

1883.
NEW ZEALAND.

EMIGRATION TO NEW ZEALAND

(LETTERS FROM THE AGENT-GENERAL RESPECTING).

[In Continuation of D.-1, 1880.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

(Memorandum.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 13th January, 1882.

A FEW applications are coming in from persons nominated in previous years, who, hearing of the resumption of nominated immigration, desire to know whether their applications for passages under such nominations will now be available. I have assumed that I am only to entertain applications from those whose names are included in the lists now being sent from the colony, commencing with those forwarded with your letter No. 62, of the 4th November last; and I have informed inquirers accordingly, suggesting to them at the same time that they should ask their friends in the colony to endeavour to renew their nominations. I shall be glad to know whether in so doing I am acting in accordance with your wishes.

In your letter No. 98, of the 2nd April, 1880, you instructed my predecessor to grant passages to single-women domestic servants accompanying their employers to the colony. I shall be glad to know whether I am to consider these instructions as still in force. Generally speaking, as to the emigration of this class of single women, I should wish to have your instructions as to whether I can entertain applications for passages for them under such special circumstances as would, in my opinion, supply the colony with some suitable servants.

For instance, I have had lately an application for passages for four such servants, to be selected by a colonist visiting this country, who wished to send that number out under engagement to himself and friends. In this and other similar cases I deemed it right to decline to entertain the applications, but I am inclined to think that while such cases would be probably only few in number, yet it would be an advantageous mode of increasing, if required, the number of that class of single women in the colony.

F. D. BELL,
Agent-General.

No. 2.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 20th February, 1882.

The recent files of New Zealand papers have directed attention here to the announcement from your department of the proposed dealing with three millions of acres of pastoral country in Otago.

Long before the publication of this announcement I had on every possible occasion invited the attention of inquirers here to the probability of something of the kind being done, and had taken especial pains to explain the provisions of the Land Acts relating to pastoral land on deferred payment, and to small runs to be obtained at Government auction. But I need not say that I was never able to make any authoritative statement of what would really be done, nor even to give any one an assurance that the new leases would be put up for sale at the time and in the manner appointed by the Land Act of 1877.

The notification published by you has only reached this country when it was too late for any one to avail himself of it, so far as the runs are concerned. But I have taken care to explain that this delay in announcing the intentions of the Government did not arise from any fault or neglect of theirs, but only from the pressure which had been exerted to induce you to postpone any decision at all; and I have said that you would have been very glad to invite in good time the competition of intending settlers for the Otago leases, if it had been practicable or honest to do so without at the same time warning them that when they got out they might find the whole question indefinitely adjourned and nothing for them to compete for.

But, though your notification comes too late for the leases of runs, it would still be in plenty of time for sales of pastoral land on deferred payment if I had detailed particulars in my possession of

what land is intended to be offered for sale. There can hardly be a doubt that the knowledge of there being a chance of acquiring such land would have attractions for farmers accustomed to keep sheep on the hill-farms of the North; but this bare knowledge is of no use to them unless the Agent-General can tell them precisely what they have an opportunity of getting. Nor is that enough unless he can add to that information some reasonable assurance of stability in the land law. It is the instability of that land law that is the real mischief; and, after a year's experience and close application, I do not hesitate to say that, if there is one thing more than another that deters people of the farmer-class here from going out, it is that no one can feel sure of the land law remaining for two sessions the same, nor can an intending colonist rely upon being able to make an investment which would not be immediately affected by some new agitation for a change. Even in the case of the leases for subdivided runs, whenever I have had to explain that a hill-farmer who should go out with the intention of bidding for one at the Government auction and laying out his small capital in pastoral pursuits is liable to be turned out without compensation any day at twelve months' notice, I have invariably found this provision to act as an absolute deterrent. We complain in the colony that one of the classes we should most like to see making it their home—namely, hill-farmers with small capital—are not induced to come out to us; but we take care to let them know that, if they do come out, they shall have no security of tenure whatever in the pursuit we invite them to engage in.

This subject of the land law is of such supreme importance that, if it would not have been meddling with what is not within my province, I should ere now have offered some suggestions to the Government upon it. But there is at any rate one thing in which you can make the office of Agent-General more useful than it is. If you would direct the Survey Office to keep me regularly supplied with complete sets of plans of every district, showing what Government land is really open to settlement, people coming here to make inquiries would be helped to the particular knowledge they naturally always want to get. There is no advantage in having as Agent-General a person who knows the colony from the North Cape to Foveaux Strait when he cannot even show to an intending settler on a map what he is talking to him about.

