most popular loans.[12] Cheap educational literature alone became increasingly available from the 1820s with the establishment of the *Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge* in 1826 and the *Penny Encyclopaedia* in 1833 with its long chapter on New Zealand. The Liverpool Library was founded with emigrants in mind: 'In a great public library they (the emigrants) could see maps of all countries and books specially written for particular colonies; they could obtain all that is necessary to be known respecting the climate, soil and general productions; they could see actual objects in the museum.'[13] While these facilities were increasingly available to town dwellers, those in rural parts, in villages, did not have the same opportunities. Nevertheless, newspapers were available, usually in local public houses (often for a fee) and for everyone that read, there would be others who would listen, dream, and perhaps act.

So how did New Zealand fit in this web of information and information

[10] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, London: Gollancz, 1963, p. 782.

[11] Caul's S.J & Boultwood, *An Introductory History of English Education since 1800*, 4th edition, London: University Tutorial Press, 1967, p. 320.

[12] T. Kelly, *Early Public Libraries*, London: Library Association, 1964, p. 199.

[13] A. Hume, *Suggestions for the Advancement of Literature and Learning in Liverpool*, Liverpool: privately published, 1851, p. 19 (in fact, the Liverpool Library and Museum were set up in 1851 and moved to their present building in 1858).

points? At first, it did not; settlement had been haphazard, and largely ignored which, in a way, was strange because it had better climate and more natural resources than Australia. It was not, however, on any of the main trading routes, lying as it did too far to the east and the south. This perhaps explains why it was not formally annexed until 1840 – the same year as the annexation of the Falkland Islands which clearly had a strategic position on the route Cape Horn and the west coast of America, but were of little value as a place of major settlement or trading. Perhaps the prevailing attitude even in the 1850's is summed up by the Liverpool historian Thomas Baines: 'The colony of New Zealand, at the very ends of the earth contained in 1849 a British population of 22,751 inhabitants; imported £147,767 worth of manufactures and produce, and exported £75,984' – a curt dismissal especially when compared to his fulsome praise of Victoria and New South Wales.[14] Nevertheless, New Zealand gradually did achieve greater prominence in English consciousness over the next twenty-five years. This can be seen in the rise in the number of newspaper stories about the colony, the increase in the number of letters and reminiscences coming home, and the increase in the number of agencies promoting emigration. The newspapers' increased coverage can be crudely measured by counting the number of 'stories' printed by *The Times* at ten year intervals:

1840	18
1850	13
1860	48
1870	62

Not all were positive: much of the coverage was about the wars with the Maoris – a possible disincentive to emigrate. Nevertheless, they did create a much greater awareness of New Zealand's existence and, incidentally, created a new type of settler, the discouraged soldier.[15] Graphic pictures and stories of military campaigns always excited the public imagination.[16] The plant, animal specimens and artefacts arriving in increasing quantities to museums, universities and private collections perhaps had a similar effect. Although the first Kiwi

[14] T. Baines, *History of the Commerce and the Town of Liverpool*, Liverpool: Longman, Green and Longmans, London & author, 1852, p. 816.

[15] M. Barthorp, *To Face the Daring Maoris: Soldiers' Impressions of the First Maori War*, London: Hodder & Stourton, 1979, p. 185.

[16] J. Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1986, p. 126.

