

1873.

NEW ZEALAND.

THE IMMIGRANT SHIP "ENGLAND,"

(FURTHER PAPERS RELATIVE TO).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency.
(In continuation of Papers presented 16th July, 1872, G.—3.)

No. 1.

Dr. FEATHERSTON to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

(No. 390.)
SIR,—
7, Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street,
Westminster, S.W., 9th August, 1872.
I have the honor to transmit you copy of a letter just received from Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co., relative to the commission of inquiry on the ship "England."

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington,
New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
I. E. FEATHERSTON,
Agent-General.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Messrs. SHAW, SAVILLE, and Co., to Dr. FEATHERSTON.

DEAR SIR,—
London, 9th August, 1872.
By the mail just in we have received from our Agents in Wellington the printed report on the case of the emigrants per "England."

On reading it over, we find some allegations against us as contractors for the conveyance of the emigrants, made by Captain Harrington, which we are much surprised at, and which we have no hesitation whatever in saying are utterly false and without foundation.

We feel that we cannot quietly pass over such unmerited and uncalled for misstatements, and in justice to ourselves we have in preparation a detailed contradiction to every point on which Captain Harrington seeks to attach blame to us; and we intend laying our case before you, supported by ample evidence, in time for the San Francisco mail of the 22nd inst., when we shall ask you to be so kind as to transmit it to the Government of New Zealand on our behalf.

In the meantime, we shall feel much obliged if, in your despatches by to-day's mail, you will do us the favour to mention that we totally deny Captain Harrington's statements, and that confirmatory evidence, as mentioned above, shall be laid before the Government by next mail.

The Agent-General, London.

We are, &c.,
SHAW, SAVILLE, AND Co.

No. 2.

Dr. FEATHERSTON to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

(No. 427.)
SIR,—
7, Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street,
Westminster, S.W., 22nd August, 1872.
I have the honor to transmit herewith the communication from Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co., relative to the ship "England," which was referred to in my letter No. 390, of the 9th inst.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington,
New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
I. E. FEATHERSTON,
Agent-General.

NOTE.—The communication from Shaw, Saville, referred to, was not forwarded, but the enclosures were sent loose.

Enclosure 1 in No. 2.

Messrs. SHAW, SAVILLE, and Co., to Captain FOSTER.

DEAR SIR,—
Government Emigration Office, Fenchurch Street,
London, 15th August, 1872.
We beg to hand you herewith a copy of the report of the Commissioners appointed in Wellington to inquire into certain matters connected with the immigrants by the ship "England,"

1—H. 2

which we shall feel obliged by your looking over. We have marked certain parts of the report and of the evidence, which appear to us to be decidedly misstatements as affect ourselves as charterers of the ship, and your own officers.

Captain Harrington says that "No inspection of the stores and water took place as required by the Act,"—this we know you can give a total denial to.

Then Captain Harrington, or rather the surgeon, Mr. Leigh, alleges that the medical inspection was loosely conducted, and that all the passengers were not brought forward. The evidence, however, of the interpreter contradicts this. We shall feel obliged by your stating that the inspection was conducted in the ordinary manner, and that all the passengers were duly inspected at Gravesend by your medical officer.

The next point is the ventilation. Captain Harrington says "The ventilation I never thought sufficient, and therefore increased it by opening the whole of the main hatch; a very small portion, about two feet square in one corner, having been passed as sufficient by the Inspector in London, against my objections urged at the time." Also in another place: "I employed men at my own expense to put the fittings in order, and paid their passage from Gravesend where the fittings were inspected." Now, we have to ask you if, of your own knowledge, you do not recollect that Captain Harrington, in the first place, put every obstacle in our way as to the ventilation, and would not allow us to make such openings as we considered necessary; and that, in consequence of his standing out in the matter, we had to apply to you, and that you had to exercise your authority to compel Captain Harrington to supply such ventilation as you considered necessary; and further, that it was in order to carry out this compulsory work that he took men to Gravesend, as you would not pass the ship until it was done.

