

April ships to be paid for at the rates the May ships cost the Government, class and conditions being equal.

3. If the offer of £16 is accepted hereafter, then that price shall be paid for the April ships.

4. If the Government decide to discontinue emigration, then the rates for April to stand the same as those for March.

The proposals, you were aware, were applicable, as were the others also, only to our agreed proportion of the emigrants, more than which we could not undertake on anything like the terms, from not possessing the control of an adequate quantity of light cargo for loading more ships, whilst you had no dead weight either for Wellington or Canterbury; but I told you that if you decided to accept them, I would endeavour to get the Albion Shipping Company and Messrs. Shaw, Savill, and Co. to agree to carry their proportions on the same terms. You telegraphed your acceptance of the first two and rejection of the last two in the following terms:—"Won't entertain your two last conditions, and won't telegraph them to the colony. Will agree to two first proposals." I was content without this, and accordingly accepted your decision, and saw Messrs. Shaw, Savill, and Co., and Mr. Galbraith, who readily agreed to do the same with regard to their proportions rather than allow an involuntary cessation of emigration. I advised you that they would do so, and I presume they both stand with regard to the April ships in the same position as we do, viz. to provide the April ships required by the Agent-General, pending a reference to the colony; 250 guarantee each Wellington, Dunedin, Lyttelton; 150 other ports; nominal rates, those paid for March, but subject to adjustment at follows:—If the offer of £16 is accepted hereafter, then that price shall be paid for the April ships.

Before concluding this letter, I think it right to remind you once more that the South Australian Government has recently paid £16 16s. for emigrants to Adelaide, and the New South Wales Government a somewhat similar rate, I understand, to Sydney, and that both have experienced great difficulty in getting their emigrants carried even at those rates, although their respective conditions are far less exacting and expensive than those of the New Zealand Government, and less provisions required to be put on board, whilst it is a fact that owners of ships will charter to Australia at fully 5s. to 10s. a register ton, or £250 to £500 per 1,000-ton ship, less than they will to any New Zealand port.

In conclusion, I beg to state emphatically that the New Zealand Shipping Company have not been, are not, and I trust will not in the future be, parties to any combination which has for its object the demanding of excessive rates of freight or passage money, either from the public at large or the Government which you represent.

I have, &c.,

J. L. COSTER,

For the New Zealand Shipping Company, Limited.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

No. 52.

The Hon. H. A. ATKINSON to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(No. 76.)

SIR,—

Immigration Office, Wellington, 13th March, 1875.

It has come to my knowledge that certain immigrants by the ship "Ocean Mail" left the colony in Her Majesty's ship "Blanche," having shipped as seamen on board of that vessel. As seafaring men, as a class, are not at all likely to settle in the country, and have such constant opportunities of resuming their proper avocation on board ship in our several ports, I think it inadvisable that they should be allowed, except married men under special circumstances, to take advantage of the regulations for giving free passages which are at present in force. You will therefore be good enough to give instructions accordingly.

I have, &c.,

H. A. ATKINSON.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

No. 53.

The Hon. H. A. ATKINSON to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(No. 79.)

SIR,—

Immigration Office, Wellington, 16th March, 1875.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 6, of the 12th January, 1875, with enclosures, and to thank you for the full information afforded therein relative to the loss of the "Cospatrick," and the display of public sympathy evoked by that deplorable event throughout the United Kingdom. The action you report to have taken in the matter entirely meets the approval of the Government, who feel sure that, in contributing the amount of £1,000 to the relief fund, you adopted a course which will commend itself to the people of the colony, who most deeply sympathize with the poor women and children bereaved by this terrible calamity. I await with anxiety the result of the inquiry by the Board of Trade, which you inform me has been instituted, and which it gives me satisfaction to learn is to be of so full and complete a character.

I have, &c.,

H. A. ATKINSON.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.