

for repairing the "Piako," if the work is finished in three weeks' time; and I consider this arrangement a judicious one, considering the delays that take place at this port.

I have, &c.,
S. H. WALKER,
H.B.M. Consul.

The Most Noble the Marquis of Salisbury.

No. 35.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 13th January, 1879.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 201, of the 1st November last, transmitting copy of a letter from the Rev. C. S. Ogg, respecting a party of Canadian axemen and joiners; and in reference thereto I would venture to point out that such emigrants may not be able to comply with the requirements of the Government, under which emigrants are, as a rule, selected, whilst if they come to England they will expect passages without fail. I allude to their furnishing reliable certificates as to health, age, and character, freedom from bodily and mental defects, and having a limited number of young children.

If a *carte blanche*, as regards free passages, be given to persons in Canada, merely restricted to the vague qualification of their being of "the proper stamp," the colony will run the risk, I believe, of obtaining a number of ineligible emigrants, with a probability of inconvenient claims being made on their behalf after they arrive in New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL,
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Minister for Immigration, Wellington.

No. 36.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 13th January, 1879.

I have the honor to transmit copy of a memorandum by the despatching officer of this department, respecting the cause of the fire which broke out on board the "Piako" during her voyage to New Zealand.

The prevention of fires on board emigrant ships is a matter of so great importance that I thought it right to inform the Government by telegram of the fact mentioned by Mr. Smith, in order that the inquiry, which will probably be instituted on arrival of the "Piako" at Lyttelton, may be as thorough as possible, and also to enable you to have the emigrants examined thereon before they are dispersed throughout the colony.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL,
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Minister for Immigration, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 36.

Mr. E. A. SMITH to Mr. KENNAWAY.

WHEN making inquiry separately of the emigrants ex "Piako," per s.s. "Mondego," I found it currently believed by all that the engineer had been seen to go down into the fore hold of the "Piako" with a naked light, a day or so before the fire broke out. The man who saw him go down is C—M—, a single man, who has gone on in the "Piako." I think this should be particularly inquired into on arrival of the ship in the colony, and it should be distinctly ascertained:—1st. Why the engineer went down into the lower hold at all? I cannot conceive under what pretence he was there. 2nd. Can it be proved that he took a naked light down into the lower hold? If so—3rd. Where was the officer who ought to have been present, and without whose presence none of the lower deck-hatches should at any time have been lifted?

6th January, 1879.

EDWD. A. SMITH.

No. 37.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 20th January, 1879.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 216, of the 8th November, enclosing copies of the official reports relating to the "City of Auckland."

I regret to hear that some of the emigrants seemed unsuitable, and behaved in an unsatisfactory manner under the unfortunate circumstances attending the wreck of the ship.

I am the more concerned at this, as the reports received respecting the emigrants proceeding by the vessels starting about the same time are satisfactory. I trust, therefore, that many of those who conducted themselves in the unseemly manner which they appear to have done, may still turn out to be useful settlers.

As I have remarked in previous letters on the subject of the selection of emigrants, I can hardly hope, nor do I suppose does the Government expect, that I can send out several thousand emigrants without some being unsuitable either in character or in health. I fully discussed this matter in my letter No. 433, of 23rd May, 1878.*

* Vide No. 2, D.—2., 1878.