There is one other paragraph in the report which shows that the mode of procedure here, with regard to clearance of emigrant ships, is entirely misunderstood in the Colony. Captain Harrington says that he had no certificate of clearance, and the Commissioners imagine, therefore, that "One of the most important requirements of the Act, respecting the fitness of the vessel, does not appear to have been observed." We shall feel obliged by your informing us if we are not right in stating that the certificate of clearance, when given by you, is not handed to the captain, but is lodged with the Customs here, as an authority to them to clear the ship and allow her to proceed to sea; and that in the case of the "England," this certificate, that all the requirements of the Act had been complied with, was duly signed by the clearing officer at Gravesend, and was then deposited with the Customs officials in the ordinary course.

We trouble you with the perusal of this voluminous report and evidence, as one of the conclusions the Commissioners arrive at is that "Some of the inspections by the Imperial authorities are apparently mere matters of form." As we know so well to the contrary, we think it only right that a distinct denial should go out to the Colony that matters were at any time loosely conducted with regard to the "England," or that we in any way failed in our duty to the emigrants as imposed on us by the Passengers' Act.

Captain Forster, R.N.
Government Emigration Office, Fenchurch Street, London.

We are, &c.,
SHAW, SAVILLE, AND Co.

Enclosure 2 in No. 2.

Captain FORSTER to MESSRS. SHAW, SAVILLE, and Co.

Government Emigration Office, 65, Fenchurch Street,
17th August, 1872.

DEAR SIRS,—

I return with thanks the report of the inquiry made in New Zealand on the ship "England" bringing immigrants from London.

In reply to your letter, as regards the surveys of provisions and water, Captain Harrington was totally in error. The surveys on the "England's" stores were made in the East India Docks in the usual way, the surveying officer selecting from the bulk the packages to be opened for his inspection. The whole of the supplies proved, I observe, of the usual good quality.

The medical inspection of the whole of the passengers and crew was conducted in the ordinary manner;—it occupied a longer time than usual, many of the queries of the Medical Inspector having to be put to the emigrants through the interpreter. Fourteen days elapsed from the inspection to the appearance of the disease;—it must, therefore, at the time of the inspection, have been latent and indiscoverable by any personal examination.

Difficulties were made about ventilation. My requirements were kept so long in hand, that at the last moment men had to be sent to Gravesend to complete them before the final inspection.

The reference to the clearance certificate further indicates, it seems to me, Captain Harrington's misconception. You, as the authorized Passenger Brokers, requested that I should order a survey on the ship "England," under the Passengers' Act; and so, in the regular way of business, you continued, in all transactions with this office, to represent the ship. The clearance certificate required by the 11th section of the Passengers' Act was therefore given to you when the emigration officer signed the passenger lists, to enable you to clear the vessel at the Custom House, under the Passengers' Act.

The surveys and inspection held by this office on the ship "England," and on her outfit and stores, were, I believe, as carefully conducted as on the other numerous vessels making the same voyage with the most favourable results.

Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co., Leadenhall Street.

I have, &c.,
THOS. FORSTER.

Enclosure 3 in No. 2.

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

I, Sir Sills John Gibbons, Bart., Lord Mayor of the City of London, do hereby certify that on the 22nd day of August, 1872, personally came and appeared before me Alexander Scott and William Reid Sutherland, the declarants named in the declarations hereunto annexed, and by solemn declaration which the said declarants made before me in due form of law, did solemnly and sincerely declare to be true the matters and things mentioned and contained in their several and respective annexed declarations.

In faith and testimony whereof, I the said Lord Mayor have hereunto signed my name, and caused the seal of the office of mayoralty of the said City of London to be hereunto put and affixed.

Dated in London the 22nd day of August, in the year of our Lord, 1872.

(L.S.)

SILLS JNO. GIBBONS,
Mayor.

RICH. J. PAWLEY,
Deputy-Registrar.

I, *Alexander Scott*, of 34, Leadenhall Street, in the City of London, formerly master mariner, but now in the employment of Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co., of the above address, in the capacity of ship's husband to their emigrant ships, do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:—

1. I have been in the service of the said Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co., in the above capacity, for nearly ten years, and previously thereto I was a master mariner for twenty-five years, and during the whole of this period I had the command of emigrant and troop ships; and previously to my being master, I had been brought up as a seaman and officer on board passenger ships.

