

1901.
NEW ZEALAND.

SHIPS “G. M. TUCKER” AND “MONOWAI”

(REPORT OF COMMISSION ON ALLEGED DELAYS IN INSPECTION OF).

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Command of His Excellency.

REPORT of ROYAL COMMISSION on the ALLEGED DELAYS in the INSPECTION—as required by “The Public Health Act, 1900”—of the Sailing-vessel “G. M. TUCKER” and the Steamship “MONOWAI.”

SIR,—

Wellington, 27th September, 1901.

I have the honour to forward herewith, for transmission to His Excellency the Governor, my report on the matters mentioned in the annexed Commission, together with the notes of evidence taken in the inquiry.*

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

W. R. HASELDEN, S.M.

To His Excellency the Earl of Ranfurly, K.C.M.G., Governor of New Zealand.
MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

In pursuance of the authority and power given to me by your Excellency's Commission, dated the 9th day of September, 1901, hereto annexed, I duly made inquiry into the matters and things mentioned herein, and have the honour to report as follows:—

IN THE MATTER OF THE BARQUE “G. M. TUCKER.”

The following facts were proved:—

Dr. James is Port Health Officer at Wellington, N.Z. He has acted in such capacity for some years, and at the time when the events dealt with happened was paid a yearly salary of £250, and during the past year has examined 124 vessels under the laws relating to public health.

The “G. M. Tucker,” a sailing barque, of 478 tons, arrived from Newcastle, New South Wales (an infected port), on the 23rd July, 1901, and dropped anchor in the harbour at 11.15 a.m. on that day. The said vessel was long overdue, having been twelve weeks coming from Newcastle, New South Wales, and no time could be fixed beforehand for her arrival.

Dr. James made all reasonable arrangements for being apprised as early as possible of the arrival of vessels.

The first intimation given to him of the arrival of the “G. M. Tucker” was at 11.30 a.m. on the 23rd July. He at once sent for the launch “Ellen Ballance” and went on board the “G. M. Tucker,” arriving there within an hour of the vessel dropping anchor, and made the necessary examination. No blame is attributable to Dr. James in the matter.

The statement in the public Press, produced at the inquiry, alleging a delay of two hours, and impliedly censuring the Port Health Officer, was not justified by the facts. The master of the “G. M. Tucker” was in fault in not flying the visiting flag; and, in consequence, a reporter who had gone on board shortly before Dr. James arrived escaped punishment for his breach of the Health Act, section 118.

IN THE MATTER OF THE S.S. “MONOWAI.”

Admitted Facts.

The admitted facts herein are as follows:—

The Union Company's s.s. “Monowai” arrived at Wellington at 11.45 on the night of the 31st July, 1901. The vessel came from Sydney, New South Wales (an infected port), with a total of 173 souls on board (about forty saloon passengers, sixty steerage, and the rest of the total number members of the crew). She had a general cargo, partly fruit, and some of her passengers and cargo were for other ports than Wellington.

The Port Health Officer, Dr. James, boarded the “Monowai” at 7.45 a.m. on the 1st August. Not more than five minutes were spent in preparation, and then the examination of the passengers and crew began. The examination took place in the smoking-room on deck, and 172 persons underwent examination in twenty-five minutes.

* Report only ordered to be printed.