

No. 5.

AGENT-GENERAL to HON. COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Hamburg, 22nd May, 1872.

In reply to the Honorable Mr. Ormond's memorandum of the 21st February, No. 28, I beg, in the first place, to express my regret that the occupations of the emigrants in the "England" were omitted, as I fully recognise the advantage, both to the Government and the emigrants themselves, that the employment to which they have been accustomed should be made known in the Colony previous to their arrival.

I believe, however, that this is the only instance in which the occupations of the emigrants have not been given.

With reference to Mr. Ormond's remark, that although owing to his "not having received copies of the agreements alluded to in my letter of the 16th November to the Colonial Secretary, he is unaware of the steps I have taken to approve the emigrants selected by the various Continental firms with whom I have contracted, but that it seems to him, however, that it would have been better, and more likely to have secured the class of emigrants desired, had the shipping firms provided only the passage, and other means been adopted for selecting the emigrants, and that should it be in my power to amend the contracts in this respect he thinks it would be very desirable to do so." I am happy to inform you that the course thus recommended by Mr. Ormond, in entire ignorance of the contracts into which I had entered, is precisely the one that has been adopted, and that therefore there is no occasion to amend the contracts in the direction referred to.

1. My contract with Messrs. Shaw, Saville and Co. is simply for the conveyance of the emigrants, with the selection of whom they have nothing whatever to do. The emigrants, as a general rule, apply first to the local agents; if they are deemed eligible by the local agents they fill in the required forms, their applications are then forwarded to my office, and are only after a very careful scrutiny accepted or rejected.

2. In my German contract (though I admit that this does not clearly appear on the face of the contract itself, but may be clearly inferred from Mr. Sloman's letter appended to it), Messrs. Louis Knorr and Co. are the parties to select the emigrants, but the shipping firm is that of Messrs. Sloman and Co.; besides this it will be found that the description and class of emigrants, the districts from which alone they are to be taken, &c., are all specified and embodied in the contract. It is further provided that all emigrants so selected are subject to the approval either of myself or an officer appointed by me. That this approval is not intended to be a sham but a reality is, I submit, sufficiently proved by my having personally inspected the emigrants on board the "Friedeburg"—they having been previously inspected by Mr. Friberg, and by my being now on my way to inspect the emigrants which will sail in the "Hodvig," from Christiania, about the first of June. These emigrants will also have been inspected (as well as the arrangements of the vessel) by Mr. Friberg previous to my arrival.

In short, it is not my intention to allow any emigrant ship to sail from a foreign port without the emigrants and the arrangements of the vessel being inspected either by myself or by an officer in whom I can thoroughly rely. I hope to engage the officer who has for some years been employed by the Queensland Government to superintend the arrangements, fittings, &c. of their emigrant ships at this port, to act in a similar capacity for the Government of New Zealand.

3. The Norwegian contract makes no provision for the shipment of the emigrants direct from Norway; it is simply an agreement with Messrs. Winge and Co. to procure and select a specified number of emigrants in conformity with certain conditions and regulations laid down in the agreement.

My contract for the conveyance of emigrants in the "Hodvig" direct from Christiania is not with Messrs. Winge and Co., but with a Mr. Bull (the owner of the vessel), and between whom and Messrs. Winge and Co. I am not aware that there exists any connection. A copy of this contract cannot, I am afraid, be transmitted by this mail, as the counterpart executed by Mr. Bull will only be handed me probably on my arrival at Christiania.

4. The contract with Mr. Horneman, of Copenhagen, is precisely the same as that with Messrs. Winge and Co.

I have gone into these details for the purpose of satisfying the Government that the contracts into which I have entered are not open to the objections raised by the Minister for Public Works, but if additional guarantees for the due and proper selection and approval of emigrants can be devised I shall only be too glad to adopt them.

Hon. W. Gisborne.

I have, &c.,
I. E. FEATHERSTON.

No. 6.

AGENT-GENERAL to HON. COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Hamburg, 24th May, 1872.

I have just received your telegram dated Wellington, the 18th of April.

I learn with very great satisfaction that the emigrants by the "England" had been liberated from quarantine, and that most of their complaints were apparently unfounded. I feel very certain that I shall procure at Copenhagen abundant proof that the statements of the Danish emigrants, that they were badly treated on the voyage from Copenhagen to London, are untrue.

I receive with great gratification the announcement of the successful tour being made by His Excellency Sir G. Bowen through the Taupo country. Such a tour speaks volumes, and cannot fail to produce a very favourable impression in England, as demonstrating the pacification of the country and the wisdom of the present Native policy.

The Hon. W. Gisborne.

I have, &c.,
I. E. FEATHERSTON.