

No. 12.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

(No. 665.)

7, Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.,

SIR,—

3rd October, 1873.

In reply to the Hon. Mr. O'Rorke's Memorandum of 5th May (No. 90, 1873), requesting me to inform the Government whether the German contracts for immigrants are still in force, and whether the number of immigrants arranged for are likely to be introduced within the time specified in the contracts, I have to state,—

1. That during my recent visit to Hamburgh, I agreed with Messrs. Louis Knorr and Co. for a transfer of their contract to Mr. Augustus Behrens, a merchant of high respectability, and with Messrs. Winge and Co. for a transfer of theirs to Mr. Gunnerstadt, who had indeed been, throughout, the real agent in the whole business.

2. That, considering the difficulties that are thrown in the way of emigration by the Government of the German Empire, it is quite impossible at present to say whether Mr. Behrens will have it in his power to carry out successfully the undertaking he has accepted.

I have, &c.,

I. E. FEATHERSTON,

Agent-General.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington, N.Z.

No. 13.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

(No. 672.)

7, Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.,

SIR,—

3rd October, 1873.

Referring to the Hon. Mr. O'Rorke's Memorandum of 4th June (No. 116, 1873), I have now the honor to forward herewith an explanatory memorandum from Mr. Ottywell on the report of the Immigration Commissioners upon the ship "Wild Duck."

I have, &c.,

I. E. FEATHERSTON,

Agent-General.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary. Wellington, N.Z.

Enclosure in No. 13.

MEMORANDUM on Immigration Officers' Report upon Immigrant Ships.

7, Westminster Chambers, Victoria-street, Westminster, S.W.,

3rd October, 1873.

As the Immigration Commissioners at Wellington, in their report upon the ship "Wild Duck," reflect upon the manner in which the duties of the Despatching Officer, in the case of that vessel, have been discharged, I think it right to explain my position, during the last two years, in relation to that office.

The first vessel despatched in 1872 under Messrs. Shaw and Savill's £13 contract, the "Schiehallion," conveyed emigrants engaged by Messrs. Brogden and approved by Mr. Carter. A few days before the passengers embarked, Mr. Carter suggested that I should superintend the fitting out of the vessel. The matter was referred to the Agent-General, and as no Shipping or Despatching Officer had been appointed, and I had been in the habit of doing similar work for the Canterbury Government, I was directed to act in the manner suggested. It was subsequently arranged that Messrs. Shaw and Savill should fit up the vessels, and that I should afterwards inspect the arrangements, and should be at liberty to require any alterations which I might deem it advisable to make. These duties were additional and subordinate to the duties which devolved upon me in the selection and engagement of emigrants for all the Provinces, and in the conduct of the daily correspondence with applicants for passages. As the arrangement was probably intended to be a temporary one, no remuneration was attached to the office. It frequently happened that I had to superintend or inspect the fittings of two or three vessels on the same day, returning to the office to complete my ordinary work, which was, in consequence, seldom finished before eight or nine in the evening. It will therefore be obvious that I could not undertake to attend the inspection of the vessels in dry dock, or the survey of provisions by the Government Emigration Officers; and in point of fact I never had time to attend the former, and I was seldom able to attend the latter of those inspections.

I proceed to notice some of the principal remarks in the reports upon the "Wild Duck."

1. It is stated that "the ship herself was manifestly unfit for the conveyance of emigrants," &c. When my duties commenced on board, the vessel had been surveyed and passed, under "The Passenger Act, 1855," and was already at her loading berth. The survey by the Board of Trade, which is conducted by practical shipwrights, is infinitely more rigorous than any which I could possibly institute, and extends to an examination of the vessel's timbers, &c.

2. I have no recollection of being present at the inspection of provisions, and believe I was unable to attend on that occasion. Copies of the reports were furnished to Messrs. Shaw and Savill, in order to elicit from them an explanation as to the alleged deficiency and inferior