

## Enclosure 4 in No. 36.

Mr. BIRCH to Dr. FEATHERSTON.

SIR,—

Inverness, 14th January, 1873.

In reply to your letter of the 6th instant, that I should report of my proceedings during the last six months, ending 31st December, 1872, I have now the honor to report that during the three months ending August, my time was mainly occupied in the Shetland Islands, from whence I embarked a contingent of emigrants, and accompanied them by steamer to London, along with a number from Banffshire numbering, so far as I can remember, 32 adults. These embarked on board the "Christian McAusland," in the East India Docks, *en route* for Otago. This vessel left the dock about the 5th September, and soon after her departure I left for Scotland and visited some emigrants in Aberdeen, who sailed per "Euterpe," also Aboyne and Tarland, on Deeside, to meet parties who contemplate emigrating as paid passengers. Thereafter I visited Duftown, and there delivered an address, from thence went to Cromarty, in Ross-shire, for the second time, and did there also deliver an address; and here I may say that on all occasions when I have spoken of New Zealand publicly, the Press has uniformly done the subject ample justice. Having visited other parts of the Black Isle of Ross, and conferred with people in their own homes, I again revisited Orkney and Shetland, delivering addresses and meeting inquiries. While at this time in Shetland (November), I secured a few more families from Dunrossness, and made arrangements for their conveyance to London, where they arrived safe, and embarked on board the "Euterpe" for Otago; this second batch numbered, so far as I can remember their names, 24 adults; one family of eight, however, did not proceed by the said vessel, albeit they paid a deposit towards passages of £10. I am sorry I cannot afford the Agent-General the numbers of isolated families who left various parts of Scotland through my instrumentality, as I kept no account of such. Besides I think it would be almost impossible to do so, seeing that my movements have been of such a peripatetic character; neither can I form an estimate of the number of paid passages, although I believe they have been considerable. I am also sorry that I kept no diary of days on which I visited certain districts, such being not my instructions; but I would beg to draw the Agent-General's attention to a most important fact, which is, that I have been in communication weekly with the London Office, since my arrival in Britain. I have further to add that it is impossible for me to inform the Agent-General of the approximate number of emigrants likely to be secured during the next three months; the recent tempestuous storms and shipping disasters have had a depressing and damaging effect on the minds of intending emigrants. I have further to report that during the whole month of December I was in Aberdeen, where I had numerous applications, the result of which will be realized, I trust, in spring. At the same time I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that greater inducements are offered by the Canadian Government, besides that the distance is so much less. This latter fact is hard to overcome; and as I have not been asked to offer any suggestions how emigration to New Zealand might be brought before the public to insure greater success, I refrain. In conclusion, I may here state that during the last six months I have replied to very near 400 letters asking for information, besides that I have travelled over and sailed across some of the worst roads and dangerous seas in Scotland.

I have, &amp;c.,

THOMAS BIRCH.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.