

In reply, I am to forward herewith, for the information of the Earl of Carnarvon, copies of reports which have been received in the matter from Dr. Eccles and the Emigration Officer at Plymouth.

The Emigrant depôt at Plymouth is a private establishment, and the Passenger Acts give this Board no control over it. With the view of directing attention to the alleged defective state of the depôt arrangements, the Board have caused copies of the Governor's despatch and of its enclosures to be sent to Dr. Featherston, the Agent in this country of the New Zealand Government.

The enclosures to your letter are herewith returned.

The Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

I have, &c.,

HENRY G. CALCRAFT.

Sub-Enclosure 1 to Enclosure 3 in No. 97.

Dr. ECCLES to the BOARD of TRADE.

SIR,—

1, Sussex Street, Plymouth, 25th September, 1874.

I have the honor to make the following report on the points affecting the performance of my duty as Sanitary Surveyor, as referred to in the report of the Royal Commission on the ship "Scimitar."

I would first remark that my duties as Sanitary Surveyor are entirely confined to the inspection of the emigrants, medicines, disinfectants, surgical instruments, and diploma of the surgeon of the ship, at the final muster previous to the sailing of the ship, and that I have nothing whatever to do with the emigrants officially previous to that muster, that is, during residence in the Emigration depôt. Whilst in the depôt they are in charge of the surgeon of the ship. Thus, Mr. Hosking says in his evidence, "I received a telegram on 17th December, from the Agent-General's office, to proceed to Plymouth to the depôt, to take charge of the emigrants."

With regard to this, the Commissioners in New Zealand evidently laboured under a wrong impression, produced, probably, by it having been reported to them, in Mr. Hosking's evidence, that I was at the emigration depôt every morning. It is true that I did call several times in the morning to learn if my attendance on any of the emigrants sent out of the depôt was required; for with this duty I had been intrusted; but this was no part of my official duty as Sanitary Surveyor under the Board of Trade.

With respect to my official examination at the final muster, the Commissioners report:—

"The medical examination at the time of embarkation seems to have been as efficient as the hurried inspection at the time of sailing usually is." Mr. Hosking says in his evidence, "The examination was very careful. I stood by him. In every case he looked at the tongue, and whenever he saw a case of the slightest suspicion, he examined the throat and the skin of the chest." This testimony was fully borne out by the fact that the first case of scarlet fever which appeared on board the "Scimitar" after she sailed did not show itself until five days after my inspection; and, as Mr. Hosking remarks, "no examination prior to our sailing could have detected disease in this case."

Thus, then, by the testimony of Mr. Hosking, the surgeon of the "Scimitar," who was present during the whole of my inspection, I am acquitted of any carelessness in the performance of this duty, as is also acknowledged by the New Zealand Commissioners.

I will now take up the report in detail, so far as concerns myself. In Sir James Fergusson's letter, it is said, "Dr. Eccles, the Emigration Commissioner, who, according to the evidence of Dr. Hosking, the surgeon in charge, persisted against that officer's opinion in sending on board persons probably infected by contact with others suffering from scarlet fever." To this I would reply, that I have nothing to do with sending the emigrants on board. This duty devolves wholly on the surgeon-superintendent of the ship. My duty consisted in inspecting them when they were on board, and when called upon to do so by the Emigration Officer. I never appoint either the time or the place of the inspection.

Section 3. Report of Royal Commission.—It is stated that "the ordinary medical stores were satisfactory, and the medical comforts liberal." This proves that the remaining part of my inspection was complete.

Section 4. "On the fourth day after sailing, a child named Brown was observed covered with scarlatina." This case, I respectfully submit, proves that my inspection was efficient.

Section 7. "The seeds of both scarlet fever and measles must have been in a state of vitality amongst some of the emigrants whilst in the depôt before embarkation." Possibly so, but no one could know this until the seeds germinated and produced the rashes of scarlatina and measles. There are absolutely no signs of the presence of these seeds of disease whilst only in the stage of incubation; and even when the stage of sickening ensues, which lasts only for two days before scarlet fever and four days before measles, it is impossible to be quite certain that these diseases exist. The rashes alone are absolutely distinctive.

Section 8. "After embarkation, and before sailing, a family named Smith were sent on shore with strong symptoms of scarlet fever. A few hours before sailing, a child called Woolfrey was quite covered with scarlet-fever rash, and the whole family were immediately sent on shore. And this family came from Jersey, and there is reason to believe that several members of that family were only convalescent from scarlet fever before entering the depôt." This family was seen by Mr. Hosking and myself at the inspection, and reserved for re-examination afterwards. I thought the symptoms suspicious. Mr. Hosking thought them hardly pronounced enough to send them on shore. I therefore directed him to put the whole family immediately into the hospital and to watch the child, and if the slightest rash arose to send the family immediately ashore, which he did. Captain Stoll, the Emigration Officer, took a note of this at the time in his journal.

Section 8. "There is reason to believe that several members of that family were only convalescent from scarlet fever before entering the depôt." Mrs. Morgan's testimony to Mr. Hosking was, that other members of the family had suffered from scarlet fever from three to five weeks before entering