2. I have perused the report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into certain matters connected with the immigrants on the ship "England," dated Wellington, 10th May, 1872, and the appendix annexed thereto, being the evidence taken on the inquiry in respect to the ship "England," which had been chartered by the said Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co. for the purpose of conveying passengers to New Zealand.

3. On Monday, the 4th day of December, 1871, the said ship "England" was lying in the East India Docks. I was on board superintending the embarkation of the emigrants, who came on board on that day, and who were victualled under my superintendence and by a cook provided by Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co., who acted under my orders. I remained on board the ship day and night, and I never heard a word of complaint from the emigrants for want of food, and I am positive that none of them went short. I say that the statement of John Daniel, contained on page 12 of the said appendix, that the emigrants got no food on Monday on board ship, is a gross falsehood, which is contradicted by the evidence of William Cullen, contained on page 15 of the said appendix, which states the fact before spoken to by me, namely, that the said Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co. sent the cook, who was on board on the arrival of the emigrants, who got dinner the same day they arrived, and that the stores that the said cook prepared for them were independent of the ship's stores.

4. I say that on the 4th day of December, when the said emigrants came on board, all the fittings of the ship were complete except the ventilation, which was not completed until the vessel reached Gravesend, on Thursday, the 7th day of December aforesaid.

5. By the charter party, of which a copy is set out on page 26 of the said appendix, the ventilation of the ship was contracted to be done by the owners, and it was no part of the duty of Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co. to provide for the ventilation of the ship. I spoke to George Henry Harrington, the master and owner of the said ship, several times in regard to his neglect in not providing proper ventilation; and the Emigration Officer also complained to him in my presence to the like effect. The passengers remained on board three days without sufficient ventilation, solely in consequence of the neglect of the said G. H. Harrington, who never came on board of the said vessel to attend to his duties in the course of the day, but who was in the habit of coming on board after dark, in order, as I believe, that he might avoid his creditors in the daylight.

6. In reference to the statement of the said G. H. Harrington, on the first page of the said appendix, that the provisions and water were examined and sampled on the dock quay before bringing them on board, I say that this is not true. The said G. H. Harrington, as he goes on to state, was not himself present, and therefore knows nothing of the matter. The said provisions and water were examined and sampled on board in the usual and customary manner by one of the Emigration Officers of the port of London.

7. In reference to the statement of the said G. H. Harrington, on page 4 of the said appendix, that when the emigrants arrived on Monday the ship was unprepared to receive them, I say that this is not true; that the ship, so far as regards accommodation for the emigrants was concerned, was quite ready; but I admit that, by reason of unavoidable delay in consequence of obtaining the cargo,—which arose through stress of weather, which prevented its arrival,—that the main hatch was left open for the said Monday night, but I did the best I possibly could to prevent cold or draught, by hanging sails round the said main hatch, and also supplied charcoal stoves to keep the between-decks warm. I deny that anything was done by the said G. H. Harrington, for I say that the said sails were hung up before he came on board.

8. In reference to the statement of John Daniel, on page 12 of the said appendix, that the water-closets were not ready for several days after the emigrants came on board, I say that the said water-closets were ready, but that it might have happened, as it often does happen, that they, or some of them, became inaccessible, at least without inconvenient publicity, during the embarkation. There is, however, a water-closet for the women and a privy for the men on the dock quay, close to where the ship was lying. This water-closet and privy were built specially for the accommodation of emigrants by Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co.'s passenger ships, and were built by the Dock Company at their request.

This water-closet and privy provided sufficient accommodation for the emigrants, even assuming the use of the water-closets on board the ship was temporarily denied them.

9. The said ship was loaded with her cargo, stores, water, baggage, and utensils, in an ordinary, proper, and seamanlike manner. The emigrants were provided with the usual and proper accommodation.

