

1884.
NEW ZEALAND.

EMIGRATION TO NEW ZEALAND.

(LETTERS FROM THE AGENT-GENERAL RESPECTING)

[In Continuation of D.-4, 1883.]

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.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 24th May, 1883.

I beg leave to introduce to you Count Bologna Strickland, a member of the Maltese nobility, who is about to visit New Zealand and Australia (*see* No. 3, D.-4A, 1883).

Count Strickland has for some time past been engaged, as a member of the Council of the Government of Malta, in considering the question of emigration of Maltese to some other British dependency. Your memorandum of 20th February last informed me of what you had done when Signor de Cesare lately visited New Zealand; but it does not seem that the Council of the Government of Malta have heard from him on the subject. They are now desirous of renewing their inquiries on the spot, and they have asked Count Strickland to place himself in communication with the Government on his arrival and ascertain whether the Government would still be willing to give any facilities for the emigration of Maltese to New Zealand. I have accordingly desired Count Strickland to wait upon you and lay his views on the subject before the Government.

The Hon the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

No. 2.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 24th September, 1883.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th August, transmitting a number of documents relating to the renewed disasters which so unfortunately happened during the second voyage of the ship "Oxford."

As you have appointed a Commission to investigate the case it would be obviously improper for me to say much until the report of that Commission has been made; but there are a few points on which I think it necessary to express an opinion at once.

It is true that, in my letter of the 6th April, I said that the inquiry I was then making with respect to the original supply of water would not be stayed until the blame for its impurity was placed on the right parties; but what I then forgot was that, with the cleansing of the tanks, the overhaul of the ship under her repairs, and her final departure on her second voyage, must entirely disappear the means of prosecuting my inquiry with any success; and I turned from what would have been a fruitless attempt at remedying the past to the more practical object of preventing, if possible, a recurrence of similar evils in the future. This naturally became part of the far wider investigation into the whole subject of the way our immigration is managed, which has long occupied my thoughts, and which I hoped might lead to a change of system and the establishment of a better and more permanent organization instead.

As regards the complaints made of short-shipment of stores and articles of dietary in the "Oxford," I have called the attention of the Despatching Officer to the allegations, and now transmit to you his report, from which you will see that it appears certain that the full quantities of stores of every description required under the shipping contract for 266 adults, 68 children, and 4 infants (equal to 300 statute adults) for a voyage of 140 days, were put on board in London, and that the quantities used previous to the emigrants landing at Cardiff were duly replenished.

As no doubt the Royal Commission will inquire into this statement of the Surgeon-Superintendent as to the deficiency in the supply of candles and children's stores, and will have the opportunity of examining the officers of the ship who were responsible for their safe custody and proper issue, I shall await the receipt of the report of the Commission before instituting any further inquiries that may be within my power to make on this side. . . .

1—D. 3.

I think it will not be out of place to refer to the view which I understand has been entertained in the colony, that the immigrants ought not to have been re-embarked in the "Oxford." Such a view would entail serious consequences, for, if there was a rule that, on the occurrence of an accident disabling an emigrant ship and compelling her to put back, the emigrants should be transferred to another vessel, it would involve the forfeiture of the whole passage-money. If the owners of such a ship fulfil the conditions of the Passengers Act as to the time of completing repairs and alimony to passengers, and if the Imperial officers of the Board of Trade are satisfied that there is nothing to prevent the ship from proceeding on her voyage, the emigrants must be put on board again, or the passage-money be forfeited. Now, although I should have been very glad from the first to transfer the "Oxford's" people to another ship, and did, in fact, refuse an hour's grace to her owners for completing her repairs, I was not prepared to create a precedent which would have involved such a loss of money. Moreover, a moment's reflection will show that there is no possibility under our existing system of inventing any precaution which shall be really effectual for the purpose that would have been wanted in the "Oxford." No emigrant ship ever leaves Plymouth without more or less danger that there may be lurking among her people some form of contagious or infectious disease. A large number of emigrants are suddenly assembled together from distant parts of the country, and huddled into a dépôt only a few hours before their embarkation; they may be, and often are, mixed up with other large numbers in the same dépôt, who are embarking for another colony; even when they are not so mixed they are certain to occupy buildings which have been just used by others who have preceded them; undetected contagion or infection may exist among them in yet undeveloped germs; the emigrants who sailed yesterday for one colony may be the cause of this undetected disease afterwards breaking-out among those sailing for another colony to-day; there may be the same lurking danger among the crew: when once the ship has sailed all trace is lost, for any scientific purpose, of the true cause of any subsequent outbreak of disease. Typhoid, of all such diseases, is perhaps the one where the danger is most formidable, and the true cause most mysterious and difficult to trace; and an illustration of this is afforded by the "Oxford" itself, where, although the vessel was allowed to leave by the officers of the Board of Trade on the 26th April, because (after specially careful examination) no fresh case had appeared within the recognized term of incubation, typhoid suddenly appeared on the 18th May, continuing among the single men and girls only, and leaving the married people entirely exempt. I shall be very curious to see how this point is treated in the medical evidence before the Commission.

When I receive the report of that Commission it is not unlikely I may have to address you again; but I have been careful only to say here what could not in any way affect the inquiry.

I regret that I cannot send you Dr. Hasard's journal of the first voyage, for I have not got it; he ought to have given it to Dr. Wasse for continuation on the second voyage, and I did not think of getting it from him.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 2.

MEMORANDUM for Mr. KENNAWAY.

WITH reference to your memorandum on the report of the "Oxford," calling upon me to report on the statements made therein relative to the alleged short-shipment of certain stores and articles of food: I beg to inform you that the provisions and stores were surveyed in the East India Dock by the Emigration Officer, Dr. Hasard, and myself. Every package was counted, and found to correspond with the list furnished by the provision merchants, and a certain proportion of each description was examined and all the articles were found good; the Dock Company take care that all the goods examined and passed are shipped.

When the "Oxford" returned to Cardiff the officer in charge of the stores was directed to make out a list of what had been expended. This list was, as far as possible, verified by Dr. Hasard, and all deficiencies were made good. I attach a list of the provisions which were thus supplied. It was to the interest of the owners and charterers that all deficiencies should be made good, as the expenses fell on the underwriters; there could therefore be no object in not supplying deficiencies.

These provisions and stores were examined by the Emigration Officer and the Medical Inspector under the Passengers Act at Cardiff, who told me, when I went there to see to the re-embarkation of the emigrants, that all expenditure had been made good, and that the provisions were the best they had ever seen. Dr. Hasard did not leave a copy of provisions and stores' list with Dr. Wasse, so I gave him my copy, and I furnished him also with a list of the provisions put on board at Cardiff. I am therefore utterly unable to explain how there could have been any deficiency of children's stores and candles, which are the only articles specified by the Surgeon-Superintendent as being deficient, as the full quantity of provisions and stores for 140 days for 266 adults, 68 children, and 4 infants was put on board in London, and the expenditure was made good at Cardiff.

EDWARD A. SMITH,
Despatching Officer.

24th September, 1883.

Enclosure 2 in No. 2.

LIST of ADDITIONAL STORES forwarded to Cardiff for "Oxford" by Messrs. Low, Huckvale, and Co.

Crew: Ex navy biscuit, 13 cwt., 13 bags; flour, 392 lb., 2 barrels; rice, 1 cwt., 1 bag; sugar, 2 cwt.; 1 barrel; coffee, 56 lb., 2 bags; rum, 15 gallons, 1 cask; salt beef, 2,432 lb., 8 tierces; salt pork, 1,600 lb., 8 barrels; butter, 330 lb., 4 firkins; suet, 1 cwt., 1 keg. Cabin: Butter, 56 lb., 8 tins in

1 case; preserved meats, 36·2 lb., preserved soups, 24·2 lb., in 1 barrel; loaf sugar, 56 lb., 1 keg; cheese, 2, 27 lb., 1 box. *Emigrants*: Boiled beef, 432 lb., 6 cases; boiled mutton, 432 lb., 6 cases; salt beef, 608 lb., 2 tierces; salt pork, 600 lb., 3 barrels; ex navy biscuit, 6 cwt., 6 bags; flour, 4,530 lb., 3 tanks, 1 barrel, and 1 keg; peas, 272 lb., 1 barrel and 1 keg; oatmeal, 6 cwt., 3 barrels; sugar, 8 cwt., 4 barrels; tea, 92 lb., 1 half-chest and 1 box; coffee, 125 lb., 1 crate 5 tins; butter, 554 lb., 8 firkins; currants, 133 lb., 1 case and 1 tin; raisins, 362 lb., 13 half-boxes; suet, 2 cwt., 1 barrel and 1 keg; pickles, 25 gallons, 5 jars; molasses, 44 lb., 1 bottle; carrots, 252 lb., 4 cases; onions, 167 lb., 3 cases; rice, 342 lb., 1 barrel and 1 bag; sago, 28 lb., 3 tins in 1 case; arrowroot, 28 lb., 3 tins in 1 case; preserved soup, assorted, 12·2 lb., 1 case; condensed milk, 24 dozen, 6 cases; fresh potatoes, 26 cwt. 2 qr. 8 lb., 17 barrels.

No. 3.

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

SIR,—

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

I have to thank you for directing the report of the inquiry to be sent to me upon the complaints by steerage passengers and immigrants on board the "Catalonia." (Presented to the House of Representatives in manuscript on the 3rd August, 1883.) It illustrates one of the greatest difficulties of carrying immigrants in a line of steamers taking numbers of steerage passengers who pay their own passage, and reminds me of an incident which lately occurred respecting the stores of a particular steamer. No American pork is allowed by me to be included in any immigrant's stores; but the other day my despatching officer found that a supply of it was to be put on board for the steerage passengers. He refused even to look at it; but I might find it difficult to insist on such a refusal in the case of stores for people paying their own passage, while the result would inevitably be that the supplies for the steerage passengers and for the immigrants would get mixed up, and complaints similar to those on board the "Catalonia" become a constant source of difficulty and embarrassment.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 4.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 29th September, 1883.

I have at last the satisfaction of informing you that Parts I. and II. of the new Official Handbook are in type, and that I shall be able to send you copies by the next direct steamer.

Mr. Gisborne, to whom I confided the work, has executed his task admirably, and has rendered a real service to the colony by it. I shall send you, with the book itself, such details as you will probably wish to have of the scheme on which I desired him to proceed in preparing Parts I. and II., and on which I hope he will consent to undertake the completion of Part III. This, however, I am not yet sure his engagements will allow him to do.

I have given Mr. Gisborne £250 for his work so far, but this must be deemed to be in the nature of an honorarium rather than a payment, for it could not be called adequate remuneration for the labour which was required, and which has much exceeded what I thought when I first asked him to give me his assistance in bringing the Handbook out.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 5.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 10th October, 1883.

When I was writing to you on the 24th ultimo about the ship "Oxford" I was under the impression that I had sent you the particulars which I obtained last April as to the source from which the water for that vessel's first voyage had been supplied; but, on looking back through my letters, I find I omitted to do so. I now transmit copies of the Despatching Officer's reports on the subject.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure in No. 5.

MEMORANDUM for Mr. KENNAWAY.

I HAVE made inquiry as to the source from whence the water supplied to the "Oxford" in London was obtained, and learn that it was supplied to the "Oxford" from a barge belonging to the Samaritan Company (L. W. Verdon), the barge obtained the supply from the stand-pipe in the East India Docks, and that the East India Dock Company are supplied by the East London Waterworks Company.

EDWARD A. SMITH.

7, Westminster Chambers, 6th April, 1883.

Sub-Enclosure in No. 5.

MEMORANDUM for Mr. KENNAWAY.

WITH reference to your inquiry as to the steps taken by me to ascertain whether the tanks for holding the water for the use of the emigrants are fit for that purpose, and whether the water with which they are filled is fit for use, I beg to state that I see most of the tanks while they are lying on the wharf before they are stowed in the ship's hold, and many of them after they are stowed. As a rule the tanks are new, and I satisfy myself that they are thoroughly clean. The tanks on board the "Oxford" were all new.

After they are stowed they are filled by water being pumped in from a tank barge belonging to the Samaritan Company (L. W. Verdon), which obtains its supply of water from a stand-pipe in the Docks, and this water is supplied by the East London Waterworks Company. I taste the water, and have not for many years had to complain of the water supplied; but I need scarcely point out that it is impossible, without chemical analysis, to say whether water is pure, as there are many ways by which it could be fouled without its being made apparent to the taste. Some years ago, by a water-tank barge then in use being leaky, some of the water in the dock mixed with the water in the tank, and thus fouled it; but this can generally be discovered, as the water under such circumstances becomes slightly brackish. I think it right to point out that, as the tanks have to be filled after they have been stowed, there is the risk, during the interval before they are filled, of impurities getting into them; for instance, decomposed rats have been the cause of ships' water being impure, and causing fever.

EDWARD A. SMITH.

6th April, 1883.