Again, a new edition of the Handbook, which is quite obsolete, is greatly wanted; and if I could employ some one I was able to trust to bring out in a bright and attractive form the latest information about both Islands I know it would do great good. For months past I have been trying to make time for doing this most necessary work myself, but in vain; it can only be done properly by a special hand under my immediate supervision, and if it is not done really well it is not worth doing at all.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 3.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

(Memorandum.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 21st March, 1882.

IN making arrangements with the New Zealand Shipping Company for the passages of nominated emigrants by ships which have not been placed under the Passengers Act, the company required payment for those emigrants whose passages were engaged but who failed to embark.

There is no doubt that the company is liable to loss if they do not receive any payment for such defaulters, more especially as regards ships where the number which it is possible to take is limited, as the room is reserved, and they are therefore precluded from taking other passengers. In the late shipping contract it was provided that where defaulters were more than ten in number the company were to be paid half passage-money for any in excess of that number; but this arrangement cannot altogether be made applicable to cases where the number expected to embark does not as a rule exceed twenty. I have, however, adopted a somewhat similar course, and have agreed that, if the defaulters exceed 10 per cent. of the number for whom passages have been taken, the excess shall be paid for to the extent of half the passage-money, and I trust that this arrangement will meet with your approval.

In connection with this subject I would point out that there are certain special difficulties in making arrangements for the passages of small numbers of emigrants. The shipping companies as a rule decline to put their ships under the Passengers Act, unless I can give them 100 passengers; so that I am compelled in many cases to send those nominated people (who avail themselves of their nominations) out in short ships, which cannot take more than twenty or thirty at a time. I am unable, for instance, in such cases, to make as satisfactory arrangements as could be wished as regards the conveyance of the single women.

Again, some of the nominated people for Otago live in Scotland and wish to start from the Clyde, but their number is not sufficient to enable me to engage a ship from that port under the Passengers Act, while they are too many to go in the short ships, and some have therefore to embark at either London or Plymouth. I mention these one or two points, as possibly your attention may be called to them and others of a similar nature in some other way. I need scarcely add that, as far as circumstances allow, as satisfactory arrangements as possible are made for the conveyance of these small bodies of nominated emigrants.

F. D. BELL,

Agent-General.

No. 4.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

(Memorandum.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 28th November, 1882.

IN accordance with previous practice I am providing the single-women emigrants with a free ship's outfit, and also with a free pass to the port of embarkation, or, where the free passes do not apply, refunding to them, previous to the sailing of the ship, a reasonable amount on account of railway and steamboat fares; and, in this respect, I am making no distinction between those nominated in the colony and those who apply direct to this office.

F. D. BELL.

No. 5.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

(Memorandum.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 20th January, 1883.

THE difficulty experienced in obtaining single women who have been domestic servants away from their own parents' home, to the extent to which they are evidently required in the colony, has induced me to entertain a few applications from young women of good health and character who have been accustomed to domestic work only at their own homes.

Three of such young women had passages by the "Crusader" for Canterbury, and I herewith give their names in case you might deem it desirable for the Immigration Officer to make special endeavour to provide them with suitable places, and, if possible, ascertain whether they prove to be desirable emigrants.

F. D. BELL,
Agent-General.

No. 6.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

(No. 43.)

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 25th January, 1883.

I regret to have to inform you that the ship "Wild Deer," which sailed from the Clyde on the 12th instant with 164½ statute adults, Government emigrants, was wrecked near the North Rock, off the coast of Ireland, near Belfast, within a few hours of her leaving the Clyde.

I was informed of the wreck by telegram from Messrs. P. Henderson and Co., of Glasgow, and was much relieved at hearing that the passengers had all been landed in safety. I immediately authorized steps to be taken to insure as far as possible the comfort of the emigrants under the painful circumstances in which they were placed. They were at once taken to Belfast, and thence they returned to Glasgow, where they await the despatch of the ship "Caroline," which has been specially engaged by the Shaw-Savill and Albion Company to take them to their destination in about a fortnight's time. The emigrants' luggage is stated to have been for the most part saved from the wreck; but Mr. Ottywell reports, I regret to say, that, on inspecting what has been brought back to Glasgow, he finds the greater portion of it very much injured by salt water, and much of the clothing wholly unfit for use.

