

No. 30.

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

(No. 277.)

SIR,—

Immigration Office, Wellington, 16th December, 1875.

I have the honor to transmit herewith copies of the following documents relative to the ship "Duke of Edinburgh," which arrived at Lyttelton upon the 17th November ultimo:—1. Immigration Commissioners' report. 2. Certified list of births and deaths. 3. Surgeon-superintendent's report. 4. Correspondence and newspaper extracts relating to the surgeon-superintendent.

I have approved the recommendation of the Commissioners and his Honor the Superintendent relative to the payment to the surgeon, and I am inclined to think, from a perusal of the correspondence, that he should not be re-employed.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

I have, &c.,

H. A. ATKINSON.

Enclosure in No. 30.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORT on Ship "Duke of Edinburgh."

THE Commissioners report that they visited the above ship on her arrival on the 17th November. The health of the immigrants was reported as having been good throughout the voyage, only two deaths having occurred; one of these being of an infant, the other a child under four years of age. The various compartments of the ship were in a very creditable state of cleanliness, those of the married persons and single girls being above the average in that respect: the physique of the immigrants generally was exceedingly good. No complaints were made to the Commissioners as to the conduct of any of them. The compartments were arranged according to contract, and the hospital accommodation was ample. The closet in the single females' bath-room had a defect in the outfall pipe being too horizontal, which allowed of water entering from without in heavy weather, and necessitated the closet being shut up during some part of the voyage. The supply of water during the voyage had been sufficient, but the distilling apparatus was old and had been but imperfectly repaired, and the suction-pipe had been carried too far forward to raise the water properly: this had to be cut and supplemented by a piece of indiarubber hose belonging to the ship.

There were complaints made throughout the married people's and single men's compartments generally with regard to the unsatisfactory serving out of provisions: this refers mostly to the supply of bread. Under the new scale a certain amount of flour per adult is issued to the baker to be made into bread, and the Commissioners are quite satisfied that on many occasions the amount of bread issued was short—the result of pilfering. Some of the immigrants were detected in the act of stealing bread from the galley on different occasions, and, from the wholesale way in which it is said to have frequently disappeared, there is no doubt that an organized system of theft was going on. A locked place should be provided where the baker could put the bread to cool on taking it from the oven.

The issuing of the preserved meat was also complained of, many messes stating that they had received only the allowance for eight adults when there were ten in the mess, and that the balance was not made up to them in after issues. There were also complaints of incivility on the part of the officer issuing the stores.

The Commissioners are glad to find that in future no single male passengers are to be taken in the saloons of immigrant vessels, except when members of families also passengers in the ship, as on board the "Duke of Edinburgh" their presence was a source of considerable trouble to the matron, and they are sorry to find that the surgeon-superintendent did not exert himself to prevent intercourse between them and the single females.

The Commissioners have carefully read through the surgeon's diary and report, extracts from the matron's diary, reply from the surgeon, and other papers forwarded with this report, and they cannot but give their opinion that the appointment of the surgeon-superintendent was not a judicious one. Although they do not doubt that, suffering as he evidently did severely from sea sickness during a great part of the voyage, he did his best under the circumstances as far as his ability went, they consider that he was not fitted to take charge of immigrants, his diary showing great lack of power of commanding obedience to orders. The Commissioners beg to call the attention of the Minister for Immigration to a side-note appended to the article forwarded from the *Timaru Herald*. They recommend that the surgeon-superintendent should receive the usual head-money for the immigrants landed, but no further gratuity; that the officer who issued the stores should not receive gratuity, but that all others should be paid.

Lyttelton, 3rd December, 1875.

JOHN W. ROUSE.
FREDK. D. GIBSON.
J. E. MARCH.

No. 31.

The Hon. C. C. BOWEN to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(No. 1.)

SIR,—

Immigration Office, Wellington, 11th January, 1876.

I have the honor to transmit herewith copies of the following documents relative to the "Mataura," which vessel arrived at Nelson upon the 8th August ultimo:—1. Immigration Commissioners' report. 2. Surgeon-superintendent's report. 3. Certified list of births and deaths.

I have, &c.,

C. C. BOWEN,

(in the absence of the Minister for Immigration).

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.