No. 6.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 15th October, 1883.

I have received to-day Mr. Under-Secretary Elliott's memorandum of the 24th August, enclosing the newspaper reports of the proceedings before the commission of inquiry in the case of the ship "Oxford." Pending the receipt of an official copy of the evidence, I will only notice one statement.

J— M— appears to have alleged that I had told him, in reference to certain complaints he had made, that, "if he would promise to say nothing more about it, I would give him a passage in a steamer, and that I had told him this in the presence of Dr. Hasard, Mr. Smith, and others." In another newspaper report I have seen the story is varied in this way: M— is alleged to have said I told him that I "was afraid there would be too much heard about it in New Zealand, and if he would promise I should hear nothing more about it I would send him in a steamer, treat his case as a special one, and make him some recompense; that he thereupon said he would make no promise; that this took place in the presence of Dr. Hasard and other gentlemen; and that afterwards, in the Grand Hotel, I repeated my promise."

What this person did not see was the absurdity of accusing the Agent-General of having offered him hush-money in the presence of a number of people. What passed between him and myself took place in the presence of all the emigrants, assembled at the public inquiry held by me. I then explained the provisions of the Passengers Act, and said that, while I could not transfer the people to a steamer, I would not separate families in which typhoid fever might exist when the "Oxford" sailed again, but would keep back any such families and send them in the "Ionic." I then believed M—'s family would be one of these, a boy of his being ill with the fever. At that time the "Oxford" was to sail again at the end of March; she was delayed till the latter part of April; in the meantime the boy recovered, and the M— family were able to proceed together in her, as well as the rest of the people.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 7.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 22nd October, 1883.

Adverting to that part of my letter of the 24th September (No. 278) which refers to the difficulties in the way of transferring the "Oxford" emigrants into another ship, I beg to be permitted to express the obligations I feel under to you for the answer you gave to Mr. Turnbull's question in the House of Representatives (vide *Hansard*, August 29, 1883, folio 350) on the subject, and especially for having pointed out that it would have been impossible to transfer the people into the steamer "British Queen." The Board of Trade, as you indicated, would not have allowed it for a moment, even if that steamer had been able to take them.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 8.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 24th October, 1883.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th September (No. 172), transmitting the report of the Royal Commission of enquiry on the ship "Oxford."

There are several points in that report, and the evidence appended, on which it will be my duty to remark in due time; but there are two which I must notice at once: (1.) As to the alleged

filthy condition of the dépôt, I shall presently lay before you a mass of proofs showing the extent to which the Commission were deceived. (2.) As to the statements of M——, I have to repeat what I said to you when I had only seen the condensed report of them in the newspapers. Now that his actual evidence is before me, I have distinctly to state that, so far as it relates to myself, there is not a word of truth in it.

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.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 30th November, 1883.

I am glad to be able to send you at last the new "Official Handbook." It must speak for itself; but I request your perusal of the preface, in which I have briefly explained the design on which I instructed Mr. Gisborne to prepare Parts I. and II., and on which Part III. will be also written. Eighty copies are in a box which I am sending to Plymouth to-night, to be put on board the New Zealand Shipping Company's steamer "Aorangi."

I trust the work will appear to you a useful one. It has occupied a long time, but it brings together a mass of varied information which cannot but be useful to intending colonists. In my opinion Mr. Gisborne has rendered good service to the colony by the manner in which he has executed the work I confided to him; and I need not say how much the editing of it has engaged my own attention and interest.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

No. 10.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 6th December, 1883.

Adverting to what I said in my letter of 24th October, on the subject of the Plymouth Dépôt: I hoped to have been able to send you by this mail copies of the reports which I have obtained on the state of the dépôt generally, as well as at the time of the departure of the ship "Oxford." The letter and enclosures which I have received from the Board of Trade raise questions which I shall probably have to write to them again about; so I keep the correspondence, in order to send it to you complete by next mail.

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,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 19th December, 1883.

In my letter of the 24th October (No. 296) I stated that I was getting together a variety of information on the state of the emigration dépôt at Plymouth; and this information is now contained in the correspondence which I enclose herewith, and which is noted in the margin.*

The condemnation of the dépôt was pronounced by the Royal Commission on the ship "Oxford" in the following terms: "Complaints of the dirty state of the establishment, and the want of such ordinary comforts as the severity of the weather would render essential, are almost universal. The sleeping accommodation, as described by the married witnesses, was absurdly small, and the filthy condition of the bedding almost incredible. Vermin appears to have abounded. A proper supply of bed-clothing for the existing cold weather was not forthcoming; and a considerable amount of unnecessary harshness seems to have been displayed in the management, and particularly with regard to the women and children. A considerable amendment is stated to have occurred during the visit of the Agent-General, for whose inspection special preparations are said to have been made. The Commissioners would, however, point out the evidence showing the filthy state of the establishment and the bedding."

You will observe that I applied for information to the Board of Trade, to the Local Government Board, and to the Agents-General for New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia, in order that you should have the best means of judging how far the allegations made in the evidence before the Royal Commission were correct.

It appeared to me that the matter was one of too great importance to remain where the evidence had left it. The question as to whether the Plymouth Dépôt was a place such as the evidence represented it to be was obviously one of great interest to all the colonies which are sending out emigrants. If a general impression were to get abroad in England among the people who are going out that the dépôt was a filthy place, not fit for the reception of decent and modest people of the working class, it would be bad enough; but it would be much more serious if such an impression should prevail among the large numbers of colonists in Australia and New Zealand who are sending Home for their friends. It is perhaps fortunate, therefore, that the accusations made before the Royal Commission have given an opportunity for accumulating proofs respecting the true condition of the establishment.

It is hardly necessary for me to refer particularly to any of the correspondence; nevertheless I should like to notice a few salient points:—

* Correspondence with the Local Government Board, Board of Trade, Agents-General for New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia, and the Hon Mrs. Joyce (extract from letter from).

1. *Board of Trade*.—The report made by Mr. H. D. Grey, the Board of Trade's officer at Plymouth, states that the officers of that department have "no opportunity of observing the cleanliness or otherwise of the dépôt, as they never go into the building, but merely into a detached building used for the inspection of the emigrants;" but you will observe that I have called the attention of the Board to the circumstances which must have escaped the recollection of Mr. Grey, and have invited them to institute a strict and regular inspection of the buildings, promising to give every assistance in carrying it out.

2. *Local Government Board*.—This Board proposes to institute a system for collecting information as to the health of emigrants sailing to the various colonies, and I have promised to assist them in it. I suggest your perusal of Dr. Blaxall's statement, and of the extracts from his forthcoming report, now in the Press. Dr. Blaxall states that he visited the dépôt several times quite unexpectedly, and on each occasion found that "the buildings throughout were well ordered, and in a very satisfactory cleanly condition." The particulars he gives of the accommodation provided in each block prove that such complaints as were made before the Royal Commission are really without reasonable foundation.

3. *New South Wales*.—Sir Saul Samuel, who has often visited and carefully inspected the dépôt, states that "the internal arrangements are excellent, that there is order, neatness, and perfect cleanliness, and that the beds and bedding, which he had himself examined, are particularly clean." The report sent to Sir Saul Samuel by Mr. Francis Fox, the Port Sanitary Officer at Plymouth (after referring to some sanitary arrangements of which he disapproved, but which have since been remedied), goes on to say that "of the whole of the internal arrangements, the order, the neatness, and the perfect cleanliness in which everything is kept, it is impossible to speak too highly."

4. *Queensland*.—Mr. Archer says that the assertions before the Royal Commission are not, as regards the sanitary arrangements of the dépôt, borne out by his personal observation, nor by the reports of his despatching officers; but he adds that the comfort and convenience of the emigrants, while in the dépôt, are not sufficiently attended to in some details which can be easily and inexpensively carried out, and he is now considering the best way to meet any reasonable complaint.

5. *South Australia*.—Sir Arthur Blyth states that he has himself attended to the despatch of thirty-two emigrant ships from the dépôt; that its cleanliness has always been remarkable, and the sleeping accommodation ample. Sir Arthur Blyth has been at the dépôt so often that it is impossible for any habitual want of cleanliness to have escaped his observation; and I should be perfectly willing to rest the case upon his testimony alone if it had not been corroborated by so much independent evidence. As to the statement that when I went down to inquire into the case of the "Oxford" careful preparations had been ordered beforehand, so as to conceal the ordinary filthy condition of the dépôt, Sir Arthur Blyth's letter reminded me of a circumstance which I had forgotten, that he happened to be there himself at the time I went down; and his statement that "no amendment over the ordinary state of the dépôt was observable on that occasion" will no doubt satisfy you of the falsehood of the evidence in question. The Assistant-Agent-General for South Australia, Mr. Deering, refers to a visit which he made in September last year to the dépôt, in company with a Deputy-Inspector-General of Hospitals, when that officer "carefully examined the beds and the walls and the floors, which were scrupulously clean, and stated that he had no idea that emigrants were so well treated."

Conclusive, however, as this official testimony is, that given by the Hon. Mrs. Joyce will be more convincing to the general reader. Mrs. Joyce is one of a large number of ladies who take a deep interest in emigration and devote a large part of their time to helping the women and girls who are sent out. She publishes occasional "Letters on Emigration" in a periodical called "Friendly Work"; and her letter in the November number is just one of those bright and attractive statements which produce the greatest amount of good among working people. It was a pleasant surprise to me to read that letter, coming unexpectedly as it did exactly when her testimony was most welcome and most valuable. You will find it amply repay perusal, and I will not spoil it by making more than one extract here: "Of course you have to rough it at the dépôt; that is the roughest time of all. In providing for so many, everything must be simple and plain, and only just what is necessary; but everything is scrupulously clean and sweet. The beds are made of cocoa fibre, which (properly prepared) makes a good stuffing, and possesses the great advantage that no vermin will harbour in it. Each bed has a loose linen covering to it, which is frequently washed. The blankets lent for the two nights in the dépôt are kept in good, useable condition. When you hear that all the walls are limewashed after the departure of every ship, and the floors and berths scrubbed with carbolic soap, you will see how carefully all matters for health are attended to."

The Royal Commission were, of course, guided by the evidence which came before them, and it is no part of my duty to question the judgment at which they arrived.

But, while I have thought it necessary to remove that evil effect as far as I could by the proofs I am now sending you, it may be as well to point out that there would not be much ground for surprise if the dépôt really was the unclean place that was supposed. During the year 1883, just expiring, it has been occupied by nearly 35,000 people sailing for the Australasian Colonies, in the following proportions:—

				Ships.		Emigrants. Souls.		Equal to Statute Adults.
New Zealand	...	...	...	17	...	4,977	...	4,413
New South Wales	...	...	...	21	...	8,852	...	7,500
Queensland	...	...	...	37	...	17,242	...	14,878
South Australia	...	...	...	8	...	3,550	...	2,989
Totals	...	...	...	83	...	34,621	...	29,780

It might be expected that, with such crowds of people assembled during a single year from all parts of the country, and necessarily containing a proportion arriving in a more or less undesirable condition, the dépôt should often be very dirty; and the fact of its not being so shows the care that is really taken in its management. All the same, I have long held the opinion that a building so extensively used for the accommodation of emigrants ought not to be in the hands of any private person, but ought to belong to and be maintained under the direct control of the colonizing governments. This, however, is a subject foreign to the immediate object of this letter, and my views thereon will in due time be explained in my report on the general emigration business which you have been so long expecting.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

Enclosures in No. 11.

PAPERS RESPECTING THE PLYMOUTH EMIGRATION DEPOT.

No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

SIR,—

Westminster Chambers, 13th November, 1883.

The attention of your department was probably called, in the early part of this year, to the case of the emigrant ship "Oxford" and the outbreak of typhoid fever which took place on board. Shortly after the vessel had proceeded on her second voyage, a fresh outbreak of typhoid occurred; and on her arrival in New Zealand a Commission was appointed by His Excellency the Governor to inquire into the circumstances of the case. The Commission took evidence, and made a report to the Governor, of which I beg permission to transmit a copy. In that report the Commissioners, acting upon allegations brought before them by some of the emigrants, express a strong opinion with regard to the state of the Plymouth Dépôt. These allegations are very contrary to the facts which were before myself at the time, and to those which I understand have been more than once before the officers of the Local Government Board, who have had the best means of judging of the condition of the dépôt. Allegations of that nature seem to me calculated to cause not only alarm to emigrants themselves, but to create an impression in the minds of the colonial Governments that the dépôt is an entirely unfit place for the reception of the large number of people of the working class who are sent out. Moreover it might easily be made to appear as if the officers, not only of the colonial Governments, but of the Imperial Government, were neglectful of the welfare of the emigrants. I trust, therefore, that you will permit me to ask that the report of the Commission should be referred to your officers, with instructions to make any observations which you may think right to require as to their own experience of the general condition of the dépôt, or as to any other points in the report to which you may direct their attention.

I have, &c.,

The Assistant Secretary, Local Government Board.

