

'bathroom,' and the door leading out of their cabin to it was locked. One of the single women complained about it to the captain, who told her he would have her put in irons. Before that date, they were obliged to use the same water as the saloon passengers or mates had used, the pumps being removed after a certain hour. The single women also kept their provisions and tins in the bathroom, and when it was taken away they were told to keep them under their beds, which they refused to do, saying they would tell the Immigration Agent on their arrival at Wellington; the captain then had two little shelves put up at the side of the cabin door.—E. REDWARD, Matron (signed by six single women)."

Extracts from report of Commissioners on the "Charlotte Gladstone:"—

"5. The bedding supplied to the immigrants was infamous, refuse apparently from dust heaps having been put up in clean ticking. Some of the immigrants thought that there was vermin in it, and one man positively swore that two days after sailing he threw his bedding overboard, as it was swarming with vermin. There is no doubt that many of the beds were thrown overboard early on the voyage, and that those who threw them over preferred sleeping on the boards of the bunks to keeping the beds. Every kind of disease might lurk in such material as these beds were made of. The blankets also were very bad.

"6. The ship was not ready for passengers on the day fixed for embarkation, and cargo was received after they were on board. This is contrary to the conditions of contract between the Agent-General and Messrs. Shaw, Savill, and Co.; but the confusion on board an emigrant ship on sailing appears insuperable from the system of embarking immigrants without collecting them previously at a *dépôt*.

"7. The medical inspection was insufficient. It appears that, in the case of nominated and selected emigrants, all that is required is a certificate from some medical man whom the emigrant may choose, before the contract ticket is given. And in the case of the Brogden emigrants, the medical examination was conducted by a medical man appointed by Messrs. Brogden, who examined the men only. The women and children of these emigrants do not appear to have been medically examined at all before embarkation. There is no examination of the emigrants collectively by any medical officer appointed by the Agency. The examination on board at Gravesend by the medical officer appointed by the Emigration Officer appears to be too much a matter of form.

"The surgeon reports 57 cases of fever amongst the immigrants, and 3 amongst the crew. It is impossible to trace the outbreak of fever to any one cause; but the following predisposing causes are sufficient to account for the illness on board, and for the mortality which ensued upon its outbreak:—

"The weak, underfed, and dirty condition of some of the emigrants.

"The disgraceful material of the bedding supplied.

"The presence on board of the pigs which were provided for the cabin table. Although efforts were made to keep the pig-styes clean, these pigs were a serious nuisance to the single men, as the styes were close to the hatchway opening into their compartment, and the effluvium was carried below. The pigs' dirt from the decks was also carried down on the men's boots. A strong impression prevails amongst the emigrants that much of the illness was due to the presence of these pigs on board.

"The dirty habits of the emigrants, and the want of discipline, which should have been very strict in such a crowded ship.

"The conclusions we have arrived at, after considering the evidence before us, is, that the system of shipping emigrants in England for New Zealand is faulty, and that most of the evils that have occurred in the case of the 'Charlotte Gladstone' are attributable to the faulty system."

Extracts from report of Commissioners on "Forfarshire," forwarded on 14th March; but the conviction of the captain, having been obtained subsequently, was communicated to you on 14th April:—

"Here again the people appeared satisfied with the treatment received, and many spoke in high terms both of the captain and surgeon-superintendent. But when all had passed in review, several came forward with a very serious complaint of the scarcity of water throughout the voyage; and from statements made by them, the Commissioners came to the conclusion that only about two-thirds of the legal allowance had been issued, and that great inconvenience and some suffering had resulted.

"While making this complaint, these poor people also stated that there had been a great scarcity of soap, as of water, which accounted for their unwashed and untidy appearance. Upon making inquiry, the captain stated that, in consequence of defective tanks, he had lost about three weeks' supply of water by leakage; also that the condensing apparatus was defective, having several tubes in the boiler burst, and that *actually*, on arrival in port, he had only *two days'* supply of water on their limited scale, and not more than one ton of coal on board. The Commissioners do not think it necessary to dilate upon this state of affairs in a ship carrying such a cargo, and at the termination of an average passage. In explanation of the scarcity of soap, the captain said that only about 25 per cent. of the proper allowance had been put on board; through some neglect the soap had not been shipped."

"On deck the latrines for males and females were simply abominable, both in construction and capacity; the ingress and egress being in the most public part of the ship, making their necessity a serious dread and anxiety to women possessed of the slightest feeling of decency. The hatchways and ladders were of the cheapest and most inconvenient description, being low booby hatches and ladders without backs or hand rails, offering no protection or assistance to persons passing up and down."

I have brought the cases of these three ships specially under your notice at the same time with my complaint, and have made the above quotations from the Commissioners' reports, as it appears to me almost incredible that if you had perused these reports you would have committed yourself to the assertion that my complaints were not borne out by the reports of the Immigration Commissioners.

Finally, I must observe, in reference to the statement contained in the last paragraph of your letter under reply, that immigrants have been invited and almost solicited to prefer complaints, is a statement which ought not to have been hazarded without your furnishing the grounds of your opinion. If you have such grounds, the Government request you will at once communicate them.

Immigration Office, Wellington, 29th September, 1873,

G. MAURICE O'RORKE.