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PASSENGERS REGULATION.

RETURN to an Address of The Honourable House of Commons,
dated 7th March 1828;—for

COPIES OF DESPATCHES

Received at the Colonial Department from the Governors
of the *British Colonies in North America*, respecting
the necessity of imposing Regulations for the Convey-
ance of Passengers to *North America*.

Colonial Office,
10th March 1828.

F. LEVESON GOWER.

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- 1.—Copy of a Despatch, and its Enclosures, from Sir Howard Douglas to Viscount Goderich, dated 14th September 1827.
 - 2.—Copy of a Despatch, and its Enclosure, from Sir Howard Douglas to Viscount Goderich, dated 16th October 1827.
 - 3.—Copy of a Despatch, and its Enclosure, from Sir James Kempt to Viscount Goderich, dated 7th September 1827.
 - 4.—Copy of a Despatch, and its Enclosure, from Sir James Kempt to Mr. Secretary Huskisson, dated 25th November 1827.
 - 5.—Copy of a Despatch from Sir Thomas Cochrane to Viscount Goderich, dated 25th September 1827.
-

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
10 March 1828.

— 1. —

Copy of a DESPATCH, and its Enclosures, from Sir Howard Douglas to
Viscount Goderich, dated 14th September 1827.

Fredericton, 14th September 1827.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Earl Bathurst's despatch of the 10th April 1826, transmitting to me the copy of the Bill for repealing the Act of the 6 Geo. IV. for regulating vessels carrying passengers to foreign ports, and desiring me to inquire into the treatment of pauper emigrants during their passage to New Brunswick, and to report the result of those inquiries.

I lost no time in desiring the secretary of the Emigrant Society to call upon the several committees acting at the principal sea-ports of the province to make every inquiry, and to furnish me with the fullest information on this subject.

I have now the honour to transmit reports from the Emigrant Societies at St. John, St. Andrew's, Miramichi, and Liverpool, covered by a letter from the secretary of the Emigrant Society of the province, by which your Lordship will perceive that the repeal of the Act referred to is considered to have been productive of much misery and distress to the emigrants, and has occasioned a good deal of distress and alarm in the province. So intensely, indeed, do the settlers appear to feel upon the probable effects of this setting of a desultory current of pauper emigrants, that I could not get answers altogether confined to the points which I referred to the secretaries, as expressed in Lord Bathurst's despatch. But the documents transmitted herewith contain true statements of what it is very important your Lordship should be made acquainted with, and I transmit them accordingly.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

(signed) *Howard Douglas.*

The Right Honourable
Viscount Goderich,
&c. &c. &c.

Fredericton, 10th September 1827.

Sir,

Enclosure
1.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency the accompanying letters from the secretaries of the several agricultural and emigrant societies established in the sea-ports of this province on the subject of the abolition of the regulations which heretofore existed with regard to the carrying of passengers from the United Kingdom to the colonies.

From these reports, as well as from information received through other channels, added to my own observation, I am persuaded that the tide of indiscriminate emigration is flowing to our shores too rapidly for the good of the colony, or for that of the emigrants. Most of those who are able to work go to the United States for want of adequate employment here; and others who arrive in a diseased and helpless state are a burthen to society, which, in the present depressed state of the province, it is ill able to bear.

It is notorious that many of the poor emigrants are deluded from their homes by false but specious statements of brokers and ship-masters, whose sole object in prosecuting the inhuman traffic appears to be that of collecting as large cargoes as possible of their unsuspecting fellow-subjects; and as the passage-money is paid in advance, it is of little consequence to them, in a pecuniary point of view, whether the hapless victims of their cupidity perish on the voyage, or live to spread disease and death among the people on whose shores they may be landed.

A large proportion of the emigrants who land in this province go to the United States, but on their way thither the people of the settlements through which they pass are burthened with the expense of feeding them.

Painful as it may be to allude to the characters of the emigrants, yet it is too true that many of them are the veriest refuse of their own country. The consequences of mixing such a people with our old settlers may be easily foreseen; and if the present rage for indiscriminate emigration continue, the only hope that will be left to the inhabitants is, that their children may yet be preserved from that contaminating communication which corrupts good principles, and the poor

rates

rates kept within bounds that will not prove ruinous, by making at once contributions which perhaps they can ill afford, for the purpose of accelerating the passage of these unfortunate beings to a foreign country.