F. D. BELL.

[A similar letter was addressed to the Board of Trade.]

No. 2.

The LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W., 6th December, 1883.

I am directed by the Local Government Board to advert to your letter of the 13th ultimo, with reference to an outbreak of enteric fever on the emigrant ship "Oxford," and, in thanking you for the information which you have given to the Board, I am to forward to you the accompanying extracts from a report, now in the Press, by Dr. Blaxall,* one of their Medical Inspectors, relating to emigration and immigration, in which reference is made to the emigrant dépôt at Plymouth. I am to add that the Board's Medical Department have been instructed to consider whether it may be practicable for the Board to obtain, on some organized system, information respecting the health of emigrants on ships leaving the ports of the United Kingdom, and Dr. Blaxall has been directed to take an early opportunity of communicating with you on the subject. The Board would be glad to receive a copy of all future reports, like the one which accompanied your letter, as to the health of emigrants on board vessels bound for New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

ALFRED D. ADRIAN,

Assistant Secretary.

Sir F. D. Bell, K.C.M.G., Agent-General.

Sub-Enclosure A.

EXTRACT from Minute by the Local Government Board's Inspector, Dr. Blaxall, with Reference to the Outbreak of Fever on the Emigrant Ship "Oxford."

THE note on page 17 has reference to the outbreak on board the "Oxford." The occurrence of the fever came to my knowledge quite by accident, and on inquiry I learned that the fever appeared in the ship upwards of twenty days after the embarkation of the emigrants, attacking both emigrants and crew. The latter had not been to the dépôt, which fact, together with the length of time which elapsed between the emigrants embarking and the outbreak of fever, pointed to the disease having been contracted on board ship, and in this connection the drinking-water on board was found to be highly polluted. On the disembarkation of the emigrants at Cardiff some went to their own homes, others proceeded to the dépôt at Plymouth. Cases of fever occurred amongst both parties, the emigrants at the dépôt manifesting symptoms within a day or two of their arrival there; and fresh cases continued to occur amongst them for some time, in a manner that pointed to propagation of

* Report by Dr. Blaxall not received in the colony.

infection on the premises, the channel being in all probability the privies infected by the first sufferers. Other emigrants passed through the dépôt during the time, but the disease was almost, if not altogether, confined to the emigrants from the "Oxford," who were detained there some weeks, pending the repairing and refitting of their ship; while the other emigrants lodged there for two or three days only, which would mean probably such exposure to infection as would be occasioned by one or two visits to the privies. And this fact appears to offer explanation for the distribution of the disease. I was not aware that the emigrants on board the "Oxford" suffered after the second embarkation. I applied to the Agent-General respecting the health of the emigrants of the "Oxford" and other ships, and his reply was dated before he heard news of the arrival of the "Oxford" at New Zealand. With regard to the condition of the Plymouth dépôt, I visited it three or four times quite unexpectedly, and on each occasion found the condition such as to enable me to state in my report that "the buildings were well ventilated and lighted, and in every respect well adapted to the purpose" (page 16), and, again, that "the buildings throughout were well ordered, and in a very satisfactory cleanly condition" (page 17).

23rd November, 1883.

F. H. BLAXALL.

Sub-Enclosure B.

EXTRACT from Dr. Blaxall's Report to the Local Government Board on Emigration and Immigration (now in the Press), pp. 16 and 17.

(3.) *Plymouth*.—Emigrants from this port are chiefly sent out by the agents of the Australasian Governments, who have arrangements with the proprietor of a large dépôt at Plymouth for their being received and lodged there pending embarkation. The site of the dépôt has much to recommend it, standing on the west shore of Deadman's Bay, having the water of the harbour on the east and south side, the Citadel on the west, and the Commercial Wharf on the north. There is a good yard for the emigrants to walk about in, overlooking the busy harbour. Tug-steamers can come alongside to embark passengers for ships in the Sound. The building consists of three blocks, A, B, C, substantially built, well ventilated and lighted, and in every respect well adapted to this purpose. Block A contains, on ground-floor, dépôt-master and colonial agents' offices, a surgery, and a large mess-room (58 feet by 41 feet six inches) for single women. On the floor above, a dormitory (73 feet 6 inches by 41 feet 6 inches, fitted with washstands, &c., with accommodation for 248 single women, and a separate berth for the matron. Block B, ground-floor, dépôt-master's quarters, and two large store-rooms for baggage; and over these a dormitory (57 feet 6 inches by 41 feet), available for married couples or single men, as required; Block C communicates with Block B by means of a covered way. On the ground-floor are situated the kitchen, provided with ample and excellent cooking apparatus, a large provision store-room, separate lavatories, with baths for men and women, and a disinfecting chamber heated by gas, in which, I am informed, a high temperature can be maintained. On the first floor are two large mess-rooms, fitted with tables and forms; on the second floor, dormitories for 100 married couples; and on the third floor, dormitories for 120 single men. At the end of this block, on the first and second floor, and cut off from the remainder of the building, are two wards well adapted for the reception of suspected cases of infectious disease. The waterclosets are situated in the yard, and discharge into the harbour: thus the contents are removed by the tide. There is, however, a considerable surface of rock above high-water mark upon which excrement lodges and decomposes.* The drainage of the dépôt runs direct to the harbour, and there is no communication with the town sewer. At the entrance to the dépôt there is a lodge for the gatekeeper. Paper, pens, soap, and other articles which emigrants are likely to require are kept for their use and supplied to them at a reasonable cost, to prevent the necessity of their going into the town. The buildings throughout were well ordered, and in a very satisfactory cleanly condition. The Urban Sanitary Authority possess an infectious hospital, situated in the workhouse grounds. It is a small building, insufficiently ventilated, crowded with beds, and altogether ill adapted to the purpose of a hospital. In the spring of 1881 the Port Sanitary Authority obtained from the Admiralty the loan of the "Pique," an old wooden sailing frigate, to be used as a hospital. She is now anchored in the Sound in charge of a man and his wife, whose duty it is also to attend upon the patients. I visited the "Pique," and found her lying in an exposed position, where, indeed, I have myself seen vessels driven on shore by force of the wind and sea. The ship is roomy and a fair height between decks, the sides of the cabins and sick bays are painted, and the deck overhead whitewashed. She has been thoroughly lime-washed below, and was generally clean throughout. The bilges were fairly free of water, and there was no perceptible smell from them till the water in them was disturbed, when it gave off offensive effluvia. The ventilation of the decks was effected by means of hatches, ports, and side-scuttles, and that of the bilges by two canvas windsails. There is no provision for heating the air between decks, nor for the efficient disinfection of clothing, &c. The old cooking-galley remains, and, in addition, there is a smaller one, affording together ample provision for culinary purposes, heating water for baths, &c. There is only one accommodation-ladder, but the ship is fitted with a derrick, by means of which the sick can be hoisted on board in a canvas cot prepared for the purpose. Some five or six cases of small-pox have been treated on board, but there is no separate accommodation set apart for such cases.

F. H. BLAXALL.

* June, 1883.—Whilst this report is passing through the Press several cases of typhoid fever have occurred at the dépôt, amongst certain emigrants who had embarked in health, but returned after an absence of twenty-four days, owing to the ship having become disabled at sea. The fever manifested itself within a day or two of their return, and was attributed to impure water on board the ship. Subsequently the disease spread at the dépôt, and continued to prevail there more or less for some six or seven weeks; the channel of infection there was probably the privies, which had become specifically infected by the evacuations of the first sufferers. August 6th.—I am informed that the offending privies have now been removed, and self-cleansing trough-closets of approved pattern substituted.

No. 3.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 17th December, 1883.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, and to thank the Local Government Board for the information which you have been good enough to give me. I hear with great pleasure that the Board are contemplating the institution of an organized system for collecting information respecting the health of emigrants, and that Dr. Blaxall is to communicate with me on the subject. I shall be most happy to give any assistance I possibly can towards a system which is sure to lead to such good results; and I propose, as one of the means of helping in this matter, to transmit to you in future copies of the reports from my Surgeons-Superintendent of the events on each voyage as they reach me. The first of these reports will go to you in a few days.

The Assistant Secretary, Local Government Board.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

No. 4.

The BOARD of TRADE to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Board of Trade (Marine Department), Whitehall Gardens, 1st December, 1883.

I am directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th ultimo, in which you ask that the report of the Commission appointed by His Excellency the Governor of New Zealand to inquire into the circumstances connected with the outbreak of typhoid fever on board the "Oxford" might be referred to the Board's officers at Plymouth and Cardiff for their observations. In reply I am to state that the report in question has been referred to the Board's principal officers at the above-named ports, and to enclose herewith, for your information, copies of the observations thereon which have been received from those officers.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS GRAY.

Sir Francis Dillon Bell, K.C.M.G.

Sub-Enclosure A.

Board of Trade Surveyor's Office, Cardiff, 22nd November, 1883.

Re "Oxford."—In reply to M. 21543/83, as to the fouling of the bilges in emptying the water-tanks at this port, I can only reiterate the various statements contained in my reports previously forwarded the Board. Everything that could be done at this port to thoroughly disinfect the ship. I would call especial attention to M. 7528, in which Dr. Spooner reports the ship was "thoroughly disinfected before he left Cardiff," the bilges receiving very careful attention. I drank a quantity of the water from the tanks, and suffered no ill effects, and at present have samples that are perfectly clear and free from sediment. I remember hearing many years ago of the case of one of Her Majesty's ships which, owing to fever, was disinfected, but, finding it again broke out, she was sunk, and this failed to rid her of the germs; this vessel had ultimately to be broken up. The vessel was twice fumigated, bilges disinfected, bunks also; the bedding destroyed. Two medical men went thoroughly into the case, and I, as the emigration officer, spent much time in the solution of the difficulty, as will be seen by my numerous reports already referred to.

W. H. NEATE.

The Assistant Secretary, Marine Department, Board of Trade.

Sub-Enclosure B.

Plymouth, 20th November, 1883.

Your officers have no opportunity of observing the cleanliness or otherwise of the dépôt; they never go into the building, merely into a detached building used for the inspection of the emigrants. The dépôt, according to the statements recently made, appears to be entirely under the control of Mr. E. Smith, an employé, or other employés of the Agent-General. I think it my duty to state that a most careful examination was made of all the emigrants and crew of the "Oxford" by your Medical Officers, Drs. Eccles and Morris, and samples of the water were taken from each tank, which samples are still retained by me; they are at this moment perfectly clear, without any deposit. They were taken from each tank on the 26th April, 1883.

H. D. GREY.

The Assistant Secretary, Marine Department, Board of Trade.

No. 5.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the BOARD of TRADE.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 17th December, 1883.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant (M. 22210), enclosing, by direction of the Board of Trade, copies of reports from Mr. Neate, the Board's Surveyor at Cardiff, and Mr. H. D. Grey, the Board's officer at Plymouth; and I have to return my thanks for the information which the Board have been good enough to give me. Adverting to the statements contained in Mr. Grey's letter, that the officers of the Board of Trade "have no opportunity of observing the cleanliness or otherwise of the dépôt, as they never go into the building, but merely into a detached building used for the inspection of the emigrants," and also that "the dépôt appears to be entirely under the control of employés of the Agent-General," I beg the permission of the Board to observe that I believe Mr. McKirby, one of the assistant officers of the Board, very lately went over the dépôt, and that Drs. Eccles and Morris, Medical Officers of the Board, are constantly in different parts of the building; and I feel satisfied that, if they had been asked by Mr. Grey to report, they would not have said that they had "no opportunity of observing the cleanliness or otherwise" of that establishment. Further, while the "Oxford" emigrants were in the dépôt after the ship's return to Cardiff, I have reason to believe that Dr.

Eccles officially inspected the dépôt throughout. I do not, however, think it material to go into matters of the past; I had rather ask the Board to let me represent, for the future, that it is of great importance that, if no instructions to that effect have hitherto existed, the Board should give orders to their officers to make a periodical inspection of the dépôt, and to bring any complaints of its condition under their notice. It will be in your recollection that, in the correspondence which lately took place between your department and myself with reference to a matter affecting the internal regulation of the dépôt, and the respective authority of the Board's officers and mine, the Board informed me that they must insist upon the right of their officers to intervene in all cases where the interests of the emigrants appeared to require such intervention. I can conceive no higher interest appertaining to the thousands of emigrants emigrating to the Australasian Colonies than the one involved in there being perfect cleanliness in the dépôt; and I am certain that the other Agents-General, as well as myself, will be only too glad to give the utmost assistance to the officers of the Board in maintaining a strict and regular inspection of every part of the building. There is no reason to suppose that such an inspection would be objected to by Mr. Hill, the proprietor of the dépôt; but it must be unnecessary for the Agents-General to say, as the persons responsible to their Governments for the proper conduct of emigration, that any objection of the kind, supposing one to be ever made, would be instantly overruled.

I have, &c.,

The Assistant Secretary, Marine Department, Board of Trade.

