

in the event of the company consenting that it shall be made under the directions of the Commissioners, it being a matter of much importance to the company that their vessels should not be delayed by such examination.

Request that the copy of the contract may be returned.

Mr. T. W. C. Murdoch to Mr. Hamilton.

Sir,

Emigration Office, 27 January 1859.

I HAVE to acknowledge your letter of 20th instant, enclosing the copy of a contract made between the Atlantic Steam Navigation Company and the Government of Newfoundland, and ratified by Her Majesty's Government, by which it is provided, among other things, that the vessels of the company shall be entitled to the exemption from the operation of the Passengers' Act, 1855, granted under certain circumstances to vessels carrying mails. You also enclose a letter from the Postmaster General, pointing out some differences between the vessels of this company and ordinary mail steamers; and you desire us to communicate with the company, in order to make such arrangements as, while they will relieve the company's vessels from the risk of being delayed at the moment of departure, will yet provide protection for the emigrants who may be conveyed in them.

2. In obedience to these instructions, I have had a personal conference with the secretary of the company, and the letter, of which a copy is enclosed, has been addressed to him, pointing out the conditions which it appears to us most essential to enforce, and the mode in which it is proposed to enforce them. We have restricted these conditions to what we consider indispensable, and what the company ought not, we think, to hesitate to accept. I enclose the draft of a bond to be executed by the company, if the Lords of the Treasury should approve it, to carry this arrangement into effect.

3. It will not escape notice that the material difference between this mode of proceeding, and that prescribed by the Passengers' Act for passenger ships is, that if the emigration officer should discover anything objectionable or incomplete in a passenger ship, he can compel its alteration and correction by detaining the ship. In the company's ships he will be able only to report the circumstances, and the ship may proceed to sea, notwithstanding his objection. This, however is inevitable under the circumstances. The only reliance will be that the company will be extremely unwilling to have their bond put in suit, and will, therefore, observe carefully the prescribed conditions.

4. I return, as desired, the articles of agreement between the company and the Government of Newfoundland.

5. To prevent the possibility of future misapprehension, I think it right to point out that the exemption granted to the company relates only to their vessels, and that they and their agents will remain liable, as all other persons are, to the provisions of the Act, in regard to passage brokers and contract tickets for other than their cabin passengers.

I have, &c.

(signed) T. W. C. Murdoch.

G. A. Hamilton, Esq.
&c. &c. &c.

Enclosure 1.

Government Emigration Board,
25 January 1859.

Sir,

WITH reference to your interview, yesterday, with the Chairman of this Board, I am directed by the Emigration Commissioners to state to you the regulations which they should propose, in obedience to the instructions of the Lords of the Treasury, to establish for carrying out on board the ships of the Atlantic Steam Navigation Company the more essential provisions of the Passengers' Act of 1855, for the protection of the poorer class of passengers.

The first point to be looked to is the seaworthiness of the vessel. In ordinary passenger ships, this is provided for by a survey previously to the commencement of each voyage. As, however, the company's steamers, like all other steamers carrying passengers, will be subject to the half-yearly survey of the Board of Trade, the Emigration Commissioners will not think it necessary to insist on any further survey, except in the case of subsequent injury to the vessel from bad weather or accident. They propose, therefore, to stipulate that

Enclosure 2.

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