Messrs. Henderson and Co. are, through their agents, having a further search made at the wreck for luggage, and I shall probably know in a day or so if any more has been found. But, in all probability, it will be necessary to supply the emigrants with a quantity of clothing to enable them to proceed on their voyage, and I have accordingly instructed Mr. Ottywell to ascertain what is required, and to arrange for its supply at the Government's expense. On this and other points connected with the matter I shall, if necessary, report more fully by next mail.

I have, &c,
F. D. BELL,
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

No. 7.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

(Memorandum.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 7th February, 1883.

REFERRING to my letter No. 43, of the 25th ultimo, respecting the wreck of the "Wild Deer," I herewith transmit newspaper extract* giving a report of the inquiry which was held at Glasgow on the 5th instant. You will observe that the master of the vessel was held by the Court to be the only person to blame, and that his certificate was suspended for three months.

The despatch of the ship "Caroline," which takes the "Wild Deer" emigrants to their destination, has been delayed by stress of weather, but it is expected that she will sail on the 17th instant. The emigrants are lodged at Glasgow, with the surgeon-superintendent in charge, and up to the present time no illness has appeared amongst them. Mr. Ottywell, the Despatching Officer, has been engaged in seeing that they are provided with necessary clothing, &c., for the voyage, as I regret to say that the greater portion of their luggage was either lost or so injured as to be useless.

F. D. BELL.

No. 8.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 21st February, 1883.

I regret very much to have to inform you that the ship "Oxford," which I advised you in my last monthly report as having sailed from Plymouth for Wellington on the 31st January with 300 Government emigrants, was compelled through stress of weather to put back to Cardiff. It appears that the ship encountered most severe weather in the Bay of Biscay, and was damaged to such an extent as to become dismasted and almost helpless. Fortunately, with assistance, she was able to reach the Bristol Channel off Cardiff, and on the 14th instant I received a telegram from the surgeon-superintendent, Dr. Hasard, reporting her arrival there. I am glad to be able to add that none of the emigrants appear to have been injured, and also that during the whole of the time they behaved extremely well, and showed much courage and quiet endurance under the very trying and anxious circumstances in which they were placed.

* *Glasgow Herald*, Tuesday, 6th February, 1883.

On hearing of the disaster I at once placed myself in communication with the shipowners, and, it being ascertained that the damages were such as to render it necessary for the emigrants to leave the vessel, it was arranged to send them to Plymouth, where those who preferred it could remain at the Emigration Dépôt there until they could again embark for their destination. They were accordingly conveyed by special train from Cardiff to Plymouth on the 18th instant. Mr. Smith, the Despatching Officer, has inspected them since their arrival at Plymouth, and has reported favourably as to their health. A few are anxious not to proceed on their voyage, but probably only a few of these will persist in declining to re-embark.

I am unable at present to send you any definite report as to the causes which led to this disaster, nor am I able to give the exact date at which the shipowners will be ready to again embark the emigrants, either by the "Oxford" or some other ship. I understand, however, that the damage to the ship is so extensive as to require possibly a month or six weeks to repair.

As you are no doubt aware, the Passengers Act gives the shipowners six weeks to make provision for re-embarking emigrants detained under such circumstances; but I shall urge on the Shaw-Savill and Albion Company the necessity of providing another suitable vessel rather than keep the people waiting for so long a period.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
F. D. BELL.

No. 9.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

(Memorandum.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 22nd February, 1883.

I HAVE arranged to send emigrants by the steamer "Westmeath" (Shaw-Savill and Albion Company) and "British Queen" (New Zealand Shipping Company) at the following rates—namely, £15 per statute adult, and £8 14s. 6d. per child over twelve months and under twelve years; the dietary scale to be the same as that provided under the late shipping contract, and all other conditions to be similar to those under that contract so far as they can be adapted to steamers. The "Westmeath" will be despatched from Plymouth on the 16th March with emigrants for Auckland and Hawke's Bay, and the "British Queen" from the same port on the 24th of the same month with emigrants for Wellington and Canterbury. They will each probably take about 250 emigrants.