Experience has proved that the present want of system with regard to emigration, has inflicted a positive evil upon this province; but it has also proved, that robust, healthy men, of steady habits, and with means to commence agricultural operations in the wilderness, may live in comparative comfort, and in time become independent proprietors, and useful members of the community.

It will be unnecessary for me to suggest to your Excellency, how highly important it is that future settlers, like those who are already established in the province, should be firmly attached to their king, and to the laws and institutions of their country.

I have, &c.

(signed) *R. Simonds,*
Sec^r to the Central Agricul. and Emig. Society.

To His Excellency
Major-General Sir Howard Douglas,
&c. &c. &c.

St. John, New Brunswick, 17th Sept. 1827.

THE condition of emigrants arriving in this port during the present season has, generally speaking, been of a most deplorable character. Many families landing in a state of absolute destitution, and others suffering under a complication of disease.

Enclosure
2.

The causes of these appear to be the poverty of the emigrants *at the time of their embarkation*, through which they are unable to provide suitable provision for the voyage; and the very crowded state in which they are kept during the long passage of the Atlantic, being, at the same time, subject to no salutary regulations, save their own guidance, in the application of their stores, which often fall short, and little pains being taken for the comfort or cleanliness, diseases of various kinds soon take root amongst them, which, ere they arrive in port, attain an alarming, and frequently fatal extent.

That the abrogation of the law formerly in force, regulating the treatment and restricting the number of passengers on board of merchant vessels, tends to increase the sufferings of these unhappy beings, there appears too much reason to believe, and arrivals have taken place here among the present summer, of vessels, in a state never witnessed before, and disgraceful to those having the charge of them. The emigrant has been repeatedly called upon to relieve those *on board*, who, suffering from disease, and had not wherewithal to procure a meal of the most ordinary food. On such occasions medical men have attended, whose opinions were, *that the maladies arose from privations on the voyage extended through the crowded and unclean state of the vessels.*

Notwithstanding the very benevolent donations of His Majesty's Government, in addition to the sums raised here for their relief, much misery still exists about the city, and so great are the demands made upon the public charitable funds, that should they continue at the present ratio, the expenditure will exceed the receipts, 25 per cent for the year; and as the late ships are said to be about to bring an increase to the number already here and *unemployed*, it is to be feared that the district during winter will be most afflicting.

The provisional hospital established for their relief has been full of patients during the summer, but the expenses attending it, and supplying provisions, &c. to those sent into the country, will soon exhaust the funds at the disposal of the society; and humane as the inhabitants of this place are, any further appeal to them at this hour of general depression might increase their sympathy, but could not justly be expected to produce any additional means of relief.

There is a general complaint made by the emigrants, which, if correct, is highly reprehensible on the part of those concerned; viz. *that they are deluded by prospects held out to them by their venal carriers previous to embarkation*, which induces many to part with their all, in order to raise the amount of passage-money under the assurance, that, *on their landing here, His Majesty's Government will furnish them with lands, implements of husbandry, and provisions for twelve months*; this imposition is fraught with much mischief to the individual, and highly unjust to our Government.

It is also much to be regretted, that amongst the destitute, though probably deserving emigrants, there should be sent hither characters of the worst description, not under the name of *honest voluntary emigrants*, but *self-reputed criminals supplied and sent here by the Police of Ireland!* several cases of which occurred during the present season.

That a continuance of this practice will engender a strong feeling amongst all classes of society here against the body of emigrants is beyond doubt, whilst its moral consequences to the province will be felt now and hereafter, nor can we be surprised that a prejudice should arise, when we behold the increase of crime here, and that in the long list of criminals on the sheriff's calendar at the last assizes held here, the name of only one native of the province was found.

On the part of the ship-owners carrying passengers in the present depressed state of navigation, it must be said, that the unlimited number which they may take on board, and the rate of passage-money which they pay, hold forth strong temptations for them to employ their vessels in the trade; but the advantages they may derive from its prosecution under its *unrestrained* character, will only prove the means of extending the misery of our unfortunate fellow-creatures.

(signed) *A. Wedderburn,*
Sec^r to St. John Agricultural and
Emigrant Society.

Saint Andrew's, 1st August 1827.

My dear Sir,

Enclosure
3.

It was only on the 30th ultimo that I received your esteemed favour of the 20th. I rejoice to find that the subject of the treatment of emigrants on the late relaxed principles of transportation has attracted the attention of His Majesty's Government. Viewing the subject as I do, as one of great importance, affecting the health, comfort and safety of so many unfortunate, and I was going to add (but your communication proves the contrary) unprotected and disregarded human beings.

