

by the Board of Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Secretary of State, the enclosed copy of a letter addressed to the shipping companies whose vessels were referred to in the list furnished by the New Zealand Government, together with copies of the replies which have been received by this Department.

The general effect of these letters is to show that the shipping companies realise the necessity of taking steps to prevent the embarkation of persons suffering from consumption, and will co-operate with the authorities in the matter. It is pointed out, however, that there is difficulty in detecting consumption in the initial stages, and that the number of cases reported in the New Zealand Government list is not large considering the total number of passengers conveyed.

The power of this Department is limited, under section 306 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, to preventing the embarkation of steerage passengers or members of the crew who appear unfit to proceed or likely to endanger the health of the other persons about to proceed in the ship, and every care is taken to see that persons who appear likely to be a danger to themselves or to others on the voyage are not permitted to embark.

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

I have, &c.,

WALTER J. HOWELL.

M. 10292.

Marine Department, 7 Whitehall Gardens, London, S.W.,
25th April, 1909.

GENTLEMEN,—

I am directed by the Board of Trade to transmit to you, for your confidential information, the enclosed copy of correspondence which has taken place respecting the carriage of persons suffering from consumption from this country to New Zealand, from which it will be seen that the New Zealand Government have suggested that if greater care could be exercised at the medical inspection at the port of departure, much disappointment and waste of money might be prevented, and have forwarded a list of passengers from the United Kingdom arriving at New Zealand suffering from consumption. The Board of Trade would be much obliged if the company would be so good as to favour them with their observations on the general question raised by the New Zealand Government, and also, so far as may now be practicable, on the cases mentioned in the list in which the company's vessels are concerned.

I have, &c.,

WALTER J. HOWELL.

The New Zealand Shipping Company, Rochester Buildings,
138 Leadenhall Street, E.C. [and five other companies].

Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company (Limited), 34 Leadenhall Street,
London, E.C., 27th May, 1909.

SIR,—

We duly received your confidential letter (M. 10292), of the 25th instant, with reference to the carriage of consumptives from this country to New Zealand, and are much obliged to you for giving us an opportunity to report on the instances relating to cases conveyed in the steamers of this line.

We have extracted these from the list you enclose, and attach hereto a statement giving details as far as we have them of each case.

Two of the cases, you will observe, were members of the crews of our steamers, and in regard to these we would point out that it is now our practice to require each member of the crew of each vessel to undergo a medical examination before signing on. Such instances, therefore, should be rare in future. In one case, as you will observe, the man was not intended to remain in the Dominion, but deserted from his vessel there.

As regards passengers, we invariably require a declaration before booking that the intending passenger is in a good state of health, and all our agents are warned against booking any one who has not this qualification. The only case in the list where this precaution was not taken is a second-class passenger who was conveyed by instructions from the Dominion, and whose passage-money was paid there.

The steamer's surgeon and the Board of Trade doctor inspect all third-class passengers on embarkation, and, although the duty of the latter officials appears to be limited to observations as to the possibility of contagion, infection, and suchlike, they are of assistance in detecting any sign of consumption.

On the run from London to Plymouth the steamers' surgeons have instructions to scrutinise all the passengers carefully, and, if any appearance of ill health or consumptive tendency is observed, to examine the subject thoroughly, and, if the condition demands it, have the passenger landed at Plymouth. Our surgeons are instructed to ask the assistance of the Board of Trade officials in any difficult or doubtful case.

The only observations on the subject which occur to us to be made are,—

- (1.) That it is very desirable that the Board of Trade officials should be authorised and instructed to give official assistance to the steamers' surgeons to prevent the embarkation or proceeding of passengers of any class who are disqualified by health from landing abroad.
- (2.) That the scope of the duties of the Board of Trade officials be extended so as to include consumption in all its stages in those matters concerning passengers which "are likely to be a danger to themselves or to others on the voyage."

We would remind you that we fully explained our practice in regard to this matter in our letter to you of the 1st April, 1908.

We are, &c.,

J. A. POTTER, General Manager,
SHAW, SAVILL, AND ALBION COMPANY (LIMITED).

The Assistant Secretary, Marine Department, Board of Trade, Whitehall, S.W.