

cases of small-pox were found in Victoria, Port Townsend, and also in Seattle, and naturally very many people believed, and I believe myself, that the small-pox came from that ship. I am not at all prepared to say that the present superintendent of quarantine, Dr. Watt, did not do his duty. I do not know; I sincerely hope he did so, and carried out the instructions and regulations of the department in a vigorous and strict manner. But I should like to know from the Minister of Agriculture whether strict orders have been given to that officer to carry out the quarantine regulations in their entirety. William's Head quarantine station is, as the Minister knows and many other hon. members know, the most important quarantine station in Canada to-day, not excepting Grosse Isle, in view of the rapidly increasing communication with China and Japan, and the large trade existing between those two countries and British Columbia. There are many large vessels running regularly, there are at the present time three important lines of steamers running from Victoria regularly, once a month; the Canadian Pacific Railway vessels go up to Vancouver, but the others go only to Victoria, and there is always small-pox latent in China and Japan. The quarantine buildings were constructed two or three years ago by the late Government; they are very fine buildings, the site is a magnificent one, and in fact there could not be better buildings or a finer site. But I am sorry to say there is not properly furnished accommodation for a large number of first-class passengers, such as are now quarantined at that station. The accommodation for steerage passengers is, I believe, pretty good, there being plenty of room; but for first-class passengers it is very bad indeed. I do not know whether there are sufficient beds and bedding and proper facilities to maintain a large number of first-class passengers there, and it is unpleasant to think that delicate ladies, many of whom have suffered from sea sickness from the long voyage, and men accustomed to all the luxuries of the day, should be suddenly quarantined in a station without any accommodation beyond bare boards. I only hope the Minister will see that as quickly as possible the quarantine station is placed in first-class condition. It may cost some money, but it is an expenditure that would not raise a debate in this House. I wish to say also that it was rumoured in town yesterday that owing to the influence of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, the Minister of the Department of Agriculture had telegraphed that first-class passengers might be allowed to go free. I know that every one is very sorry indeed that the Canadian Pacific Railway, with its magnificent steamers, should suffer tremendous loss from those steamers being kept in quarantine; but beyond and above all this, we must first think of the

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public health, and I am sure the Minister will be ready to attend to it. I would ask the hon. Minister whether the superintendent at the quarantine station has strict instructions to carry out the rules, regardless of the expense that may be entailed on the Canadian Pacific Railway Company or any other company?

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. Fisher). The hon. member for Victoria (Mr. Prior) informed me a little while ago, almost immediately on my return to the city after a few days' absence, that he would bring this matter up. The matter has been dealt with by the department in my absence, I think efficiently, so as to show that the department is well able to manage affairs of this kind, however important they may be or however suddenly they may arise. The statement which the hon. gentleman read from a morning paper is one which reflects great credit on the ingenuity of the publisher of that paper in putting forward a flaring and attractive heading and article; but at the same time the statements therein contained are hardly consistent with the facts of the case, as I think the hon. member must be very well aware.

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The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. The facts as they appear from the telegrams, are as follows:—The "Empress of China" arrived with two cases of small-pox on board. There were 106 first-class passengers, 34 intermediate, and these, together with the steerage passengers and the officers and crew, made a total of 963. As a matter of fact the regulations require that when vessels arrive with contagious disease on board, they shall be detained. The regulations require that the officer in charge of the quarantine station at the port shall exercise his discretion, within the regulations and under certain rules, as to how much detention shall be made, and what passengers shall be subjected to that detention. It is well known that as regards small-pox the period of incubation is about 12 days. It happened in the present case that small-pox was found on the ship nine days before its arrival at Victoria. The passengers afflicted with the disease were immediately isolated, and the other passengers and crew, and indeed all on board were vaccinated seven days before the ship arrived in Victoria. The result was that, practically speaking, the other passengers were liable to supervision and careful watching until the ordinary period of incubation would be passed, which is, according to the dates I have received, to-day. The officer in charge did detain the vessel. He investigated the cases, he examined carefully to see whether all the passengers had been vaccinated, as was stated by the officers of the ship, and he found, as I understand, that they had been all so vaccinated. It is necessary for him in order to