F. D. BELL.

No. 6.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the AGENTS-GENERAL for NEW SOUTH WALES, QUEENSLAND,
and SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

SIR,—

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

Your attention was probably called, in the early part of this year, to the case of the emigrant ship "Oxford," and the outbreak of typhoid fever which took place on board. Shortly after the vessel proceeded on her second voyage a fresh outbreak of typhoid occurred; and on her arrival in New Zealand a Commission was appointed by His Excellency the Governor to inquire into the circumstances of the case. The Commission took evidence, and made a report to the Governor, of which I beg permission to transmit a copy. In that report the Commissioners, acting upon allegations brought before them by some of the emigrants, express a strong opinion with regard to the state of the Plymouth Dépôt. These allegations are very contrary to the facts which were brought before myself at the time, and to those which I understand have been more than once before you, who have had the best means of judging of the condition of the dépôt while supervising the departure of large numbers of emigrants to [*Here the colony is named*]. Allegations of that nature seem to me calculated to cause not only alarm to emigrants themselves, but to create an impression in the minds of the colonial Governments that the dépôt is an entirely unfit place for the reception of the large number of people of the working class who are sent out. Moreover it might easily be made to appear as if the officers, not only of the several Agents-General, but of the Imperial Government, were neglectful of the welfare of the emigrants. I trust, therefore, that you will permit me to ask your attention to the report of the Commission, and that you will favour me with any observations which you may think right to make as to your own experience of the general condition of the dépôt.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

No. 7.

Sir ARTHUR BLYTH, K.C.M.G., to the AGENT-GENERAL for NEW ZEALAND.

SIR,—

Government of South Australia, 8, Victoria Chambers, 14th November, 1883.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and its enclosure, as to the Commission held in respect of the emigrant ship "Oxford," and in reply to state that I have attended to the despatch of thirty-two emigrant ships from the dépôt at Plymouth, and the Assistant Agent-General has attended to those which I have not visited there; and I have invariably asked the emigrants in all the three departments—containing married couples, single men, and single women—if they have any complaints to make; that on two occasions Lady Blyth has accompanied me, without notice; and lastly, that I was at the dépôt when a portion of it was occupied by the returned emigrants per Oxford, and that certainly no "amendment" over the ordinary state of the dépôt was observable on that occasion. The cleanliness of the dépôt is everywhere, and always has been, remarkable, the sleeping accommodation ample, and the kindness and attention of the master and mistress, Mr. and Mrs. Grant, at all times all that could be desired, and these qualities have very often been mentioned by the emigrants to me in my personal rounds amongst them. On the very last occasion when I was at Plymouth, despatching the "Berar," a testimonial was got up, unsolicited, by the emigrants assembled at the dépôt, thanking the master and mistress for all their considerate kindness and the unlooked-for comfort afforded to them. As this document also expressed thanks to myself, I begged that it might not be presented, as it was only thanking us for the performance of obvious duties. I regret now that I did not allow the emigrants to express, as they wished, their feelings. I ought here to say that I have invariably had instant attention from Mr. Hill, the proprietor of the dépôt, to any suggestions I have made. You have doubtless seen a short history of the dépôt at Plymouth, issued in August of this year, a copy of which I enclose; and, as regards the sanitary arrangements, I particularly draw your attention to the paragraph on this subject to be found on page 11 therein.

I have, &c.,

ARTHUR BLYTH, Agent-General.

Sir F. D. Bell, K.C.M.G., Agent-General for New Zealand.

Sub-Enclosure.

MEMORANDUM for the AGENT-GENERAL for SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Government of South Australia, 8, Victoria Chambers, 21st November, 1883.

REFERRING to your letter of the 14th instant, and enclosures, transmitted to Sir Francis Dillon Bell, K.C.M.G., Agent-General for New Zealand, to the correctness of every particular of which I can testify, I beg to add a statement which you may perhaps think it desirable to forward to Sir F. D. Bell. In September, 1882, I paid a private visit to Plymouth in company with a Naval medical officer of high rank in the service (Deputy Inspector-General of Hospitals), and, he having expressed a wish to see the emigrants dépôt, I took him there; our visit was quite unexpected, so that no special preparation was made for our reception. We found the dépôt nearly empty; some twenty or thirty emigrants had just arrived for Queensland. This circumstance enabled us to inspect the dinners—it being just dinner-time—which consisted of roast beef, roast potatoes, and bread. The quality and quantity were tested by my companion. We then inspected the day-rooms of the single women, the married couples, and single men, the sanitary accommodation, and finally the dormitories of the different sexes, to the very top of the house. My friend, who, in the exercise of his duty both on board ship and in naval hospitals, was, in my opinion, a very competent judge of what was calculated to promote the health and comfort of the emigrants during their stay in the dépôt, expressed his amazement both at the food and other arrangements; carefully examined a bed, and the walls and floors, which were scrupulously clean, and stated that he had no idea that emigrants were so well treated. Mr Arthur Hill's pamphlet on the dépôt, or rather dépôts, for there are two now, is so exhaustive that I will not repeat anything that he has said, except to remark that, when a batch of emigrants has been embarked, the dépôt is immediately restored to the state in which my friend and I found it. Not having received permission to mention his name, I cannot do so; but he is still on the Active List of the Royal Navy.

SAML. DEERING,

Assistant Agent-General and Assistant Emigration Agent.

No. 8.

Sir SAUL SAMUEL, K.C.M.G., to the AGENT-GENERAL for NEW ZEALAND.

New South Wales' Office, 5, Westminster Chambers, 19th November, 1883.

SIR,— I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, with copy of a "Report of the Commission appointed by the Government of New Zealand to inquire into the Case of the Emigrant Ship 'Oxford,'" a strong opinion being expressed in that report with regard to the state of the Plymouth Dépôt. I have much pleasure in complying with your request to furnish you with my experience of the general management and condition of the dépôt. Having on several occasions visited and carefully inspected that establishment immediately previous to and at the time of the embarkation of emigrants for New South Wales, I can, without hesitation, state that the dépôt is well adapted for the purpose for which it is used; the internal arrangements are excellent, and there is an order, neatness, and perfect cleanliness about the establishment which do credit to the master and mistress in charge. The beds and bedding, which I have myself examined, are particularly clean. On the occasion of my last visit one set of emigrants had just left the dépôt for Queensland, and all the bedding had been changed for the reception of the people coming in to embark for New South Wales. On each occasion I conversed freely with the emigrants, and no complaint was made by them either with regard to the food or the arrangements generally, but, on the contrary, they all appeared well satisfied, and on their departure cheered heartily the managers of the dépôt. I have every reason to believe that the cases to which I refer were not exceptional. In consequence of allegations which had been made by discontented emigrants, I have procured reports relative to the dépôt from Dr. Francis Fox, Port Sanitary Medical Officer of Plymouth, and from several experienced medical officers going out in charge of emigrant ships under my direction. Copies of these reports I annex, by which it will be seen that the complaints which have been made are perfectly groundless. I consider, on the whole, that the dépôt and all the arrangements are as suitable and as complete as any that can be procured, unless buildings are specially erected for the purpose. I may add that in many instances amongst the emigrants there are discontented and disappointed persons, who are prone to make unfounded complaints against any one or all concerned in the management of the several emigration departments here. This discontent and disappointment may be brought about either by illness amongst their families, or having to endure discomforts to which they have been unaccustomed, but which are nevertheless inevitable in an emigrant ship or in a dépôt, with a large number of people strange to each other and gathered from various parts of the kingdom.

I have, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

SAUL SAMUEL.

Sub-Enclosure.

REPORT by Dr. F. Fox to Sir SAUL SAMUEL.

SIR,—

Plymouth, 26th July, 1883.

Having been requested to inspect the emigration dépôt here with reference to its sanitary condition and its suitability in other respects, I have to make the following report: The building may be divided into two portions, one of which has been in use up to the present time, the other being a recent addition, not yet completed in its internal arrangements. I will first speak of the part now in use. The women's mess-room is a large, lofty room, well lit and well ventilated, capable of containing from 150 to 200 emigrants; the dormitories are large, well lit and ventilated, the arrangement of the bunks good, and the lavatory requirements sufficient. The mess-room for the men is well suited to the purpose; the dormitories for the married and single are on the same plan as the women's, and quite equal to them in all respects. In the recent additions to the dépôt I am

of opinion that the ventilation is insufficient in the dormitories: I have suggested a method by which this defect may be remedied at a very trifling cost; in all other respects they are quite equal to those in the original building. I am not satisfied with the closet construction; the back portion underneath the seat is made of cement, has a roughened surface, and inclines forward as it descends; the consequence is that portions of the excreta adhere to it, with daily increasing additions, for the removal of which there are no arrangements of any sort made.* The bulk of the soil falls into an open channel, which can be flushed at pleasure by pulling a string opening a valve in a cistern outside. An official is directed to attend to this, but in the intervals of his doing so the soil remains uncovered, tainting the surrounding atmosphere. A continuous flow of water would remedy this, but I am informed on authority that this cannot be obtained; I would therefore recommend McFarlane's trough as being a good and efficient substitute. The sewage from the entire building escapes by a drain discharging itself immediately under the new platform on which the people exercise and amuse themselves; this leaves it at low water entirely uncovered, and must of necessity affect the atmosphere breathed by those on the platform above, until again covered by the returning tide. I consider this most objectionable. The remedy is a very simple one: it only requires an earthenware pipe of sufficient dimensions carried from the present opening to beyond low-water mark, a matter of a few yards only, and this nuisance will be removed. Of the whole of the internal arrangements, the order, the neatness, and the perfect cleanliness in which everything is kept, it is impossible to speak too highly; and, if the few suggestions I have made are attended to, I am of opinion that the place is well adapted for the reception and care of the emigrants during their short stay here. The water supply is ample.

I have, &c.,

FRANCIS FOX,

Port Sanitary Medical Officer and Consulting Surgeon to South Devon
and East Cornwall Hospitals.

The Agent-General for New South Wales.

No. 9.

Mr. ARCHER to the AGENT-GENERAL for NEW ZEALAND.

SIR,— Queensland Government Office, 1, Westminster Chambers, 15th November, 1883.

In reply to your letter of the 13th instant, requesting my attention to the report of the Commission appointed by His Excellency the Governor of New Zealand to inquire into the causes of the outbreak of typhoid fever on board the "Oxford," and asking my opinion as to the sanitary condition of the dépôt at Plymouth, I beg to say that the assertions made by some of the persons that were examined are not, as regards the sanitary arrangements in the dépôt, borne out by my personal observations, nor by the reports of the despatching officers employed by this office. Of the comparatively trifling amount of disease that has prevailed amongst the many thousands of emigrants that have passed through the dépôt on their way to Queensland during the last two years, none has been traceable to infection contracted in the dépôt. My senior despatching officer reports that, owing to the sudden increase of emigration about the time the "Oxford" sailed, the dépôt was frequently inconveniently crowded, and the comfort of the people could consequently not be adequately provided for; but, to remedy this, a large addition has been made to the premises, and the worst evils of overcrowding have thus been remedied. The despatching officer is, however, of opinion that the comfort and convenience of the people are not sufficiently attended to in some details that could be easily and inexpensively carried out.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS ARCHER,

Agent-General.

Sir F. D. Bell, K.C.M.G., Agent-General for New Zealand.

No. 10.

EXTRACTS from Letter from the Hon. Mrs. Joyce. (In "Friendly Work" for November, 1883.)

I AM going to interrupt my course of letters this month to give you a typical description of the beginning of an emigrant's voyage. . . . On we go to Exeter. By 4.15 we get to our journey's end: we have a long walk to the emigration dépôt—seven great vans follow with the baggage—the only fatiguing part of the day. We come to a high wall with great gates in it; a side-door opens, and we see the sea close up to the wharf. "Show your embarkation papers," calls the porter. Each emigrant passes into the office, and gives up her embarkation order to Mr. Grant, the master of the dépôt. "Single women's quarters to the left," is repeated as we walk along. We enter a large hall supported by square wooden piers, narrow tables and wooden benches beside them: each holds ten, as much like on board ship as possible. The girls sit down and look about them. At the end of the hall there are coloured photographs of scenes in Queensland—grand trees, wide rivers, farm stations, sugar-cane mill, still life and bustling activity, in strong contrast. In a few minutes the tea comes in, a great teapot for each mess, and such plates of bread and butter—it disappears in a marvellously short time; and then the hum of conversation goes on again, until it is stopped by a call, "Come and claim your luggage!" Each woman goes across to the baggage-shed, and, under the auspices of the strong-limbed "Mary," opens her box and takes out what she wants for the night. A tidy girl, who has packed neatly, has her things for immediate use upon the top, and an inventory of all her belongings pasted inside the lid of her box. If she has put her brush and comb down quite at the bottom, and her boots at the opposite corners of the box, she is apt to have the time she takes up in diving and making hay in her box enlivened by caustic

* Since the above report was written Mr. Hill, the proprietor of the dépôt, has arrived here from London. He informs me that closet arrangements similar to those I have recommended, and working automatically, have been ordered, and are now on their way to Plymouth; they will be fixed as soon as possible after they have been received. He also admits that the nuisance which now arises from the uncovered sewage at low water must be remedied, and has promised that this shall receive immediate attention.—F. Fox. 28th July.

inquiries as to "whether she expected her hair to keep smooth till she lands on the other side?" or "whether she meant to keep her left-hand boot for wear next year?" But every one is good tempered, and the ubiquitous Mary gets through her battalion of maidens in incredibly short time. Queensland girls are then allowed to "sort themselves": this is the time for G. F. S. girls to join each other, if they have not done so before. One of them, who has been chosen to be their leader, has a list to give to the despatching officer, to ask for our girls to be berthed and messes together; a copy of this list goes down by post, but they have to remember to keep together as they pass the doctor and the despatching officer, and give in their names together, as these officers mark them off on their books. Then the business begins of choosing the captain of the mess. She is a very important person; she is responsible for the conduct of the girls at her table, and it is her business to see that they have their rations. The G. F. S. captain is selected beforehand by the recommendation of her Associate.

