

P.S.—Since the question of opening “direct communication between the single women’s compartment and the poop in all vessels” was referred to the Despatching Officer for his report, your letter No. 101, dated 7th April, 1876, has been received. I observe that the Government has re-considered the question and cancelled the instruction contained in your previous letter on this subject. I have now given instructions, in accordance with your altered instructions, that the communication referred to is to be made “where practicable, without cutting into the decks.”—W. K.

Enclosure in No. 2.

25th May, 1876.

Re letter, No. 56, 7th March, 1876, recommending that direct communication between the single women’s compartment and the poop should be arranged for in all emigrant vessels for the future. Wherever it has been practicable I have arranged for direct access to the poop from the single women’s compartment, and if the Government require it, it must of course be carried out in all ships; but it is right that I should state that in the majority of cases there would be great difficulty in doing this, and the result would be practically to prohibit the carrying of cabin passengers in any emigrant ship, and in many instances the owners would refuse to allow the poop decks of their ships to be cut for the purposes of a companion hatch.

EDWARD A. SMITH, R.N.,
Despatching Officer.

No. 3.

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

(No. 423.)

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

8th June, 1876.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 67, dated 8th March, 1876, forwarding copy of a letter addressed by Mr. Thomas Johnson, patentee of the new plan for berths on board ship, to the Superintendent of Canterbury, and transmitted to you by his Honor. Mr. Johnson’s plan has already engaged my attention, and since the receipt of your letter I have desired my Despatching Officer to report thereon for the information of the Government. From his report (enclosed herewith) it appears that the adoption of Mr. Johnson’s plan would entail an additional expense of from 4s. to 5s. per head, besides necessitating a more liberal allowance of space than is provided for under the existing contract. You will observe also that in Mr. Smith’s opinion the adoption of this plan would, in some vessels, increase the difficulty of lighting and ventilating the between-deck satisfactorily. Dr. Husband (one of our oldest surgeons) is on the point of proceeding to Adelaide as surgeon-superintendent of the “Hydaspes,” which ship has the whole of the lower deck fitted with this patent for the accommodation of married people. My Despatching Officer has requested Dr. Husband, who himself is doubtful as to the advantages of the patent, to report on his arrival at Adelaide fully his opinion with regard to it. At present, however, I do not think that the advantages to be derived from the system are sufficiently decided to enable me to recommend its general adoption.

The Hon. the Minister for Immigration,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,
WALTER KENNAWAY,
(for the Agent-General, and in his absence).

Enclosure in No. 3.

Mr. E. A. SMITH to the AGENT-GENERAL.

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

25th May, 1876.

SIR,—

In reference to your instructions that I should report on the new plan for berths patented by Mr. Thomas Johnson, some of which were fitted in the “Lady Jocelyn,” and reported on favourably, and some in the “Carisbrooke Castle,” I beg to state that a few of the married people’s berths in those ships were, by your authority, fitted on Mr. Johnson’s plan, the Government paying the difference of cost and Mr. Johnson’s royalty. The objection to these berths on the part of the charterers is the difference in the cost, amounting, I believe, to about 4s. or 5s. a head. The plan is, in my opinion, very ingenious, but I should fear its getting out of order on the voyage. The berths require more superficial space than provided for even under the present charter-party, and to insure perfect lighting and ventilation the ships would require side-scuttles specially arranged and carried higher up than they are ordinarily fitted.

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
EDWARD A. SMITH, R.N.,
Despatching Officer.