F. D. BELL.

No. 10.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

SIR,—

Plymouth, 20th March, 1883.

You have already been informed by me of the disaster that happened to the emigrant ship "Oxford" very shortly after her departure on the 31st January, and of her having to put back to Cardiff for refitting, the emigrants being brought down here while the repairs were being done.

Some days after the emigrants got down typhoid fever appeared in a number of cases, and I greatly regret to say that four of them have terminated fatally. Dr. Hasard, who was surgeon-superintendent of the ship, and one of our most experienced and trustworthy medical officers, states that there is no doubt of the outbreak of typhoid being entirely due to the water in some of the tanks on board; but a rumour was spread that the fever had originated in the Emigration Dépôt, and numbers of the emigrants went into lodgings in this town instead of remaining in the dépôt. In the meantime a number of complaints arose among them, some relating to the dépôt itself, and others to defects in the ship, the provisions, and so forth. Letters appeared in the local papers, and questions were put in the House of Commons by Mr. Puleston and Sir Henry Peek; but before these questions were asked it had seemed to me necessary to inquire personally into the complaints on the spot. I am accordingly engaged in making a thorough investigation into all the circumstances, and shall soon be in a position to send you complete details. Until the inquiry is finished I think it will be best to express no opinion beyond saying that some of the complaints seem to me so far well founded, and others either frivolous or much exaggerated. With regard, however, to the "Oxford's" tanks, I have insisted on their being immediately emptied and thoroughly cleansed, and have asked the Board of Trade to order their own officer at Cardiff to assist me in seeing that this is done; while, as respects the provisions and other matters on board the ship, every precaution will be taken to insure us against any dissatisfaction when she goes to sea again.

I have arranged for the ship to be sent here for re-embarking the emigrants, and I hope they will be well on their voyage before the next mail leaves. I have transferred Dr. Hasard to the s.s. "British Queen," which takes out a number of people at the end of this week; and on his arrival in the colony he is directed to place himself at your disposal in case you should desire to get further particulars from himself as to the disaster on board the "Oxford."

I am taking the opportunity of the "Oxford" inquiry to look into a number of matters connected with the despatch of emigrants where I think improvements can be made.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
F. D. BELL.

No. 11.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

SIR,—

Plymouth, 21st March, 1883.

I have already reported to you having arranged to send out a number of emigrants by the steamers "Westmeath" and "British Queen." The "Westmeath" sailed on the 17th instant with 320 souls, equal to 283 adults. She is a ship excellently suited for taking emigrants, and I expect they will have a very comfortable passage.

The New Zealand Shipping Company having put on the "Ionic," a fine steamer of 5,000 tons gross, to sail on the 28th April, applied to me to send some emigrants by her. I had settled to suspend emigration until June, so that people might not arrive during the winter; but, as it seemed to me reasonable to give any encouragement we could to the company in their enterprise, I have now decided to send a limited number of people by the "Ionic," carefully selecting them from the nominated families and from the single women applying direct, so as to avoid as far as possible any risk of their not being able to support themselves after arrival, although they will get out at the end of June.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
F. D. BELL.

No. 12.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

(Memorandum.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 3rd April, 1883.

THE necessity for some regulation as to the sale of ale to second- and third-class paying passengers on board steamers carrying Government emigrants, and the inexpediency of additional passengers being taken on board at the Cape, were subjects which came under my notice on the occasion of despatching the "British Queen" from Plymouth; and I thereupon caused a letter to be addressed to the manager of the New Zealand Shipping Company, requesting him to give such instructions to the captain of that vessel as would give effect to what I considered should be done in each case.

I transmit herewith a copy of this letter, together with the manager's reply thereto.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 12.

SIR,—

Plymouth, 22nd March, 1883.

I am directed by the Agent-General to draw your attention to the following matters in reference to the "British Queen," and to request you to be so good as to cause instructions to be given to the captain of that vessel to give effect to the regulations mentioned below, which the Agent-General considers must be adopted in each case:—

1. In respect to the sale of liquor on board, the Passengers Act provides, as you are aware, that no spirits are to be sold to the passengers.

The Agent-General will also require that no ale or other malt liquors shall be sold to the Government emigrants; and, in addition to this, he requests you to give instructions that no paying third-class passengers shall be allowed to purchase ale or other malt liquor except on approval in writing by the surgeon-superintendent.

