

Enclosure 2 in No. 46.

SURGEON-SUPERINTENDENT of "Dilharree," to IMMIGRATION OFFICER, Auckland.

SIR,—

Grahamstown, 25th January, 1875.

I beg to call your attention to the unsatisfactory condition in which many immigrants are sent on board at Gravesend, or elsewhere. The surgeon-superintendent is not afforded sufficient facilities or sufficient time for a thorough inspection of his future passengers; and further, by the final inspection of the Government Surgeon prior to the sailing of the vessel, is more or less placed in a subordinate position, and feels that no responsibility can possibly be attached to him when a superior officer passes, as healthy, persons who are half invalids.

I believe the inspection previous to the commencement of the voyage to be the only way in which the health of emigrant ships can be insured, for if any contagious or infectious disease is brought on board, it is practically impossible to check its spread by any means at the surgeon's disposal. I therefore consider this inspection to be of the greatest importance, and submit that every facility should be afforded the medical officer to make it as complete and thorough as possible.

The Immigration Officer, Auckland.

I have, &c.,

LITTON FORBES.

Enclosure 3 in No. 46.

The SURGEON-SUPERINTENDENT, "Warwick," to IMMIGRATION OFFICER, Auckland.

SIR,—

Auckland, 31st January, 1875.

I wish to call your attention to the following facts illustrating the manner in which the emigration to this colony is managed in England. I was appointed in September last to this ship, and was told at the time that I was expected to examine the emigrants at the depôt the day before sailing; I was told notice would be given me. I heard nothing whatever after this from the Agent-General's Office. I found, however, the date of departure, and went to the depôt, but there were only about half the emigrants there. The rest had not arrived. I examined what were present, and found them healthy. The only examination the others received was passing in rotation before me at the the depôt, and again repassing me and the Government Surgeon at Gravesend. The voyage showed one case of a child recovering from whooping-cough, and one old man, whose age must have been nearly 60, both of whom died on the voyage. Now, Sir, it is evident that this method of examining emigrants is quite insufficient to prevent death and disease on board. I think the Government should require a more strict inquiry into the certificates given by the local practitioners, and should require them to state that there has been no infectious disease in their neighbourhood.

I wish further to state the way in which I was appointed. In 1872 I wished to come to the colony, and applied to a medical agent, who procured me an appointment to the "Queen Bee" to this port. I discharged my duties to the satisfaction of the Government, and landed all my passengers alive and well. Returning in the same ship, I arrived in London in May, 1873. In July I applied for another to the Agent-General, and continued applying till September, always receiving unsatisfactory replies. I then procured other employment till May, 1874, when I reapplied. From that date I kept applying every few weeks till nearly October, being told all the time that surgeons were appointed for the next month, and no arrangements were made any further. I then gave the matter up and applied to the Medical Agent. He told me it was a shame, but they would never appoint surgeons except through him. In ten days I got a ship. I paid the Agent £10. Now, Sir, during those months from May to October, 1874, there were despatched from London to this colony 31 ships, with an aggregate of over 8,000 passengers. Some of the surgeons had never been to sea. Yet they could find no vacancy for one who had served the Government well. I had been to New Zealand before; I had been in responsible charge of 900 passengers on several occasions. I am in possession of some of the best obtainable British degrees and diplomas, and have in addition excellent testimonials. Yet, after all, my ship had less than the average number of passengers.

After my appointment I applied to the Agent-General for the £50 which is given to surgeons who take a second voyage. I was told that it was more than eight months since my return. I represented that that was no fault of mine, and the clerks said inquiry would be made. I then applied by letter to Dr. Featherston at his house, but again I received no answer. Common courtesy demands a reply and justice, and the welfare of the colony as far as regards its emigrants ought to lead Government to investigate so scandalous a system.

I have no proofs that the clerks at Westminster receive bribes. I was told by the Medical Agent that they received half of his fee. Besides his statement, I found my opinions on the fact that two and two make four. Some of the facts of this case I therefore beg to place before you.

The Immigration Officer, Auckland.

I have, &c.,

W. PEEL NESBITT.

Memo. by IMMIGRATION OFFICER, Auckland, to Dr. NESBITT, Ship "Warwick."

Immigration Office, Auckland, 2nd February, 1875.

IN your report, received by me this day, on the subject of the medical examination of emigrants prior to embarkation in London, you mention that you were led to make application for your appointment to the "Warwick" to a medical agent. Will you be good enough to furnish me with the agent's name and address, and state whether, to your knowledge, the party in question has any official connection with the Emigration Office in London?

Dr. Nesbitt, ship "Warwick."

H. ELLIS.