10. I say in respect to the said evidence generally, as contained in the said appendix, that it is full of gross misstatements, hearsay evidence, and contradictions; and that those portions which relate to times, facts, and periods, of which I was personally cognizant, are generally misrepresented and exaggerated.

11. It is stated by the said G. H. Harrington, in the said appendix, that the said ship was overloaded. I say that this is not true, and that the quantity of dead weight, viz., 307½ tons, was only sufficient to make the ship seaworthy, and was under the weight usually supplied to a ship of the tonnage of the "England."

12. I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of an Act made and passed in the sixth year of the reign of his late Majesty King William the Fourth, intituled "An Act to Repeal an Act of the present Session of Parliament intituled 'An Act for the more effectual Abolition of Oaths and Affirmations taken and made in various Departments of the State, and to substitute Declarations in lieu thereof, and for the more entire Suppression of Voluntary and Extra-judicial Oaths and Affidavits, and to make other provisions for the abolition of unnecessary oaths.'"

ALEX. SCOTT.

Declared and subscribed at the Mansion House,
in the City of London, this 22nd day of
August, 1872, before me,

SILLS JNO. GIBBONS,
Lord Mayor.

I, *William Reid Sutherland*, of 34, Leadenhall Street, in the City of London, clerk to Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co., of the same place, shipowners, do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:—

1. I have the management of the passengers' department of Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co.'s business, and have been in their service in the said capacity for the last eleven years.

2. I have been shown the report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into certain matters connected with the immigrants by the ship "England," and have perused same, together with the appendix containing the evidence taken on the inquiry referred to therein.

3. In reference to the evidence of G. H. Harrington in the said appendix, I say, in respect to the paragraph commencing at the foot of the third page of such appendix, that the statements contained in the said paragraph are entirely untrue.

4. I deny that I ever informed the said G. H. Harrington, or any other person, that the doctor engaged by Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co. for the ship "England," referred to, "was all right, but that he had a tile off." The said G. H. Harrington asked me what sort of doctor I had engaged for his vessel, and I told him that we (meaning Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co.) had engaged Dr. Leigh, whose testimonials and diplomas had been submitted to and approved by me; and that, from inquiries I had made, I had come to the conclusion that he (Dr. Leigh) was a surgeon of ability considerably above the average of ship surgeons, and that the papers produced by him were unexceptionable.

5. Referring to the statement of the said G. H. Harrington contained on page 4 of the said appendix, which is as follows:—"On the Friday before the Sunday on which the immigrants were expected to arrive, I applied to Mr. Sutherland (Shaw, Saville, and Co.'s manager) to have lodgings taken for them, and that they refused on account of the cost, which he told me would be £13 a day, adding that I must do the best I could. He told me he had consulted the firm, and they refused to accede to it. The immigrants arrived on Monday, at which time the ship was quite unprepared to receive them, and they had no other place to go to but the ship,"—I say that the Mr. Sutherland therein referred to is myself, and that had it been necessary to provide the said immigrants with lodgings, the said Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co. would have provided such lodgings at their own expense, as is their custom when their ships are not ready to receive immigrants; but in this case the ship was ready to receive them, and so far from Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co. refusing to provide accommodation for the said immigrants, I say it is a fact within my own knowledge, that they provided accommodation for them on board the said ship, and that they came on board and were maintained and victualled on board the said ship by Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co. from the date of their contract tickets; and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of an Act made and passed in the sixth year of the reign of his late Majesty King William the Fourth, intituled "An Act to Repeal an Act of the present Session of Parliament intituled 'An Act for the more effectual Abolition of Oaths and Affirmations taken and made in various Departments of the State, and to substitute Declarations in lieu thereof, and for the more entire Suppression of Voluntary and Extra-judicial Oaths and Affidavits, and to make other provisions for the abolition of unnecessary oaths."

WILLIAM REID SUTHERLAND.

Declared and subscribed at the Mansion House,
in the City of London, this 22nd day of
August, 1872, before me,

SILLS JNO. GIBBONS,
Lord Mayor.

No. 3.

The Right Hon. the EARL of KIMBERLEY to Governor Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G.
(No. 65.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 26th October, 1872.