2. The Agent-General understands that the "British Queen" will call at the Cape, and, if such is the case, I am to request you to give instructions that, while the vessel is there, none of the passengers of any class are to be allowed to land; that no visitors are to be permitted to come on the ship; and that no additional passengers be taken on board.

The Agent-General directs me to add that, having regard to the recent prevalence of small-pox at the Cape, he need scarcely point out how expedient it is, apart from other reasons, that these precautions be strictly enforced.

I have, &c.,

WALTER KENNAWAY,

Secretary to the Agent-Generals's Department.

The Manager,
New Zealand Shipping Company (Limited).

Enclosure 2 in No. 12.

The New Zealand Shipping Company (Limited),

84, Bishopgate Street Within, London, S.E., 27th March, 1883.

SIR,—

I beg to acknowledge your favour dated Plymouth, 22nd instant, conveying regulations the Agent-General wishes to be observed on board the steamer "British Queen" on her voyage to New Zealand, and hand you herewith copy of a letter addressed by me to Captain Nowell, desiring him to conform to same.

I have, &c.,

O. R. STRICKLAND,

Manager.

The Secretary, Agent-General's Department,
7, Westminster Chambers, S.W.

Enclosure 3 in No. 12.

SIR,—

Plymouth, 24th March, 1883.

I hand you copy of letter which has been addressed to me by the Agent-General, and to which I have to ask you to conform so far as may be practicable, and to exercise your authority in regard to sale of malt liquor to the steerage passengers whenever you think it desirable. The Agent-General's wishes should be strictly observed.

I have, &c.,

O. R. STRICKLAND,

Manager, N.Z.S. Company, London.

Captain Nowell, steamer "British Queen."

No. 13.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 6th April, 1883.

You will hear with much regret of further misfortunes about the ship "Oxford."

The circumstances which had happened up to the time of my going to Plymouth to hold an inquiry were briefly reported to you in my letter of the 20th ultimo. The owners, upon being pressed by me to complete the refitting of the ship within the time prescribed by the Act of Parliament, sent down a number of hands from London to Cardiff to expedite the work. Fearing that any undue haste might lead to the repairs being done imperfectly, I asked the Board of Trade to instruct their officer at Cardiff to see that nothing of the kind occurred, which they were good enough to do, as well as to order him to attend with care to the emptying and refilling of the water-tanks. At the same time I proposed to the Shaw-Savill and Albion Company that, instead of re-embarking the people at Cardiff, they should send the ship round to Plymouth for the purpose, which, though some difficulty was made at first by the underwriters, is now agreed to be done.

The refitting of the ship was completed at the proper time, and every arrangement made for the people to be re-embarked on the 30th March. On that day, however, and just as everything was ready, the officers of the Board of Trade very properly decided that they would not allow the re-embarkation to take place until twenty-one days had elapsed from the time of the last case of typhoid having been discovered. Hardly had this been decided when, on the very next day, two fresh cases appeared. The remaining married people and the single women were thereupon immediately removed from the dépôt and placed in lodgings at Plymouth, and the single men sent to the Sailors' Home.

On the 3rd instant the last case had developed worse symptoms; but, no fresh case having appeared, it was arranged that the re-embarkation of the people should take place on the 25th instant, provided the state of things remained the same. Unfortunately another suspicious case appeared the next day, and at the present moment I am quite unable to tell you what prospect there is of the people being able to get away.

In the meanwhile the Board of Trade had caused a careful analysis to be made of the water from two of the ship's tanks, and the report of the Principal of the Chemical Laboratory, which the Board sent me yesterday, is to the following effect: "The microscopic examination shows the presence of floating particles of vegetable matter, also of infusoria; the albumenoid ammonia is excessive; and this, together with the presence of vegetable impurities and living organisms, renders both samples unsuitable for drinking purposes, No. 2 being contaminated with organic impurities to an exceptional degree." The Board thereupon desired me to inform them from what source the water was supplied, and an inquiry is going on which will not be stayed until the blame is placed upon the right parties. The mere fact of the existence of such a source of danger in an emigrant ship is of course a thing which must cause grave anxiety and require much stricter precautions in future.

I have been in careful communication with Mr. Mackrell respecting a number of legal points involved in the case, all of which will come before you presently.