At 8 o'clock on the evening of the 24th September the Matron of the "Triumph" (the steamer which you read of as going to Auckland) had obtained permission to have a little service in the young women's hall. She had been to the chaplain for a large supply of the emigrant's hymns; these were given out to the captain of each mess for her girls. It was a very striking sight to see the 350 girls gradually hush down to silence from the babel of tongues. A short responsive service had been prepared; the girls were asked to take their part in answering "Hear us, good Lord," to each Litany sentence. The sub-matrons had each her service-book ready to lead the responses. The service was begun by a few words of good wishes for them in their brave enterprise (undertaken as it is by so many to lighten the burden of those at home), and of caution as to the responsibilities they carried with them, to keep the name of Christian English girls in good repute in the Greater Britain they had chosen as their home. Then came the hymn,—

"Go forward, Christian emigrant,
Beneath His banner true;

* * *

Till Christ Himself shall call thee
To lay thine armour by,
And wear in endless glory
The crown of victory."

The young, clear voices seemed to fill the hall. By this time they were steady enough for the prayers. There was something very heart-stirring in the earnest response, and the eager repetition of the words, as well as antiphon of the prayers.

At 9.30 the girls go upstairs to a great dormitory over the hall; it is 75 feet long, 43 feet wide, 15 feet high; another dormitory is somewhat smaller. Double rows of berths are fitted up, the passages running up the middle and down each side of the room. People who have never been on board ship are quite astonished to have to mount up to the second tier for their beds, but it was funny enough to be very amusing. One bright, clever girl, with short crisp brown hair and laughing blue eyes, found out that the easiest way to make such a bed from the neatly rolled-up "kit" was to stand at the end, and, with an athletic jerk, spread out her bed-clothes, and immediately a score of merry girls were all apparently doing gymnastic exercises with their sheets and blankets. Soon after this came a lull—some of the girls looked as if it was rather a hard thing to kneel down before so many; but the merriest were the bravest now, and knelt down at once. Some sat on the edge of their bunks reading; others knelt down with prayer manuals; others found a quieter place in their berths for their devotions. Those who did not pray then hushed their voices into whispers; and, perhaps, the blessed contagion of earnestness acted upon them another time.

Of course you have to rough it at the dépôt—that is the roughest time of all. In providing for so many everything must be simple and plain, and only just what is necessary; but everything is scrupulously clean and sweet. The beds are made of cocoa fibre, which, properly prepared, makes a good stuffing, and possesses the great advantage that no vermin will harbour in it. Each bed has a loose linen covering to it, which is frequently washed. The blankets lent for the two nights in the dépôt are kept in good useable condition. When you hear that all the walls are lime-washed after the departure of every ship, and the floors and berths scrubbed with carbolic soap, you will see how carefully all matters for health are attended to. The dormitories for single women hold over 400. As the passengers for two vessels were waiting their embarkation, it is probable that over 350 were within the walls on this occasion. The quarters for married people and single men are in another part of the building. A stern janitor (sometimes reinforced by his sub) guards the gate to the young women's part of the building during the day; at night the master of the dépôt has the key of the gate himself. The apartments for the matrons are close to the young women's dormitories upstairs.

Tuesday morning—every one was astir early, all the boxes were examined, any articles wanted in the list of "outfit required" had to be purchased. There is a drapery and brush store in the building; but no prudent person would wait till the last moment to complete her list of necessities. Then comes "passing the doctor"—a formidable moment. "To go" or "not to go" depends upon his verdict; but these doctors are keenly experienced, their diagnosis is not likely to be mistaken. One sweet-looking girl who had a slight cold had been teased by her messmates and told "not to cough" when she saw the doctor, or she would not go; her nervousness and anxiety ended in a perfect explosion of nervous coughing at the crucial moment. "Never mind," said the kind-hearted man, seeing her distress, "you won't have that sort of cough on board ship." This ordeal over, the kit-bags are given out, and should be immediately marked with the owner's name and number: knife, fork, and spoon, a tin mug, a large deep plate, a basin, become the personal property of the traveller. Single women sell their "kit" and bedding at the end of the voyage, as they have no further use for them. Everything is found for them.

But Wednesday is the great day—the steam-tender comes alongside the wharf, the iron railing is removed, a bridge thrown across: one by one, answering to their names, the passengers go on board, some of them afloat for the first time. It takes some time to get 290 people on board. At

last the doctor has all souls told; he and the other officials cross the gangway; we steam slowly out to where the "Triumph" is lying. "Is that her? Is she bigger than that ship? No; yonder, beyond the schooner. Look at her funnel; what a length she is; why, it's a walk from end to end!" and so on, till we are alongside. There is no confusion on going aboard. As the girl gets to the bottom of the stairs her number is called out, and she is directed where to find her berth; and there, neatly rolled up, is the rest of her "ship kit." Long before she has settled herself it is dinner-time. The captain of each mess goes up with the great covered tin dish, which holds vegetables at top, meat in the middle, and soup or gravy underneath. At the top of the stairs she is met by the newly-made constable, with his neat band on his arm, and a blue jersey marked with his "special" calling. Armed with her mess-card she hands up her great dish. In a few minutes it is brought back to her; her safe descent, thus laden (no easy matter), is watched with the greatest anxiety. She sways a little, and her messmates ejaculate; her precious cargo is very heavy. Another lurch—she rights herself—and once on the level soon gains her mess-table, and the smoking dinner is handed to each, and the babel of tongues is exchanged for the clatter of knives and forks. How good the stewed beef smelt! how fast it disappeared!

The "Triumph" carried 102 single women, besides single men, married people, and children; she had the advantage of being fitted with a large refrigerator for carrying fresh meat. The other steamers carrying passengers to New Zealand for the Government are all larger vessels: the "Ionic" and "Doric" are superb ships, whilst the "British King" and "British Queen" are very popular. The doctors on board these vessels take the greatest pride in the good health and comfort of their passengers: their kindness and patience in smoothing difficulties is beyond all praise. Requiring absolute obedience and discipline to preserve order and good health, they meet the convenience of the passengers with kindly consideration. There is a hospital on board well furnished with drugs and appliances, so that, as one of the emigrants remarked, "You can be ill if you like, without paying extra." Of the last packages, to come on board, a box of books, a large assortment of needlework, and (perhaps not the least valuable for the evenings below decks) some sets of dominoes, backgammon, solitaires, and draughts, went down to the Matron's cabin. But steam is getting up, there is a call for shore passengers to leave the ship, no time for anything but a hurried "Good-bye" and "God speed." We are handed down into a little tug, for we had stayed on to the last moment. The girls come up on deck with their handkerchiefs to wave, the men take off their hats—something like a cheer as we are cast loose. Their seven weeks' voyage has begun. Before long I hope to have some letters from them, to tell you how our Friendly Girls fared on their voyage to the brighter Britain of New Zealand.

ELLEN JOYCE.

St. John's Croft, Winchester, 13th October.

No. 12.

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

(Memorandum.)

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 21st December, 1883.

WITH reference to the Hon. Minister's memorandum of the 2nd November (No. 198), I shall take care that slips containing a notice as to obtaining information on the disposal of Crown lands is inserted in all the publications distributed at this office. I was glad to receive the Minister's approval of my selection of Mr. Gisborne to assist in the preparation of the "New Official Handbook;" and shall take care that copies with the maps are placed on board all the steamers leaving for the colony. In compliance with the Minister's directions, I have invited the P. & O. and Orient Companies to allow the "Handbook" and "Crown Lands Guide" to be placed in the libraries of their vessels.

F. D. BELL.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

No. 13.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 9th January, 1883.

It will be in your recollection that the Local Government Board proposed to place Dr. Blaxall in communication with me on various sanitary matters arising out of the case of the ship "Oxford." I have had a very interesting discussion with Dr. Blaxall to-day, and he has made a number of valuable suggestions for the future. We have agreed to ask the other Agents-General to meet us in conference, in order that a combined action should, if possible, take place on the part of the colonizing Governments to ensure the best precautions against the recurrence of such a disaster as happened to the "Oxford."

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 14.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 9th January, 1883.

I received yesterday your telegram with the cipher "reduce emigrants," which I understand to convey instructions to "send only nominated people of all classes."

I have at once taken steps to carry these instructions into effect. There are not many existing commitments now which will stand in their way, and as soon as these commitments are worked off I shall confine the granting of passages to those whose nominations have been approved by you.

I transmit you herewith copy of a minute in which the results of the emigration of 1883 are referred to. You will find that, contrary to the expectation I led you to entertain, the distribution

of emigrants between the companies during the year 1883 has resulted in an excess of 368 statute adults sent by the Albion line over the number sent by the New Zealand Shipping Company's line; and you will see that steps will be taken to remedy this excess in the emigration of 1884.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure in No. 14.

MINUTE for Mr. KENNAWAY.

THE receipt of yesterday's cablegram from the Minister of Immigration necessitates immediate steps being taken to carry out the instructions which it contained. I find, however, on reference to the tables you roughly prepared for me a few days ago, that, instead of the numbers which it was settled should be given respectively to the New Zealand Shipping Company and the Shaw-Savill-Albion Company during 1883, an inequality has resulted between the companies which was not contemplated by my minutes of June and November last. The figures you have given me show the following results: First half of 1883, 2,167 souls = 1,962 adults; second half of 1883, 4,336 souls = 3,784 adults: total, 6,523 souls = 5,746 adults. Further, it seems that the proportion between the companies have been as follows: The Shaw-Savill-Albion Company and Patrick Henderson and Co. combined, have had altogether, during 1883, a total of 3,057 statute adults, while the New Zealand Shipping Company have only had 2,689. Instead, therefore, of the year having worked out so as to give about an equal number of emigrants to both companies, there is a balance against the New Zealand Shipping Company of equal to 368 adults; but, if the half of this number—that is to say, 184 adults—more had been given to the New Zealand Shipping Company instead of to the Shaw-Savill-Albion Company, the desired equalization would have been maintained. Now at the time that we made the settlement last June our estimate was that there were about 2,750 statute adults to be sent out; instead of which, in the latter half to 1883 we have sent out 3,784. These differences, not only in actual numbers but in allotment to the respective companies, have resulted, of course, from a number of circumstances which affected unexpectedly the original proposals; but, at the same time, it must be remembered that one of the “essential features of the scheme,” as summarized in my minute of the 6th November, was that “the two companies were to share about equally in the emigrants, so far as the varying destinations of the people would allow;” and both you and I were under the impression, until you made up the accounts of all the ships the other day, that the result for the whole year 1883 would be found to have approximately carried that feature out. In a private letter from the Minister by last mail I learned that the course I had taken in accelerating the supply of people for the harvest was approved; but I imagine that it has been upon his receipt of the usual telegraphic statement of the total numbers that Mr. Rolleston has observed the extent of the increase over my estimates of June, and that yesterday's cablegram is to some extent the result. The commitments which we have at present are, fortunately, not large, so that there will be no difficulty in giving immediate effect to the Minister's instructions; but of course these commitments have to be completed. So soon as they are run out you will take care that passages are only provided for nominated people. In the meantime our attention must be directed at once to correct the excess which has taken place during 1883 as between the two companies, and so restore the equilibrium which was intended by the June settlement, as early as we can.

9th January, 1884.

F. D. BELL.

No. 15.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 17th January, 1884.

Your attention will probably have been called, by the correspondence relating to the dépôt which was transmitted in my letter of the 19th December last (No. 407), to the request then made to the Board of Trade to assist me in the future inspection of the dépôt.

