

In advising you of these, I would call your attention to the letter received from Sir Julius Vogel, dated 30th April of this year, in which he remarks on the importance of diminishing the proportion of children shipped on board emigrant vessels.

For the reason he gives, and also that taking a smaller number of children will probably be the means of preventing the prevalence of illness, which has unfortunately occurred on many of the vessels, and also because married people with small families are more easily provided with work in the colony, I have decided, except in special cases, not to entertain applications from families which include over four children under the age of twelve.

You will observe that in the nominated cases there are several families with a comparatively large number of children under twelve, and that in some cases where the vocation of the applicant is not in good demand in the colony I have rejected them.

If you agree with the principle I have acted upon, I have to request you to give instructions accordingly to the Immigration officers.

A comparatively large number of old people are nominated; and, with regard to them, I would venture to suggest that the fullest inquiry be made as to the ability of those who nominate them to pay the whole, or at least part of, the passage money of those they nominate, and also as to their willingness to support them when they arrive.

I have, &c.,

I. E. FEATHERSTON,

Agent-General.

The Hon. the Minister for Immigration, Wellington, N.Z.

No. 11.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the MINISTER for IMMIGRATION.

(No. 701.)

7, Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.,

SIR,—

October, 1875.

Referring to your letter No. 51, of 15th February, 1875, enclosing a letter from Dr. Nesbitt, late surgeon-superintendent of the ship "Warwick," in which that officer complains of certain difficulties he experienced from this department in obtaining his appointment as surgeon-superintendent, &c., I regret that, by an oversight, my reply to the statements of Dr. Nesbitt was not forwarded at an earlier date.

Dr. Nesbitt's principal allegation is that by means of a money payment made to Mr. Moore, a medical agent of St. Mary Axe, in this city, he obtained an appointment which would not otherwise have been given to him; and he insinuates that the clerks in this department receive a portion of the fee which surgeons who obtain appointments through the introduction of Mr. Moore are required to pay to that gentleman.

The closing sentence of his letter is as follows:—"I have no proof that the clerks at Westminster receive bribes: I was told by the Medical Agent that they receive half of his fee. Besides his statements, I found my opinions on the fact that two and two make four."

A copy of Dr. Nesbitt's statement was forwarded to Mr. Moore in April last, and he was requested to say whether it was true that he made any of the statements attributed to him; and to submit any other remarks which he might desire to offer respecting Dr. Nesbitt's charges.

I enclose copy of my letter, and Mr. Moore's reply. You will observe that Mr. Moore meets Dr. Nesbitt's statements with an emphatic denial.

Dr. Nesbitt was originally appointed to the "Queen Bee," which vessel (with 79½ adults) sailed in July, 1872, and before the existing regulations respecting the appointment of surgeon-superintendents were brought into force. He was not, therefore, entitled to receive the sum of £50 upon his return to England, no inducement of that kind having been held out to him. It is for the Government to determine whether or not such payment should be made to him.

After his return to England, Mr. Nesbitt accepted employment in other services, and re-applied about twelve months after his arrival in this country from New Zealand.

Mr. Nesbitt states or implies that his (alleged) claims were improperly postponed, and that an undue preference was given to other applicants.

I trust it is unnecessary for me to say that there is no foundation for this insinuation. The appointments to all vessels are made with my sanction. It is possible that Mr. Moore may have called attention to the application of Mr. Nesbitt. Mr. Moore is a medical agent who has for many years introduced surgeons to all the emigration services. His father (now deceased), who was some years ago employed temporarily by the Emigration Commissioners as Acting Emigration Officer for the port of London, was previously engaged in the same business. Mr. Moore has introduced some of the surgeons who have been most highly commended by the Immigration Commissioners, including Dr. Ellis, of the "Atrato," of whose qualifications his Honor the Superintendent of Canterbury wrote very favourably.

If the Government desire it, I will of course give directions that surgeons introduced by Mr. Moore are not to be appointed. I do not, however, think it will be for the benefit of the service to adopt this course.

With regard to Mr. Nesbitt, the Government will probably agree with me that, before being re-appointed in the New Zealand service, this gentleman should be required either to substantiate or withdraw the charges of corrupt conduct which he has insinuated against officers of this department.

I have, &c.,

I. E. FEATHERSTON,

Agent-General.

The Hon. the Minister for Immigration, Wellington, N.Z.