specimen arrived in the United Kingdom in 1812, it was not until the 1840's that large numbers of New Zealand birds found their way into British collections where they excited much curiosity. For example, the Liverpool Museum had over 158 specimens. By 1859 New Zealand's flora had perhaps more impact. The first published catalogue *Flora Nova Zealandiae* by Sir J. D. Hooker was published as early as 1853 and the popular passion for fern growing and collecting took off in the same decade, with living and pressed specimens being sent to Britain. At one time there was a New Zealand Fern Company that specialised in the presentation of pressed ferns in books.[17] Indeed, visual material of any kind was immensely important in spreading awareness especially in an era less well endowed with pictorial material than our own. The woodcuts of the *Illustrated London News* and similar journals must have had some influence either pro – emphasising the scenery, the economy and the attractions of the Gold Rush at Otago or anti – in images of shipwrecks or fires at sea such as that on the *Cospatrick* of November 18th 1874. The power of the visual was used at the time by emigration promoting bodies; magic lantern shows were available. In 1849, S. Brees, surveyor to the New Zealand Company exhibited the *Colonial Panorama of New Zealand* in London – a large scale moving panorama. *The Times* reviewer was impressed: 'Mr. Brees' Panorama will do more to promote emigration than one thousand speeches and resolutions.'[18] There was also a growing literature about the Colony: Charles Heaphy's *Narrative of a Residence in Various Parts of New Zealand* of 1841 was among the first while A. S. Thompson's *The Story of New Zealand Past and Present – Savage and Civilized* of 1859 was the first detailed and accurate account of the islands and their first inhabitants. More and more personal accounts flowed back to 'the Mother country' in letters and diaries. These achieved a wider circulation if published as Samuel Butler's *A First Year in the Canterbury Settlement* of 1862. More overtly propagandist were the guides for potential emigrants, such as Shaw Savill Line Guide of 1864 or those produced by the Self-Help Emigration Society of London. The latter's *Hints to Emigrants* was remarkably forthright and honest about the pains of emigrating: 'the man most likely to prove a success in any Colony is one who, in addition to his special calling, has a good sound constitution, plenty of pluck and perseve-

[17] M. Richard, New Zealand Specimen Books, in *The Pteridologist 1.3*, London: The Pteridological Society, 1986, p. 120.

[18] R. Hyde, *Panoramania Art and Entertainment of the 'All-Embracing View'*, London: Trefoil, 1988, pp. 142–143.

rance and who does not care about comforts at first, but rather enjoys the freedom and rough and ready ways of colonial life.'[19] Among those not advised to go were the Idle, the Dissolute and Worthless, and the clerks and shopmen unused to physical effort. Another guide from the same decade gave much the same advice: 'A young, healthy single man, of good morals and principles, energetic and ready to 'rough it' with a handicraft of some kind will succeed in New Zealand.'[20] It was no place for exiling the family scapegrace or ne'er-do-well.

A whole range of organisations had been started to assist specific groups to emigrate. Clearly, the government bodies, the Commissioners, were most important because they had the resources to charter their own ships and grant free passages. Selection was, however, restrictive. Emigrants had to be labourers, shepherds, miners or female domestic servants with a few skilled tradesmen. Young married couples without children were the most acceptable candidates. Assisted schemes were also run first by the Provinces, for example under The Special Settlement Act of 1858 which made part payments of the fare with land grants. The special settlements were created where undeveloped land was let to a contractor who agreed to find settlers, was a feature of the 1860s and this encouraged religious or ethnic groups to move en masse. In 1863, 150 Danes moved in with half their fare paid and land grants. Another United Kingdom example was Albertland Special Settlement Association which was formed in 1861 by W. Ransom Brame, an ardent Baptist and editor of the *Birmingham Post.* Brame set up a committee and appointed himself travelling secretary. The organised meetings were held at non-conformist chapels not only Baptist but Methodist and other denominations. After tea and a musical interlude the audience would be addressed on the subject of emigration to New Zealand.[21] Brame was successful and his group sailed from the East India Docks, London in June 1862 – an event recorded in both the *Illustrated London News* and the *Penny Illustrated Magazine.* In 1864 the Colonial government's direct involvement increased with the establishment of the Immigration Advisory Board in London with a budget of £200,000 and this was enhanced by the New Zealand Commissioners' Act of 1869 and the Immigration and Public Works Act of 1870. Rail, road development and free

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[19] E. Wilson Gate, *Hints to Emigrants*, 2nd edition, London: Self-Help Emigration Society, 1894, p. 6.

[20] J. Murray Moore, *New Zealand for the Emigrant, Invalid and Tourist*, London: Sampson, Lowe, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1890, p. 8.