You are aware that the Passengers Act does not require more than 1s. 6d. a day alimony per statute adult to be paid by shipowners in such cases. This sum was not sufficient to maintain the families who had left the dépôt, and I have therefore increased it to 2s. 3d. a day, which is the sum the owners would have had to pay if the people had remained in the dépôt. I do not know whether I shall be able to claim any of this increased allowance from the ship, but in any case I deemed it necessary to help the families to that extent. Last night a question was put to the President of the Board of Trade in the House of Commons as to whether any additional allowance had been made, when Mr. Chamberlain informed the House of what has been done. I have also distributed a supply of necessary clothing to the women and children.

The object of this letter is to keep you informed generally of what has happened, but by the San Francisco mail I shall send you a detailed account, with full particulars from the beginning of this unfortunate business. By that time, if no fresh case of typhoid appears, I shall be able, I hope, to speak with less uncertainty as to the time the people will leave. You will naturally expect that there will be a considerable deficiency in their numbers; but I am glad to say, allowing of course for some things which were sure to result from such a series of misfortunes, that the emigrants have throughout behaved remarkably well.

I cannot let this letter go without expressing my cordial thanks for the assistance I have received from the Board of Trade and from their officers at Plymouth and Cardiff.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

No. 14.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

(Memorandum.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 13th April, 1883.

THE sending of single women in much larger numbers than has been the case in previous years has rendered it necessary for me to take the subject of the appointment of matrons into consideration, and I have come to the conclusion that, whenever I am unable to find a suitable person for the post who is going out to the colony to settle, it is expedient to appoint some one who is specially adapted for the service, and intends to follow it as a vocation.

For this purpose I shall avail myself of the assistance of the British Ladies' Female Emigrant Society, one of whose chief objects is to provide matrons for emigrant ships, and to whose funds the New Zealand Government have in previous years contributed. I give in the schedule attached the rate of remuneration which I propose to give to the permanent matrons. To those who are appointed matrons, but who intend to remain in the colony, I shall continue the payment (£5).

I should be glad if you would be pleased to let me know if you approve of what I now propose doing.

F. D. BELL.

No. 15.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 18th April, 1883.

Referring to my letter No. 107, of the 6th instant, respecting the ship "Oxford," I am glad to be able to report that there is a good prospect of the ship being able to re-embark her emigrants at Plymouth in the course of next week. There is no fresh case of fever since the 4th instant, and the three weeks which the Board of Trade requires to elapse, dating from the last case, will therefore expire on the 25th instant. All the emigrants who originally sailed in the ship have had special notice to be at Plymouth ready to embark on that day. Embarkation orders have also been issued to about seventy additional emigrants, so that it is hoped that the number of those who embark next week will not fall far short of those who embarked in January last.

Messrs. Shaw, Savill, and Co. have agreed to take these additional emigrants in the place of those who from illness and other causes will be unable to resume their voyage; and a large amount of the half-passage-money which has been already paid will thus be saved.

I shall await the final sailing of the ship before I send you a final report on the whole matter, accompanied by such papers concerning it as it may be necessary to transmit to you.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 16.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 26th April, 1883.

You will hear with pleasure that the ship "Oxford" has got away at last. The Board of Trade had two of their medical officers down, and made a careful examination of the emigrants before embarkation; and the people went off in good spirits.

Under an arrangement made by me with the Shaw-Savill and Albion Company, the places of a number of the original emigrants who did not re-embark were taken by new people supplied by us; so that the total number who have gone in the "Oxford" is now 325 souls, equal to 289 adults, instead of the 273 that originally embarked last January.

I sent to-day a cablegram to the Hon. the Premier as at foot.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

CABLEGRAM.—"Oxford" sailed at last, 325.

No. 17.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

(Memorandum.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 28th April, 1883.

The s.s. "Ionic," chartered by the New Zealand Shipping Company, sailed from Plymouth this afternoon, with a number of cabin and steerage passengers and 212 Government emigrants (equal to 191½ adults).*

I transmit herewith two extracts from Plymouth papers giving an account of the ship. While she was in the Albert Docks she was visited by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, who is acquainted with her commander, Captain Hallett, R.N., the latter having been an officer on board Her Majesty's yacht "Osborne."

F. D. BELL.

* *Western Morning News* (Plymouth), 30th April, 1883. *Western Daily Mercury* (Plymouth), 30th April, 1883.