I referred to Her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners your Despatch No. 55, of the 26th June, enclosing a ministerial memorandum and a report of a Commission appointed to inquire into certain matters connected with the voyage of the emigrant ship "England," from this country to New Zealand, between December and March last.

I have the honor to transmit to you, for your information and for that of your Ministers, a copy of the report with which I have been furnished by the Emigration Commissioners in reply.

I have, &c.,

Governor Sir George Bowen, G.C.M.G.

KIMBERLEY.

Enclosure 1 in No. 3.

Mr. HUMPHREYS to Captain FORSTER.

MY DEAR SIR,—

19, Trinity Square, October, 1872.

With reference to the mental capacity of the medical officer of the ship "England," I must say that I did not observe any signs of deficiency, and I remember that he showed me two prize medals which he had obtained while in the medical classes; and without attaching too much value to such marks of distinction, they are at least proof of industry and of the power of acquiring information.

It appears that he was subject to epileptic attacks, but these, unless extremely frequent and severe, would not leave any external signs that could be discerned in an hour's interview.

I must say, in short, that he did not give me any reason to think him incompetent for the duties about to devolve upon him.

I have, &c.,

Captain Forster, R.N.

T. B. HUMPHRIES, F.R.C.S.

Enclosure 2 in No. 3.

Mr. WALCOTT to Mr. HERBERT.

SIR,—

Emigration Board, 12th October, 1872.

I have to acknowledge your letter of 3rd ultimo, with a despatch from the Governor of New Zealand, transmitting a report of a Commission of Inquiry held on the emigrant ship "England."

The "England" (860 tons) left Gravesend on 8th December last, for Wellington, with 102 emigrants, equal to 81 statute adults, and arrived at her destination on 9th March, after a passage of 92 days. The mortality on board was very large—16 deaths, or at the rate of 15·68 per cent. The Colonial Government very properly appointed a Commission to inquire into the case. The Commissioners, who appear to have taken much pains in the investigation, have divided their report into four heads. It is only with the first head (compliance with the Passengers' Act), to which the attention of the Secretary of State has been specially requested by the Colonial Government, that I propose to deal. The rest of the report relates chiefly to what took place on the voyage, and the matters affecting the charterers and the New Zealand Government Agency in this country, by whom the emigrants were selected and the arrangements for shipping them were made.

The Commissioners find no fault with the ship, either as regards her seaworthiness or suitability for the service; but they object: (1.) That no adequate provision was made for the immigrants, who arrived before the ship was ready to receive them. (2.) That the skylight over the main hatchway was too slight and insufficient to afford light and ventilation in bad weather. (3.) That the sleeping bunks were boarded up so as to obstruct ventilation. (4.) That no evidence could be obtained that the provisions, water, and medical stores were properly surveyed before they were shipped. (5.) That the medical inspection of emigrants was loosely conducted. (6.) That the stowage of the cargo was defective. And (7.) That the master did not obtain the Emigration Officer's certificate, required by the eleventh section of the Passengers' Act. The general conclusion of the Commissioners on this part of the case is condemnatory of the way in which the requirements of the Act are attended to by the Emigration Officers.

We at once called on the Emigration Officer and Medical Inspector under whose supervision the "England" was despatched, for any explanations they might be able to afford on the above points, and I would beg to refer to their replies, which I now enclose. The reply of Dr. Humphreys, who happened to be abroad, has only recently reached me, which will account for the delay in sending in this report.

In addition to the explanations of those officers, I may be permitted to make two or three general remarks on this portion of the case.

In the first place, it must be borne in mind that Emigration Officers have no absolute authority over passenger ships. Their power is defined and limited by the Passengers' Act. It rests with the shipowner to fit his ships as he thinks best, and so long as he conforms to the requirements of the law, the Emigration Officer, although he may prefer other arrangements, must accept those submitted for his inspection, unless a discretion in any particular instance is conferred on him by the Act. For example: in the matter of hospitals, the Act requires that they shall be placed either under the poop, or in a deck-house, or on the "upper passenger deck." The choice of situation, however, rests with the owner and not with the Emigration Officer. The latter can object only when the space is insufficient or not properly divided off. In the present case, Captain Forster states that the space and ventilation were, in his opinion, fully sufficient to meet ordinary requirements.