[21] J. L. Borrows, *Albertland*, Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1969, p. 18.

passages for new settlers were to be financed by government borrowing under the latter Act. Free passages were granted to either British subjects selected by the Agent General in London or nominated by New Zealand residents. Between 1871 and 1880 over 100,000 were selected or nominated. This 'Vogel scheme' – the inspiration of the ambitious Colonial Treasurer, Julius Vogel – was abruptly reduced by 1880. The collapse of the Scottish City of Glasgow Bank in 1878 had a direct and serious effect on the colonial government's finances, and therefore on their ability to fund assisted passages. The Agent General before the collapse of the Vogel schemes employed regional agents and travelling speakers to spread information about New Zealand. In 1879, for example, the Reverend J. Barry gave a talk at the Weslyan Chapel in the north eastern town of Tow Law. He painted a vision of New Zealand as the 'promised land' and certainly he persuaded John Hillary, a shopkeeper with a family of eight to take the decision to emigrate on the government chartered ship *Westland*. Hillary felt deceived on his arrival at Lyttleton because there was nothing but intermittent casual work for him and his sons and within a year he was on the steamer back to England and Tow Law. The depression of the 1880s had begun to take effect.[22] Besides the official organisations, there were a range of societies and associations promoting or assisting emigration. Some were national such as the British and Colonial Emigration Society or Kelsall's Charity which supplied grants for emigrants' outfits for the voyage. Others were local and specific such as the Clerkenwell Emigration Club and Fund, or Miss Maria Rye's Female Middle Class Emigration Society.[23] Miss Rye ran a women's employment agency for legal copying work in London and had noted the rising demand for superior servants and governesses in Australia, New Zealand and Natal. She felt that some of the women who begged her for employment would be ideally suited not least 'because an elevation of morals being an inevitable result of the mere presence in the colony of a number of high class women.'[24] Her society lasted from 1862 to 1875 and settled over 300 women, mainly in New Zealand. Other special interest groups included trade unions whose membership grew rapidly in the 1870s with the

[22] Hillary J. Haddon, *Westland – The Journal of John Hillary 1879*, London: Janus Publishing, 1995, pp. 26, 80.

[23] All the above-mentioned groups and other London-based societies held meetings at the Mansion House, London to co-ordinate their plans to stimulate emigration. *The Times*, 1st, 3rd and 27th January and 12th February 1870.

[24] J. Trollope, *Britannia's Daughters*, London: Hutchinson, 1988, p. 64.

depression of the British economy – especially in agriculture. The National Agricultural Labourers' Union founded in Warwickshire in 1872 had four items in its 'mission statement': Accident, Burial, Sickness and Emigrants. The Kent and Sussex Labourers' Union through regular collections was able to send 410 emigrants to New Zealand in 1874 and another 400 in 1879. As one agricultural worker who was emigrating said at the time: 'We should like to see our children better off than we have been.'[25]

One should not underestimate the importance of regular shipping services in developing the information links between Britain and New Zealand, and reducing the feeling of remoteness from 'the Mother country'. In this respect, the establishment of two regular dedicated lines to New Zealand – Shaw, Savill from London and Hendersons from Glasgow – in 1858 was a crucial piece of progress. They employed good quality ships capable of fast, safe passages. The introduction of steamers from 1879 by the New Zealand Shipping Company greatly reduced voyage times and strengthened the links, especially from the 1880s onwards when its two main rivals merged and bought steam ships.

This brief review of some of the sources of information available to a potential emigrant does appear to show how awareness of New Zealand as an emigrant destination grew from a more general consciousness of the need and value of emigration. It also shows the crucial government role in disseminating information and providing subsidies, which turned an individual's aspiration to travel to 'the working man's paradise' into a firm decision.

[25] W. A. Armstrong, The Flight from the Land, in *The Victorian Countryside*, ed. G. E. Mingay, Sutton: Far Thrupp, 1998, pp. 129–130.

POVZETEK

»RAJ ZA DELAVNEGA ČLOVEKA« – ANGLEŠKA ZAVEST O IZSELJENSTVU IN NOVI ZELANDIJI V DOBI JADRNIC

Michael Stammers

Izseljevanje predstavlja enega najvidnejših pojavov v demografski zgodovini Evrope 19. stoletja, pri čemer je imela Velika Britanija pomembno vlogo. Ocenjujejo, da se je v tem času od skupno 44 milijonov evropskih izseljencev izselilo kar 16 milijonov ljudi z britanskih otokov. Na tako množično izseljevanje je vplivala cela vrsta potisnih in na drugi strani privlačnih dejavnikov (an. 'push' and 'pull' factors), kot so brezposelnost na podeželju, porast prebivalstva, rast evropskih kolonij in razvoj parnega transporta.