I now transmit to you a further correspondence which has taken place between that Board and myself, from which you will learn that the Board do not think it proper for their officers to intervene in such a matter. In order that you may understand the reference made in the Board's letter to a circumstance which recently happened at the dépôt, it is necessary that you should be in possession of the previous correspondence on the subject. I therefore also transmit it to you for your perusal. It had been my intention to have replied at the time to the Board's letter of the 31st October, but on second thoughts it appeared to me that it would be better to say nothing more, but tacitly acquiesce in their claim to intervene in any manner they chose. The point which strikes me as being remarkable is that the Board should insist, in the one case, upon a right to exercise that very authority for the protection of emigrants which, in the other case, one of obviously far greater importance, they now are unwilling to exert.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 15.

Mr. T. GRAY, Board of Trade, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

Board of Trade (Marine Department),

Whitehall Gardens, S.W., 27th December, 1883.

SIR,—

I am directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant (No. 5 to Enclosure in No. 13), with reference to the reports of their officers as regards the emigrants' dépôt at Plymouth; and, in reply, I am to state that the Board regret that

complaints have been made to the Commissioners at Wellington both as regards the filthy condition of the dépôt and of the harshness displayed by the person in charge of that establishment; and to inform you that the emigration officers under this department are not empowered by the Passengers Acts to inspect houses where intending emigrants lodge. The intervention in the dépôt of the Board's officers was distinctly objected to by the agent for the Agent-General of New Zealand in the recent case referred to in your letter. A copy of the Surveyor's report, dated 4th August, is enclosed.

There can be no doubt, however, that the officers of the New Zealand or any other colonial Government hiring the dépôt for the use of their assisted emigrants have the right to see that it is kept in a clean and healthy condition, and that the emigrants are not harshly treated; and it appears to this Board that the introduction of the Board's staff into the matter would rather weaken than strengthen the position of the officer or department by whom the dépôt is for the time hired. I am to add there is some misapprehension as to the alleged official inspection of the dépôt some months ago by Dr. Eccles. The Board of Trade understand that not only has Dr. Eccles *not* recently inspected it officially, but that no other officer of the Board of Trade has done so.

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS GRAY.

Enclosure 2 in No. 15.

The AGENT-GENERAL to Mr. T. GRAY, Board of Trade.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 10th January, 1884.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th December, in which, referring to the request contained in mine of the 17th, you express the opinion that intervention in the emigration dépôt by officers of the Board would rather weaken than strengthen the position of the officer or department by whom the dépôt is for the time hired.

I bow, of course, to the decision of the Board of Trade. I trust, however, to be permitted to say, in reference to your observation that the intervention of the Board's officers was "distinctly objected to" by my despatching officer in the recent case, that, while I felt it my duty to point out what appeared to me a doubtful exercise, in that instance, of the authority possessed by your officer, I acquiesced, as a matter of course, in the intimation you conveyed to me that the Board must insist upon the right of their officers to intervene in any case which they might think necessary for the protection of emigrants. I hope, therefore, that I may be allowed to remove any misapprehension on the point, by assuring the Board that I shall be ready at all times to require from my own officers the utmost co-operation with theirs in any measures which the Board may think necessary for the protection and welfare of the people whom I send out to New Zealand.

I understand from your letter that the Local Government Board is the proper department to which I should apply for assistance in the sanitary arrangements of the dépôt, and I have had the advantage of most valuable advice thereon already from Dr. Blaxall, R.N. I regret that any mistake should have occurred in my supposition that Dr. Eccles, or any other officer of the Board of Trade, had inspected the dépôt officially.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 3 in No. 15.

Mr. T. GRAY, Board of Trade, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

Board of Trade (Marine Department),

Whitehall Gardens, S.W., 14th August, 1883.

SIR,—

I am directed by the Board of Trade to inform you that they have received a report from their Principal Officer at Plymouth, stating that, during the medical inspection of the passengers of the "Taranaki," a young girl came through the inspecting room crying bitterly, and saying that she did not wish to go; and that, after the inspection, the Emigration Officer under this department went to the ante-room where the girl was, and was informed by her that she was afraid of being compelled to go, as her father was not allowed to see her, and had been forcibly expelled from the dépôt. The Emigration Officer, thinking that the girl's father, as her natural guardian, had a right to be with her at such a time, directed him to be admitted; but shortly afterwards, while the man was standing quietly by his daughter, he was seized by Mr. Smith, the Despatching Officer, and forcibly hustled out of the dépôt, against the expressed wish of the Emigration Officer.

As there may be occasions when it may be very desirable that the Government emigration officers, in protecting the interests of intending emigrants, should investigate cases of this description, the Board will be glad if Sir Francis D. Bell will be so good as to inform them whether he has received any particulars of the case referred to, and what they are.

I have, &c.,

Sir F. D. Bell, K.C.M.G., Agent-General for New Zealand.

THOMAS GRAY.

Enclosure 4 in No. 15.

Mr. MACKINLAY to the PRINCIPAL OFFICER, Board of Trade, Plymouth.

SIR,—

Board of Trade Offices, Plymouth, 4th August, 1883.

During the inspection of the emigrants for the "Taranaki" for New Zealand a young girl came through the inspecting room crying bitterly, and saying she did not wish to go. After the inspection I went to the ante-room where the girl was, and was informed by her that she was

afraid of being compelled to go, as her father was not allowed to see her, and had been forcibly expelled from the dépôt. I, thinking that this girl's father, as her natural guardian, had a right to be with her at such a time, had him admitted on condition that he would make no fuss till matters were arranged. A minute afterwards, while standing quietly beside his daughter, he was seized (by a Mr. Smith, who engages these emigrants) and forcibly hustled out of the dépôt, against the expressed wish of your officer, who was rudely informed that he had no authority within this so-called Government emigration dépôt.

While deprecating undue interference on the part of your officers, I submit that there are many occasions on which they require to protect intending emigrants from the overbearing and even bullying treatment of some of these emigration agents and their subordinates.

The Principal Officer, Board of Trade, Plymouth.

I have, &c.,

W. S. MACKINLAY.

Enclosure 5 in No. 15.

Mr. KENNAWAY to the ASSISTANT-SECRETARY, Marine Department, Board of Trade.

SIR,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 8th September, 1883.

I am directed by the Agent-General to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th ultimo, relating to the case of a girl named M— C—, who was to have sailed in the ship "Taranaki" for New Zealand.

The Agent-General will always be most glad to inquire into any case which may be brought under his notice by the Board of Trade, and he now desires me to transmit to you a report on the present one by his Despatching Officer (not received from Agent-General), from which the Board will see that the circumstances as there detailed differ essentially from those which were represented to them by their Emigration Officer.

The Agent-General entirely recognizes the right of the Board of Trade to require a full investigation of any case where their officers may think it necessary for the protection of intending emigrants. But it appears to him that, in the present case, the Emigration Officer overstepped his duty in giving orders for the admission of the father of M— C—, after orders for his exclusion had been given by the Agent-General's Despatching Officer. If an officer of the Board of Trade has a right, under the Act, to give his own orders in the emigration dépôt, superseding orders by the proper officers of the colonial Governments, it is obvious that new arrangements must be made for the internal management of the dépôt; and the Agent-General hardly sees at present how such arrangements could be made, so as not to interfere with the proper responsibility of his own officers. The embarkation of a number of people on the departure of every ship is a different business, and it often happens, especially in the case of single girls leaving their parents, that the desire to stay at home comes strongly upon them at the last moment, after all the pains and expense have been incurred by the Colonial Government of bringing them to the dépôt and providing their passage: indeed, this is so natural that, whenever it does happen, the emigrants are told as a matter of course that they are perfectly free to go home if they please. But, if the Agent-General is to understand that the Board of Trade claims the right for their officers to give orders in such cases at their pleasure, the subject would require very careful regulation for the future, and a clear understanding of the relative authority of his own officers and those of the Board of Trade. The Agent-General is not aware as yet of the nature or the limits of the authority under which such a right could be claimed, nor whether it is really claimed by the Board; and he would be much obliged if the Board would direct such explanation to be given to him on this point as they may think right.

The Agent-General has not observed without some regret that, in the letter you have been directed by the Board to address to him, it is taken for granted that the accusations against his Despatching Officer of having "seized" the father of M— C— and "forcibly hustled" him out of the dépôt are true. As the evidence of the Despatching Officer and the dépôt-master distinctly denies their truth, the Agent-General trusts that the Board will refer that evidence to the Emigration Officer with orders to give further explanation. The imputation of personal violence is a serious one, and should either, the Agent-General thinks, be substantiated by your officer, or be withdrawn.

I have, &c.,

WALTER KENNAWAY,

Secretary to the Agent-General's Department.

The Assistant Secretary, Marine Department, Board of Trade.

Enclosure 6 in No. 15.

Mr. T. GRAY, Board of Trade, to Mr. KENNAWAY.

Board of Trade (Marine Department),

Whitehall Gardens, S.W., 31st October, 1883.

SIR,—

I am directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th ultimo, respecting the case of the girl named M— C—, and, in reply, to state that they have instituted a further investigation into the circumstances referred to, and are of opinion that their Emigration Officer was not exceeding his duty in giving orders for the admission into the dépôt of the girl's father, seeing that he could not have been aware of the instructions previously given by the Despatching Officer for the man's exclusion.

The Board feel it their duty to insist upon the right of their officers to interfere in all cases where emigrants, or intending emigrants, apply to them for assistance, or when their interests appear to the officer to require his intervention; and they are not prepared to make any exception from this course at Plymouth, or in cases in which the "passengers" are about to proceed under

arrangements with colonial Governments. As regards the point referred to in the last paragraph of your letter, the Board's Emigration Officer reports that he is unable to withdraw his statement that the Despatching Officer hustled the father of the girl out of the dépôt, as Mr. Smith, although assisted by the servitors of the dépôt, ordered the man's removal, and followed him closely up through the suite of rooms, loudly and authoritatively making use of the words, "Out with you," as he went along.

The Secretary, Agent-General for New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS GRAY.

No. 16.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the MINISTER of IMMIGRATION.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 30th January, 1884.

I transmit to you herewith copy of a letter I have received from the Colonial Office, enclosing a memorial addressed to the Earl of Derby by Mr. Kirk, on behalf of a number of third-class passengers in the steamer "Ionic" on her recent voyage to New Zealand, in which they complain of the treatment they received on board.

As the matter has been referred by the Secretary of State to the Board of Trade, I refrain for the present from making any observations on the memorial. I have had a conversation on the subject with Sir Thomas Farrer, the Permanent Secretary of the Board of Trade, and have pointed out to him that the complaints in question do not in any way relate to the Government immigrants who were sent out by that ship. There are several questions affecting the responsibility of the officers of the Board of Trade, which this memorial has brought into prominence; and I am presently to meet Sir Thomas Farrer on the subject. I feel sure, for my own part, that, since we must go on conducting the Government immigration in high-class steamers such as the "Ionic," it will be absolutely necessary to provide in some way for the assimilation of the dietary of emigrants and third-class passengers, to which subject our own attention has been so much called.

I transmitted a copy of the memorial to the New Zealand Shipping Company for any observations they might have to make, and herewith I enclose copy of the correspondence which passed in respect thereto.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 16.

Mr. WINGFIELD, Colonial Office, to the AGENT-GENERAL for NEW ZEALAND,

SIR,—

Downing Street, 26th January, 1884.

I am directed by the Earl of Derby to transmit to you for your information the accompanying copy of a letter addressed to this department by Mr. Kirk, on behalf of some third-class passengers in the steamer "Ionic" on her recent voyage to New Zealand, in which they complain of the treatment they received on board. The letter has been referred to the Board of Trade, and the writers have been so informed.

I have, &c.,

EDWARD WINGFIELD.

Enclosure 2 in No. 16.

Mr. KIRK to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

Steamer "Ionic,"

RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,—

Wellington, New Zealand, 8th November, 1883.

Voyage from England to New Zealand of the New Zealand Shipping Company's steamer "Ionic," leaving Plymouth on the 22nd September, and arriving at Wellington, New Zealand, on the 8th November, 1883:—

We beg to enclose a letter upon a grievance which requires the attention of Her Majesty's Ministers. We can assure you that the matters stated are much underdrawn, as we have desired to keep to a very moderate statement. Again assuring you we are prepared to stand by every assertion backed by the signatures of the third-class passengers, I beg leave to refer you to Jos. Dodds, Esq., M.P. for Stockton-on-Tees.

Yours, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

ROBT. KIRK.

Sub-Enclosure in Enclosure 2 in No. 16.

RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,—

Steamer "Ionic," 8th November, 1883.

