

PAUPER CHILDREN (EMIGRATION TO CANADA).

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 11 June 1877; for,—

COPY “of the REPLY of Mr. DOYLE to Miss RYE’S REPORT on the
EMIGRATION of PAUPER CHILDREN to CANADA.”

Local Government Board, }
11 June 1877. }

JOHN LAMBERT,
Secretary.

Mr. Doyle to the President of the Local Government Board.

Sir,

Plas Dulas, Abergelle, 14 May 1877.

I HAVE read the printed letter addressed to you and just published by Miss Rye, to which you were good enough to call my attention on the 3rd instant. As that letter purports to be a reply to a report made by me nearly three years ago, I desire to submit to you very briefly the reasons why, after considering it, I am still of opinion that no pauper children ought to be sent to Canada under Miss Rye’s present system of emigration. I am satisfied, Sir, and I believe I shall be able to satisfy you—even upon the evidence that Miss Rye now lays before you—

1. That pauper children of advanced years who are taken out to be immediately placed in service in Canada, are collected without regard to special fitness, physical or moral, and are unsuited for such a mode of life.

2. That irrespective of their unfitness for the position into which they are suddenly thrown, they are, from the mere fact of their being “pauper” children, exposed to great disadvantages and to much obloquy.

3. That there is a total absence of efficient supervision, and consequently children are exposed to suffering and wrong for which they get neither relief nor redress.

A considerable number of the pauper children taken out by Miss Rye have had, as you will observe from her statements, very little experience of workhouse life, and it may be said with confidence that neither the guardians who send them, nor the agent who takes them, can have any knowledge of their fitness for emigration. With respect to them; guardians are tempted to avail themselves of an opportunity of getting rid at a cheap rate of paupers who are likely to become burdensome, and Miss Rye, who knows the condition of the Canadian labour market, is but too ready to take them. With respect to the larger class who may be fairly designated “workhouse children,” the sudden transition from an English workhouse to Canadian domestic service, the habits and conditions of which are essentially different from those to which they have been accustomed, is attended with very unsatisfactory results. “I know,” as one of them wrote to me, “that I had several places and me not know how to do their work as they did; they would scold and offer to strike me, and, of course, I would leave.” In Canada “the workhouse child exhibits,” Miss Rye has so stated, “the most frightful and disheartening obstinacy and deceit.” This unfavourable view is confirmed, not only as will be seen by her own detailed statements, but by the testimony of her friends and fellow labourers. Mr. Boyd “knows of two girls “who have fallen, but they had in their very looks on arrival a looseness that augured ill for their future.” Mr. Ball (Miss Rye describes this gentleman as “a legally appointed guardian” of these children) “does not consider the children from the industrial schools as the most desirable to have, or most likely to succeed in life.” Mr. Robson having had a portion of each class [workhouse and arab] through his hands, unhesitatingly says that he much prefers the latter, as they are more industrious and obedient, less inclined