It turns out, although the Commissioners were unable to obtain evidence of the facts in the Colony, that the provisions, water, and medical stores were duly surveyed and passed by the proper officer, and it is admitted that no well-founded complaint was made as to the quality and quantity of the provisions supplied. It also turns out that the passengers' lists and the Emigration Officer's certificate of clearance were duly made out, signed, and given to the Brokers, to enable them to clear the ship at the Custom House.

The medical inspection of passengers before embarkation has always been a matter of anxious consideration with us, and, looking at the exigencies of the service, we have not been able to suggest any better method for conducting it than that adopted by the Medical Officers in London and Liverpool. This method was followed in the case of the "England," and is substantially described in Captain Forster's report. To judge of the state of health of a passenger while passing before the Inspector, may appear at first sight a mere form, and illusory. Our Medical Officers, however, affirm that it is not so, and that a passing scrutiny by a practical eye, though not a perfect, is by no means an ineffective check. In fact, the emigration of ailing passengers is constantly arrested by the Inspector, and suspicious cases thus arrested, subsequently receive a more searching examination. General results, moreover, practically support their view. The amount of sickness and mortality in the vast emigration from this country during many years past (save in one or two exceptional years, when cholera and infectious epidemics extensively prevailed) has been remarkably small, and rarely attributed to disease which could have been detected at embarkation. Indeed, unless depôts be established, as in the assisted emigration to Australia, carried on by this Board for many years, in which the emigrants could be maintained and watched for two or three days previous to embarkation, I do not see that any more stringent examination could be enforced without causing great complaints, both on the part of the emigrants themselves and of the shipowners. Take the case of Liverpool, through which port upwards of three-fifths of the whole emigration flows. More than 95 per cent. of the passengers are carried in steamers, many of them mail steamers, where delay and want of punctuality in sailing would be a serious public inconvenience. In the busy months of the year, between 3,000 and 4,000 persons sometimes embark in a day. If each person were to undergo a medical examination lasting only one minute, it would take the two Medical Examiners, acting separately about three days of ten hours each, to get through the work which is required to be done in one day. It is true this could be, to a certain extent, met by a large medical staff, but then as the emoluments, which by law are derived from a small *per caput* fee, would have to be divided amongst them, the services of the most efficient men would not be secured. During the last two years the 344,945 emigrants who left Liverpool and the northern ports of Ireland for all parts of the world (the great majority to North America) were subject to the system of transient examination. The mortality at sea nevertheless was astonishingly small, it averaged about .05 per cent.

In the case of the "England" small-pox and measles may have been conveyed on board, but it must have been in a latent form, as the first case of disease is stated to have occurred on the 20th December, twelve days after the ship left Gravesend. I am informed by a competent medical authority unconnected with the service, that from ten to sixteen days is the usual limit of the period of incubation both for measles and small-pox. Individual and close examination, therefore, of the passengers of the "England" would have failed to detect the existence of the disease at the time of their embarkation.

With regard to Mr. Leigh, the surgeon of the ship, whose fitness for the service is brought into question on the score of impaired health, I may remark that there was nothing in his appearance or known to the Emigration Officers to warrant their exercising the power vested in them by the Passengers' Act, of vetoing his appointment by the charterers. On the contrary, the Medical Officer, Mr. Humphreys, states in his letter that during an hour's interview he discovered nothing that would give him reason to suspect that Mr. Leigh was the subject of epileptic attacks, or incompetent for the duties of his post.

On the whole, while agreeing in many of the conclusions of the Commissioners, I am unable to acquiesce in the one which, founded on the evidence of persons imperfectly informed on the points to which they spoke, implies that the method of procedure with regard to the fulfilment of the requirements of the Passengers' Act is most unsatisfactory, and that the inspections by the Imperial authorities are mere matters of form.

R. G. W. Herbert, Esq.

I have, &c.,
S. WALCOTT.