At a large and enthusiastic general meeting of the third-class passengers, held on board the steamer "Ionic" (chartered by the New Zealand Shipping Company) on the 3rd day of November, 1883, a unanimous resolution was passed to the effect that the newspapers should be written to so as to bring before the public the shameful way in which they have been accommodated, treated, and fed. This we do solely that the public may be enlightened as to our experience at sea. This letter is signed by the six committeemen (appointed by the meeting) on behalf of the third-class passengers, whose signatures they hold in their possession open for inspection. The committee give their late English addresses for reference, if required, so that the public may know it is in good faith, and not from a few disaffected passengers. The following complaints were formulated by the meeting, and carried by acclamation, without one single dissident:—

1. *Sanitary Arrangements.*—The men washing on the decks in all weathers without shelter, and without stands for their wash-tins. Urinal exposed and running over, thereby creating an offensive nuisance, both these in full view of the females passing to and from the forward hatchway and forward water-tap, as also those parading the decks. The waterclosets were most inadequate for the requirements of the male passengers, there being only three seats for the accommodation of

about 230 men and boys. At times, when the emigrants' watercloset was closed for repairs, the three seats had to accommodate in addition about another fifty. The ventilation of all the third-class passenger quarters was very defective, these quarters being situated on the third deck, and below the water-line, and beneath that which Government stipulates for the use of free emigrants. The atmosphere was at times most offensive and stifling. The port-holes could not be opened whilst under steam, even in the finest weather. We would also further call attention to the fact that the sides of the ship, upon which many of the third-class cabins abut, are without boarded lining, consequently causing much discomfort to passengers and injury to their bedding from the condensed vapour of the atmosphere streaming down the plates.

2. *Food*.—In a letter to the *London Daily News* in September, 1883, the following sentence occurs with reference to the last voyage of the steamer "Ionic:" "Let the fact go forth, . . . that during the voyage fresh meat was daily provided to all the passengers." We have reason to believe, on very good authority, that this statement is incorrect. In our case we have not received an ounce of fresh meat (with the exception of the doctor's patients) since leaving Plymouth on the 22nd September, to the 3rd November, 1883. The bulk of the food was of inferior quality, and insufficiently cooked, and much of it unfit for human beings; consequently most of it was thrown overboard. It was also served up in a very rough manner. Had not many of the passengers provided themselves very liberally, both in England and more especially at Cape Town, with food and luxuries, they must have half starved and suffered from disease, especially the women and children.

3. *Incivility*.—When washing in the morning passengers were frequently subjected to annoyance by members of the crew cursing and swearing at them, and sweeping the filth of the deck on to where they were standing; as also from the man giving out the water, the latter being of daily occurrence. The chief steward of the ship during the whole of the voyage was most uncivil and disobliging, treating representations with studied contumely and occasional threats. The captain and a few other officers have, generally speaking, given satisfaction as far as their civility is concerned.

4. *General Complaints*.—Furthermore, because of having free emigrants on board, we have been subjected to many annoying restrictions. We think Government or free emigrants ought not to be allowed to travel in the same vessel with ordinary passengers on account of this. Also a flagrant oversight as to the boat provision for life-saving in case of wreck or fire, there being only eight boats and two rafts, capable of carrying about four hundred out of what we believe to be over nine hundred persons.

We would most respectfully call the attention of the authorities to these subjects, and recommend that a Government official be appointed on board all passenger ships during the voyage, with full power to see that the law is carried out, and passengers protected from insults upon making complaints, as we have been told they had us at sea and would do with us as they liked.

Much dissatisfaction was manifested with respect to the arrangements for passengers' luggage, all boxes marked "Wanted" and "Not wanted" being mixed up together, and in one hatch bags of coal and trunks were mixed indiscriminately. In lifting and lowering boxes received very rough handling and were greatly damaged. The third-class hatchways were not provided with lights.

Likewise resolutions were passed that the Colonial Secretary and the President of the Board of Trade should each have a copy of this letter sent to them. And that the sanitary inspector coming on board at Wellington be invited to inspect all sanitary arrangements, and the third-class quarters. And, in addition, an original list of the whole of the signatures be sent to the Colonial Secretary.

It has just come to our knowledge, and we wish to call your attention to the same, that very serious complaints were made to and published by a Wellington paper about the middle of June last respecting the accommodation and treatment experienced by the third-class passengers during the last voyage of the steamer "Ionic" out from London.

ROBERT KIRK and 75 others.

The Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, London.

P.S.—The Committee beg to observe that the 75 signatures appended represent, with wives and families, 191 persons. And, also, in addition to the above, many of the third-class single female passengers desired to sign this letter, but the Committee decided otherwise.—Signed by ROBERT KIRK on their behalf. Wellington, New Zealand.

Enclosure 3 in No. 16.

Mr. KENNAWAY to the MANAGER, New Zealand Shipping Company.

SIR,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 29th January, 1884.

I am directed by the Agent-General to transmit to you copy of a memorial which has been sent to him by the Earl of Derby, and which was forwarded to his Lordship by some of the passengers on board the steamer "Ionic," containing certain complaints of alleged ill-treatment during the voyage.

The matter being now before the Board of Trade, the Agent-General thinks your company may perhaps wish to make some statement to the Board on the subject of the memorial, and therefore communicates it to you without delay. Should you think proper to make any observations thereon through the Agent-General for the information of the New Zealand Government, he would be glad if you could favour him therewith in time for the out-going San Francisco Mail.

I have, &c.,

WALTER KENNAWAY,

Secretary to the Agent-General's Department.

The Manager, New Zealand Shipping Company.

Enclosure 4 in No. 16.

The MANAGER, New Zealand Shipping Company, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

N.Z. Shipping Company (Limited), Rochester Buildings,
138, Leadenhall Street, London, E.C., 30th January, 1884.

SIR,—

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, enclosing copy of memorial containing complaints from some of the passengers per steamer "Ionic" as to alleged ill-treatment during the voyage.

It will be sufficient reply to this memorial to say—(1.) That the complaints were fully examined into by the Immigration Officers at Wellington, who decided that there was no fault to be found with the vessel, the food, or sanitary arrangements. (2.) That there was no sickness of any kind on board. (3.) That the Board of Trade officers here minutely examined into the sanitary arrangements, and are prepared to deny the statements of the memorialists about them. (4.) The food was the same to all the steerage passengers, and was surveyed by your officer on behalf of the emigrants. (5.) I beg to refer you to the Wellington newspapers, viz., *New Zealand Times* of 13th November, and *Evening Post* of 12th *idem*, where you will see the complaints were found to be groundless on examination by representatives of these papers.

I have, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

O. R. STRICKLAND, Manager.

Enclosure 5 in No. 16.

Mr. KENNAWAY to the MANAGER, New Zealand Shipping Company.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 31st January, 1884.

I am directed by the Agent-General to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th instant, respecting the memorial containing complaints from some of the passengers per "Ionic," and to state, in reply, that he will have much pleasure in forwarding a copy of your letter to the Earl of Derby, with a request that it may be referred to the Board of Trade.

I have, &c.,

WALTER KENNAWAY,

Secretary to the Agent-General's Department.

The Manager, New Zealand Shipping Company.

No. 17.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 31st January, 1884.

D.—4

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th December (No. 26, ~~P. 26~~), in which you express the hope that, upon my receipt of your letter of the 6th October, containing your instructions on the direct steam service, I may have sent you the report which you have been so long expecting from me on the general subject of emigration.

I am well aware of the disappointment with which you will have seen mail after mail come in without that report: nevertheless I think that the Minister, no less than the Agent-General, will have some reason to be satisfied in the long run with the continued delay. In many letters I have referred to the special difficulties there are in the way of initiating any really efficient system under conditions the first of which must be the admixture of Government emigrants with self-paying passengers in high-class steamers: and the sustained attention which I have had to give to these conditions has made it happen, over and over again, that some opinion strongly formed by me had to be given up, and some unexpected impression produced in its stead. Thus, although I might at almost any moment in the last six months have easily completed my report, I should certainly have had to contradict myself afterwards on several important points; so that any weight which you might have been inclined to give to recommendations of mine would have disappeared when you found me retracting or materially altering what I had said before. I felt it to be the most prudent course for me to wait until the experience to be gained from the first voyage of the steamers, and the means to be thereby afforded for discovering anything radically wrong, should give a stability to my views to which I could not otherwise have pretended. And, as the results of each voyage have come back to me, I have been more and more glad that I waited for the many lessons I had to learn, for I should have had a great deal to unsay which I might have said with confidence only six months ago.

I still find myself stopped at every turn by the insuperable difficulties which attach to temporary and make-shift arrangements. During all the time I have conducted emigration from this side I have simply been doing it from hand to mouth, and it is a constant wonder to me that I have not made a thorough mess of it. Of one thing I am perfectly certain, that it has been very badly done compared with what it ought to have been and could have been with a proper and permanent organization of the business in a separate branch of this office. Not a quarter of what ought to be done has ever been able to be done, for instance, in the single matter of answering inquiries. The immigration correspondence belonging not only to the working-class, but (what is of far more concern) to the small-farmer class, is, of course, a matter of supreme importance; yet, in any sense that deserves the name, it simply has not been done at all, notwithstanding the devotion which Mr. Kennaway has given to it. We distribute thousands of leaflets and a great number of Handbooks and other publications; but the one thing which is really needed, namely, to

accompany such publications with the helpful, painstaking advice which an intending emigrant so anxiously asks for, is the very thing that we cannot do. Knowing what the work ought to be, I fret under the incessant discouragement of not being able to overtake it, and of feeling that without stability and permanence I never shall overtake it.

Yet I am perfectly confident that, if permanence and stability were only assured and a really efficient method established, results of enormous importance to the colony might be achieved. I am not speaking so much of the working-class immigrants, although even in their case an entirely different system is absolutely necessary if the colony does not intend to confine itself to nominated people alone. But I am referring to the class which above any other we want in the colony, namely, small farmers with moderate capital at their command, to fill the second-class accommodation on board the new lines of steamers. There are thousands of small farmers who might easily be brought to New Zealand if we would adopt towards them the policy which may be expressed in these words: "The Government will take you to New Zealand as cheaply as you can be taken to Manitoba;" and I do not hesitate to say that each fortnightly steamer could be made to take out its complement of valuable settlers. Literally it may be said that nothing is done in the agricultural counties of England Scotland, and Ireland to bring the advantages of New Zealand before that class. Yet I am incessantly urged by people here to do it, and I am certain that it could be done successfully if we did it with steadfastness of purpose. Nor am I less convinced of this: that, if it pays the colony to bring out working people, it would pay at least as well to devote a part of the Immigration Fund to bringing out small farmers. But there are two things which, in both the cases, I consider to be absolute essentials.

1. As regards the working-class, it is essential that the colony should decide whether it will confine itself to nominated people, or whether it will invite a moderate but steady inflow of unnominated. The former are easily got together, for they have been prepared by their friends for the move which they are to make; the latter have to be sought out, and a really good class—especially in the case of single women—can only be sought out by the most painstaking and careful organization, maintained over a considerable space of time, and not liable to be suddenly interrupted. And, equally for nominated and unnominated people, everything relating to their selection and to their reception at the dépôt immediately before embarkation should be under the sole control of the Government, nor should any private profit ever be allowed to be made out of it.

2. As regards the class of small farmers, it is essential that they should be told as clearly as possible what they can do when they get out to the colony. This means not only general information such, for instance, as is given in Parts I. and II. of the Handbook, but special information and advice, such as I have contemplated in Part III. They should not only be able to know that there is, say, good agricultural land to be had on the west coast of the North Island, or good pastoral farms to be had in Otago, but they should also be able to know for certain what the land law will really enable them to do. I ventured nearly two years ago, in my letter of the 20th February, 1882 (No. 2, D.—4, 1883), to express the opinion that the instability of the land law was defeating even then the very objects it was intended to subserve; and all the reflection which I have been able to give to the subject since has only strengthened me in the views I then held. Yet, at the very time when I was about to urge, in the report you have been so long expecting, what seemed to me strong reasons (from the immigration standpoint) in favour of a stable land law, the Assembly was engaged in considering a fundamental change in the disposal of the public lands. It would be entirely outside the province of the Agent-General to express any opinion as to what the system ought to be; and I assure you of the sincerity with which I should try, so long as I held this office, to give the best effect I could to whatever policy was chosen by Parliament. But what I said to you two years ago about the Otago pastoral question I could say now with a great deal more force about the system of perpetual leases. If that system were the law, it could, I believe, be easily made popular with intending settlers. The trouble is that I can never say with any confidence what really is the law.

I faintly indicate in these few words a very small part of what has so long been passing through my mind. I hope it is needless for me to say how entirely I admit your right to require a far more complete statement, or how much I appreciate the opinion you are pleased to express that my report would be of assistance in determining how best to give effect to the wishes of Parliament. Nor should I think of letting you meet Parliament again without placing you in full possession of what I think.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

No. 18.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 5th February, 1884.

In the answer which you gave to a question by Mr. Fish in the House of Representatives last session (*Hansard* No. 2, Session 1883—20th June, page 50), I observe that you seem to contemplate 450 immigrants being sent out by each of the monthly ships. If it is your desire that so large a number of people as 450 should be sent out in any one ship, I trust I shall receive definite instructions to that effect. I beg leave to observe, however, that none of the steamships now running to New Zealand could carry such a number without putting them in the orlop deck, and my Despatching Officer assures me that neither the "Tongariro," "Aorangi," "Ruapehu," "Ionic," "Doric," "British King," nor "British Queen" is capable of carrying even as many as 300 statute adults in the upper 'tween decks, although only 16 feet space is allowed per adult, instead of the 18 feet that I should like.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 19.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 18th February, 1884.