Ne glede na splošne vzroke izseljevanja pa sta posameznike pri njihovi odločitvi za izselitev motivirali predvsem njihovo prepričanje in dojemanje izseljenstva, ki sta bili odvisni od dostopnosti tovrstnih informacij. Te so se pojavljale v različnih oblikah, od spominskih zapisov z obiskov, pisem, knjig, časopisov pa do razgovorov s povratniki. Namen tega prispevka je raziskati, kako so tedanji potencialni izseljenci prihajali v stik z informacijami o Novi Zelandiji in njenih možnostih za priseljevanje.

V britanski koloniji Novi Zelandiji vse do leta 1840 ni bilo nobenih organiziranih naselbin. Do leta 1851 so ob prvem popisu registrirali 26.707 prebivalcev. V desetletju po odkritju zlata leta 1861 je priseljevanje skokovito naraščalo; v osemdesetih letih je začelo upadati, vendar je razvoj hlajenih parnikov za izvoz mesa in drugih kmetijskih pridelkov povečal potrebo po kmetijskih delavcih v koloniji in s tem spodbudil prihod novih priseljencev. Prevladovali so angleški, škotski in irski priseljenci delavskega porekla.

V Britaniji se je zavest o pomenu izseljevanja začela raztezati od vlade navzdol. To je bilo deloma posledica naravnih katastrof, npr. poraznih letin krompirja na Irskem, pa tudi glavnih odkritij zlata v Kaliforniji leta 1849 in v Avstraliji leta 1851, na izseljevanje pa so gledali tudi kot na »zdravilo« za socialne nemire in hkrati v njem videli pot do prekomorskih tržišč za britansko blago.

Vlada je začela podpirati izseljevanje v britanske kolonije leta 1840 s formiranjem Komisije za kolonialno zemljo in izseljevanje, ki je lahko prodajala kolonialna zemljišča, z dobičkom od prodaje pa podpirala nadaljnje množično izseljevanje. Vlada je tudi uvedla zakone o predpisanih potovalnih standardih na izseljenskih ladjah.

Glavni vir informacij so bili časopisi, ki so prinašali zgodbe, slike in oglase v zvezi z izseljevanjem. Časopisi so postajali vse dostopnejši širši javnosti, zlasti s pocenitvijo zaradi znižanih davkov, na drugi strani pa se je povečalo zanimanje zanje s širjenjem pismenosti med delavstvom, ki je bilo posledica razvoja šol in drugih izobraževalnih ustanov, med katerimi je bila tudi cela veriga t.i. »tehničnih inštitutov«.

O Novi Zelandiji se v Britaniji sprva ni dosti pisalo, na začetku so celo prevladovala svarila pred tamkajšnjo izselitvijo spričo vojn z Maori pa tudi zaradi velike oddaljenosti te dežele. Do poznih šestdesetih let pa je bila na voljo že kar obsežna in pestra literatura o mnogih vidikih in perspektivah te kolonije. Izseljevanje v Novo Zelandijo je izrecno spodbujala omenjena vladna komisija, razen nje pa tudi številna neuradna telesa, ki so imela kakršnokoli korist od Posebnega zakona o naseljevanju iz leta 1858; pozneje pa je priseljevanje spodbujala tudi sama kolonialna uprava s t.i. »Voglovim načrtom«. Ta je vključeval cerkvene organizacije, dobrodelne akcije in trgovska združenja. Upoštevati pa je treba tudi ugodne posledice razvoja rednega ladijskega prometa, sprva z jadrnicami, po letu 1879 pa s parniki.

Zavest o Novi Zelandiji kot cilju izseljevanja se je porodila sredi 19. stoletja iz naraščajoče splošne zavesti v Britaniji o nujnosti in pomenu izseljevanja, pri čemer je vlada s podpiranjem in spodbujanjem izseljevanja odigrala ključno vlogo.