Enclosure 3 in No. 2.

Captain FORSTER to ASSISTANT SECRETARY, Emigration Board.

SIR,—

Government Emigration Office, London, 17th September, 1872.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 5th September, with an enclosed report of the Commissioners appointed by the Government of New Zealand to inquire into certain matters connected with the immigrants by the ship "England." The Commissioners direct your special attention to those parts of the report which relate to the observance, before the ship sailed, of the requirements of the Act.

The "England," a ship of 853 tons, 168 feet long, 34 feet broad, 21½ feet depth of hold, built in 1863, has made two successive voyages from London to New Zealand, with emigrants, under the command of Captain Harrington. She left Gravesend on the second voyage, the one under consideration, on 8th December, 1871, with 102 passengers, equal to 81 statute adults, and arrived in Wellington on 9th March, having lost 16 persons from small-pox and other diseases.

With reference to the several points brought forward in the evidence, I beg to report as follows:—

1st.—Stowage.

On the former voyage the "England's" outward cargo consisted of,—

Ballast	100 tons	} Bales, cases, and other measurement goods.
Iron of sorts	...	...	...	150 "
Salt	...	...	...	50 "
Liquids	...	...	...	70 "

Total dead weight, 370 tons. Measurement, 800 tons.

The draft of water at Gravesend then being 16 feet 9 inches forward, 17 feet 6 inches aft, with a clear side midships of 8 feet 6 inches; 1,700 superficial feet of the lower deck being taken up by the emigrant accommodation.

On the second voyage the cargo consisted of,—

Iron rails	200 tons	} Bales, cases, and other measurement goods.
Galvanized wire	...	...	...	50 "
Nails	...	...	...	10 "
Salt	...	...	...	100 "

Total dead weight, 360 tons. Measurement, 500 tons.

The draft of water at Gravesend being 17 feet 3 inches forward, 17 feet 10 inches aft, with 8 feet 4 inches clear side; 1,840 superficial feet of the lower deck being reserved for the emigrants. I observed from time to time the stowage of both of the cargoes, which in fact were very similar, and I did not consider the quantity or description or distribution of the dead weight or other cargo, on either voyage, as unsuitable or to be objected to.

Captain Harrington having the responsibility of master, of representative owner, and also that under the 3rd section of the charter party (page 26, appendix to the Commissioners' report), made no remarks to me suggestive of attention, but on leaving Gravesend, agreed with Captain Westbrook, the clearing officer, that the ship was in good sea-going order.

2nd.—Emigrants' Accommodation, Ventilation.

The space appropriated for fifty-four* family adults was 1,472 superficial feet, the legal requirement being 815 feet. The space forward for sixteen single men was 368 feet in lieu of 240 feet. The single women were berthed in the starboard poop cabins. The plan of the berths, the ventilation of the hospitals, and of the space, was very similar to that on the former voyage. On both occasions it was, in my opinion, fully sufficient to meet ordinary requirements. The hospitals provided ample undisturbed space for the number of sick intended, as between the sick and the others there would be separation from contact, although not the complete atmospheric isolation desirable in cases of infectious disorders such as small-pox.

The ventilation of the married compartment was by the after hatchway, 25 square feet, the scuttle in the main hatch, 6 square feet, four side scuttles, one being in the hospital. The ventilation of the single men's compartment was the fore hatch, 25 square feet, and two side scuttles, one being in the hospital. The ventilation of the single women's compartment in the poop was three side scuttles, the door from the quarter-deck, and a skylight, 5 square feet. The poop skylight and the scuttle for the main hatchway were not completed until the vessel cleared from Gravesend. They were, however, completed in a strong, serviceable manner, to Captain Westbrook's satisfaction before he despatched the ship.

With reference to the opinion in page 17 of the Commissioner's report, an emigrant 'tween-decks may be, I think, better ventilated if thoroughly divided into moderate-sized compartments, than is possible as a whole space, with the foul used air from one end travelling right over all the bunks to the other end.

3rd.—Provisions.