I noticed lately in one of the New Zealand papers a complaint by some of the passengers on board the s.s. "Tongariro," on her first voyage, that the ship had been taken into latitude 50° S., where, for several days, they had suffered from sickness and inconvenience from their having made no provision for warm clothing.

I am unable to say what truth there is in the allegation, but, as the question of great circle sailing is one of much importance in the case of ships taking out immigrants, I beg to call your attention to it, in order that any instructions may be sent to me thereon which you may think necessary.

The Admiralty Ice-chart for the southern hemisphere, which I am sending you, gives detailed warnings that a course so far south as 50° involves risk of meeting dangerous ice. The chart points out that the "great circle" course, so frequently taken by ships in order to shorten the distance to and from Australia, has led to a knowledge that the danger of meeting icebergs in high southern latitudes is far greater than had been generally supposed. The chart distinguishes by colour the freer parallels from the more doubtful and dangerous ones, the uncoloured space including the position of icebergs seen during the Austral summer months; thus showing a line to the southward of which dangerous ice is most likely to be encountered. The greatest number of icebergs is usually sighted in November, December, or January, the least number being in June and July; and, as the proportion seen in June and July together is about one to thirteen compared with December alone, great caution has evidently to be observed in navigating a high latitude in the later spring and summer months.

Now the "Tongariro" sailed from Plymouth on the 29th of October, touched at the Cape on the 20th November, and arrived at Port Chalmers on the 11th December. I enclose a chart showing the tracks of the steamers "Ionic" and "Doric" on their recent voyages to New Zealand, from which you will see the difference between their course and the one which the "Tongariro" is alleged to have taken. I need not point out that, whatever dangers exist according to the warnings of the Admiralty Ice-chart, are greatly enhanced in the case of a steamer of 4,500 tons running at a high speed; and I beg you to be pleased to note the position of the Crozets as well as Kerguelen Island, comparing at the same time the tracks of the "Ionic" and "Doric" with that which the "Tongariro" must have taken if the allegation of the passengers is true about her "running for several days in 50° S."

For my own part I should be inclined to insist upon a limit of south latitude being fixed higher than which no ship taking out immigrants should be allowed to shape a course. But I did not think myself justified in exacting this as a condition in the merely temporary arrangements I had to make pending the meeting of Parliament.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

No. 20.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 26th February, 1884.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th January (No. 29, ~~H. 2~~, D.—4 1884). I entirely agree with you in thinking that whatever difficulties have seemed to beset the intricate question that was before the Joint Committee of both Houses last session, respecting conveyance of Government immigrants and freight, will presently disappear in practical administration. We have been passing through a period of transition from the exclusive employment of sailing vessels to one of part sail and part steam, and now to another chiefly of steam, and are every day gaining experience that will be of the greatest value to every one concerned.

As regards the numbers of people to be sent out, and your wish that the expenditure of the funds allotted to immigration should be distributed over the period of three years more evenly than at present, I shall do my best to give effect to the instructions I am to expect by an early mail. In the meantime I transmit a return showing the numbers which have been sent out by me since immigration was resumed, made up (so far) for each of the two financial years ending 31st March, 1883, and 1884. From this return you will see that in the financial year 1882-83 we sent out 3,220 souls, equal to 2,858 statute adults; while in the financial year 1883-84 (up to this time) we have sent out 5,272 souls, equal to 4,591 statute adults. Adding the number that will go by the steamers "British King" and "Aorangi" up to the end of March, the total number of statute adults that will then have been sent during the financial year 1883-84 would have been as nearly as possible 5,000 (namely, the nominal number you intended to fix for each year), if I had not decided to close the season by sending out all I could so as to arrive well before the winter. This further number will bring up the statute adults for 1883-84 to about 5,250; but, taking the two years together, the total will not be much above 8,000, or an average of 4,000 statute adults a year.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 20.

NUMBER of EMIGRANTS despatched between 1st April, 1882, and 31st March, 1883.

Name of Ship.	Destination.	Date of Sailing.	Number of Souls.	Number of Adults.
1882.				
Timaru	Otago ...	20 April ...	158	141½
Hermione	Auckland ...	4 May ...	104	89
Rakaia	Canterbury ...	28 May ...	151	125½
Wellington	Otago ...	9 December ...	323	273½
Crusader	Canterbury ...	18 December ...	381	334½
1883.				
Rangitikei	Auckland ...	31 January ...	293	267½
Oxford*	Wellington ...	31 January ...	302	273
Waipa	Canterbury ...	4 February ...	220	205
Caroline	Otago ...	19 February ...	235	213
Westmeath, s.s. ...	Auckland ...	17 March ...	320	283
British Queen, s.s. ...	Canterbury ...	24 March ...	295	271
Forfarshire	Otago ...	29 March ...	267	242½
Thirty short ships ...	... ..	... ..	171	139
			3,220	2,858

* Put back, and sailed again on the 26th April.

Enclosure 2 in No. 20.

NUMBER of EMIGRANTS despatched between 1st April, 1883, and 25th February, 1884.

Name of Ship.	Destination.	Date of Sailing.	Number of Souls.	Number of Adults.
1883.				
Oxford	Wellington ...	26 April ...	23	6*
Ionic, s.s.	Wellington ...	28 April ...	212	191½
Doric, s.s.	Auckland ...	28 July ...	275	237½
Nelson	Otago ...	3 August ...	334	284
Taranaki	Canterbury ...	4 August ...	340	296
Westland	Wellington ...	11 August ...	324	279½
British Queen, s.s. ...	Canterbury ...	23 August ...	239	211½
Ionic, s.s.	Wellington ...	22 September ...	228	204
Triumph, s.s.	Auckland ...	26 September ...	290	250½
Trevelyan	Otago ...	27 September ...	288	240½
Victory, s.s.	Otago ...	27 October ...	334	294½
Waitangi	Canterbury ...	25 October ...	314	280½
British King, s.s. ...	Wellington ...	5 November ...	328	290½
Bombay, s.s.	Otago ...	28 November ...	300	263
Northumberland ...	Auckland ...	10 December ...	160	123½
Rangitikei	Auckland ...	19 December ...	341	300
British Queen, s.s. ...	Wellington ...	29 December ...	261	232½
Seventeen short ships ...	... ..	... ..	72	63
1884.				
Ruapehu, s.s.	Auckland ...	12 January ...	132	109½
Florida, s.s.	Otago ...	16 January ...	238	209
Ionic, s.s.	Canterbury ...	28 January ...	239	214
			5,272	4,591

* Additional number shipped after ship put back.

No. 21.

EXTRACT from MONTHLY REPORT from AGENT-GENERAL, dated 1st March, 1884.

No vessel with Government emigrants has been despatched for the colony during the past month. As I advised you in my last report, the steamer "British King" will be despatched on the 15th instant with about 300 emigrants for Auckland, Wellington, and Canterbury. I have since arranged to send about 200 in the steamer "Aorangi," which leaves Plymouth for Otago on

the 29th instant. After providing passages to this extent, it was estimated that there would be a mixed number of emigrants for various ports, which (including those likely to go under the nominations received by last mail) would make up a further number of about 250 statute adults (principally for the Northern Island); and these I have arranged shall go in the steamer "Victory," starting also about the end of the month, for Wellington and Otago. I propose then to suspend sending out any more emigrants until July next, except such as it may be expedient, for special reasons, to forward by the regular steamers of April, May, and June.

No. 22.

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

(Memorandum.) 7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 29th February, 1884.

REFERRING to the report of the Royal Commission respecting the ship "Oxford," and to my letter (No. 407) of the 19th December last concerning the immigration dépôt at Plymouth, I herewith transmit copy of a letter which I have received from Dr. Wasse, the Surgeon of the "Oxford," in which that officer reports on the condition of the dépôt during the time he was there in charge of the "Oxford" emigrants. Dr. Wasse also gives his recollection of what passed between myself and the emigrant M—— at the interview I had with him and other emigrants, and to which I more particularly referred in my letter (No. 280) of the 15th October, 1883.

F. D. BELL.

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 22.

Dr. WASSE to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

London, 28th February, 1884.

I beg to tender my thanks for the opportunity of perusing the papers respecting the Plymouth emigration dépôt, and the emigrant ship "Oxford," which you have been good enough to afford me.

In the evidence given by certain immigrants before the Commission appointed by His Excellency the Governor of New Zealand to inquire into the case of the ship "Oxford," many statements occur concerning the Plymouth Dépôt, which would lead persons to suppose not only that it is much mismanaged, but that it is a totally unfit place for the reception of colonial emigrants. Moreover the Commissioners, acting on these statements, express a very strong opinion of this nature.

These allegations are quite contrary to the facts as observed by me while in charge of the "Oxford" emigrants at Plymouth for several weeks. I need scarcely say that during that time I was constantly in and out of the dépôt, and had ample opportunity of observing the existing state of things in every part of it. I was often in the dormitories and noticed the bedding, and never found it other than clean, and free from vermin.

Owing to the unusual number of emigrants passing through the dépôt about the time the "Oxford" sailed, some of the beds were unavoidably overcrowded; and for the same reason the floors of some of the mess-rooms were at times very dirty: this was, however, by no means the rule. Every means was employed by the dépôt officials to secure cleanliness, and carbolic acid soap was constantly used for washing the floors, benches, &c.

With regard to the vermin, many of the "Oxford" emigrants, on their second arrival at the dépôt, brought them with them in large numbers on their clothes; great pains were taken by the matron and other dépôt officials to get rid of them.

I never observed unnecessary harshness in their treatment of the emigrants, and, what appears to me the most significant fact of all is that never once, during the time I was in charge, was any complaint made to me by any emigrant with reference either to treatment or accommodation. The master and matron always appeared to me most attentive and painstaking. It is to be remembered that the "Oxford" emigrants, on account of their misfortunes and long sojourn at Plymouth, had become especially discontented; this was seen in their being often exceedingly troublesome at the dépôt, and in the querulousness of their evidence before the Commission.

With regard to the statement made by the emigrant, G—— M——, that you promised to send him out in a steamer and make him some recompense if he would say nothing concerning a letter sent by him to a friend in New Zealand and returned thence to you, I can only say that I was present at the interview you held with the emigrants at Plymouth and heard what passed between yourself and M—— at that meeting, and that, to my certain knowledge, you made no remark of any such nature.

Of course if the dépôt had been dirty, or abounding with vermin, it would have been my duty to report to you. I contradicted in my evidence the statements made against it, and there was no indication of their having made a special impression on the Commissioners' minds so as to make it advisable for me to press the matter. I think it much to be regretted that no copy either of the evidence given or of the Commissioners' report was submitted to me in New Zealand. The report had already been submitted to the Governor, and even published, before I had any opportunity of becoming acquainted with its contents; I was still detained in quarantine at the time, and my only information was gleaned from the Wellington papers, information which I now find to have been incomplete, consisting only of extracts.

I have, &c.,

GERVAS MILLS WASSE,

Late Surgeon-Superintendent of the ship "Oxford."

Sir F. D. Bell, K.C.M.G., Agent-General for New Zealand.

No. 23.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 13th March, 1884.

I received to-day your telegram of same date, directing me to stop immigration, except nominated girls, during the winter. You will have seen from my despatches, marked in the margin,* that I had already taken steps towards the object indicated by you; and, in obedience to your present instructions, I shall (after the people who are going in the "British King," "Aorangi," and "Victory") send only nominated girls until the steamer of July. There will, accordingly, be plenty of time after receiving this letter for you to give me any instructions you desire. In the meanwhile, I think I shall best carry out your wishes by beginning with the next season slowly, and not exceeding, say, 250 statute adults in July, and the same number in August.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 24.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 7th April, 1884.

I have not yet given an express answer to your despatch of 2nd February last (No. 40), relating to the number of immigrants to be sent out during 1884–85; but you will have seen, from my letters of 26th February (No. 117) and 13th March (No. 151), that I had prepared the way for carrying out your instructions: and I will take care that due effect is given to them.

It was, of course, certain from the first that the vote of £200,000 would not allow of a stream of immigrants being sent out for three years, at the rate of 5,000 a year; and, looking at the period in the financial year 1882–83 when we began work, it seemed to me that I should perhaps best meet the wishes of Parliament by sending about 3,000 the first year, 5,000 in the second, and the remainder in the third. The proposal I made in my letter of 13th March, to cease sending people until July, and then only to begin with 250 statute adults in July and the same number in August, will allow of any further orders you may wish to give being sent me in good time for the rest of the financial year 1884–85.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Immigration, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

* Letter, 26th February, 1884, No. 20; Memorandum, 1st March, 1884 No. 21.