Application was made by letter in the usual manner for the survey of the provisions and medical comforts, with a list on a printed form, headed, "Provisions, &c., &c., for 80 Statute Adults." In accordance with the practice, the Surveying Officer, Captain Westbrook, having examined the list, proceeded on the afternoon of the 2nd December to the ship, and, in presence of the provision merchant and others, surveyed the stores,—the wet goods on the upper deck, the dry goods partly on the 'tween-decks, and the bonded stores in the adjacent shed. The survey occupied more than an hour. The office list shows, in Captain Westbrook's pencil-marks, the number of packages opened. The articles were all down except 12 cwt. of fresh potatoes, which were shipped at the last moment. This list is signed by Captain Harrington as correct.

I have enclosed a paper with the scale of provisions and medical comforts under the Act, and also in the Commissioners' ships, the Victoria and the Queensland Government ships, and in the "England."

The "England's" provisions, you will observe, were ample,—in excess of the law. The medical comforts were sufficient, which is the practice in the New Zealand ships, as they sail under one firm, Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co., and are supplied with cuddy stores for the voyage out and home, any of which are furnished to the surgeon on application.

4th.—Medical Examination.

The practice in conducting the medical examination is to assemble the people together, in this case on the starboard side of the quarter deck. The decks are then examined for stowaways. Sentinels are placed to stop passing only the one way. The Medical Inspector, Dr. Humphreys, and the ship's surgeon stand on one side, the Emigration Officer and the Broker on the other. The names are called over from the passengers' list, the persons coming forward, passing between the surgeon and the Emigration

* See reference on plan, page 24, appendix. The seventy adults is an error, and include, I suppose, whole of the single men, who have thus been counted twice. The total number of adults, page 1, is eighty-one, out of which seventeen single women were berthed in the poop.

Officer, and delivering up their counterparts. Children are more especially examined as to their having vaccination marks, so that for healthy-looking men and women, the calling over will proceed regularly; with families, there will be stoppages waiting to see the vaccination marks. In the "England" there was more than the usual delay, the questions asked by Dr. Humphries having to be put through the interpreter.

From the inspection (7th December) to the first case (on the 21st December) is an interval of fourteen days: I do not understand that there is any possibility of discovering the existence of measles or small-pox in the system so long before their appearance on the surface.

Provision was made for infectious disease by my pointing out to Dr. Leigh, after agreement with the Broker, that there were unoccupied cabins in the poop (there were only two cabin passengers besides the surgeon) which afforded ready means of establishing an isolated hospital if required. The provision for isolation hospital was again repeated by the Clearing Officer at Gravesend.

Dr. Leigh presented himself at this office, with his qualifying documents and testimonials, on the 4th December, and after inspection of the documents, he signed his name in our day book. He was subsequently seen by Dr. Humphreys, who with him examined the medical chest, the instruments, and other things used. He also lived on board four days before sailing, in charge of the people, and stood by Dr. Humphrey at the medical inspection. No person connected with this office saw any reason to question but that, from his previous employment and proofs of good conduct, he was in every way qualified and suitable for the appointment of surgeon to the "England."

5th.—Subsistence Money.

Subsistence money under the 49th section was not demanded by me. The contract tickets are dated the 4th December, the ship left the docks on the 6th, was inspected at Gravesend on the 7th, and sailed at daylight on the 8th. The people were maintained on board for the two days to my satisfaction, the surgeon being in attendance the whole time. The likelihood of catching fresh disease is much lessened by living on board rather than by living in lodgings near the docks, such as strangers could get by the day, with board, at 1s. 6d. per adult.

6th.—Passengers' Lists and Clearance.

The three passenger lists, when brought to this office and signed by the captain, are examined, and the clearance certificate made out in duplicate. The Emigration Officer then signs the lists and clearances, retaining in this office one copy of each, and handing the other back to the Brokers. The Brokers' copy of the clearance is demanded by the Customs as their authority for clearing the ship under the Act. Captain Westbrook, the Clearing Officer, considered the ship to be then in very good order.

I have, &c.,
THOS. FORSTER.

R. B. Cooper, Esq.