I do not apprehend that from the new system much injury will arise amongst such passengers as may arrive in regular established traders, where the masters have an interest in maintaining a character for humanity and attention to the cleanliness, health and comfort of those intrusted to their charge; but more than one half of the emigrants come out in transient vessels, chartered for the express purpose of making money, by men reckless of character or consequences, so long as they suppose the law will not reach them.

The brig William Henry, owned by N. Marks of St. Stephen, but chartered by a Dublin house, arrived here last month with 250 passengers (from Dublin), had no surgeon, and insufficient supply of provisions and bad water. Their sufferings were dreadful—of the number, 39 are chargeable to this parish, two have died, and others are not considered out of danger. This is a glaring instance of the evils arising from the new system, and it is not a solitary one, although the most prominent at this port. At Halifax, still greater misery has been exhibited, and from similar causes. I had omitted to state, that a large proportion of the passengers per William Henry are of the most useless description, mere beggars, squalid, loathsome, dejected; I trust in God, and I feel confident, that the paternal and watchful care of His Majesty's Government is such, that no vessel will hereafter be permitted to leave the United Kingdom with passengers, without a minute and careful investigation that they are provided with medical aid, wholesome provisions and water, adequate to their probable necessities; and also, that the vessels shall not be too much crowded.

I feel confident, that the accounts you may receive from St. John, will substantially accord with my statement.

I am, with much esteem, &c.

(signed) *Peter Stuls,*
Secretary of the Charlotte County Agricultural
and Emigrant Society.

Rich. Simonds, esq.
Sec^r to the New Brunswick Agricultural and Emigrant Society.

Miramichi, 5th September 1827.

My dear Sir,

I HAVE received your favour of 8th ultimo, containing certain queries relative to the effect which the present system of emigration from the mother country to the British Colonies has had upon this place; when I say the present system, I allude to the recent measure of the Government at home in suspending the operations of the late Act of the British Parliament imposing certain restrictions and obligations upon the masters and ship-owners, in the conveying and exporting of emigrants to these colonies; and in reply I beg leave to observe, that as the enforcing of these parliamentary restrictions and obligations were attended with the most salutary and beneficial consequences to the poor emigrants, so the doing away with them must be attended with the most serious evils: at all times ships arriving at this place with emigrants were apparently too much crowded, and contagious or epidemic disorders were very frequently the consequence, but since the suspension of the above-mentioned restrictions upon the masters and owners, the state of the emigrant on his arrival is deplorable and heart-rending in the extreme; little or no attention is apparently paid to their health or comfort on board the vessel, but as many as can possibly be stowed into the vessel are embarked; in fact the only inquiry that is made or object looked to, by those concerned in the exportation of those unfortunate people (if I can judge from the situation of the human cargoes that have arrived this season), are simply whether the passenger can pay for his passage, and lay in his sea stores; indeed as relates to the ship-owners and masters, it is altogether matter of speculation, and very little better than the slave trade; the consequence is, that an overwhelming number of the most miserable and squalid race of emigrants ever beheld, have this season been landed upon our shores penniless; many of them diseased and unable to work, by which means the country is inundated with the scum of the population at home, half of them paupers shipped off, we have too much reason to believe, in many cases by the police of many of the towns at home, to free themselves from the burden of supporting their own poor. Diseases and distempers of the most virulent and appalling nature are thus introduced among the population of the country, and so far from the country deriving benefit from an increase of population thus produced, it is literally looked upon by the inhabitants, from woeful experience, as a curse upon the country so severely have they felt, and so severely do they continue to feel, the direful effects of the evils thus introduced among them; in truth the present system of emigration, as far as we can at present judge, is only calculated to exchange or transfer the miseries, arising from a redundant population, from the old to the new world, merely changing the scene of distress, infesting the country with a set of worthless and depraved characters, and burdening the inhabitants with additional poor-rates. I think I am within bounds, when I say one half of the emigrants that have arrived here this season, who have remained in the country, are now dependent upon the bounty of the inhabitants for their subsistence. I do not mean by what I have said to discourage emigration in toto, but merely to point out the dreadful consequences, both to the emigrant and to the inhabitants of the country they emigrate to, under the present system. I at the same time do not hesitate to say, that I am clearly of opinion, that two or three hundred emigrants well selected, men of sober, steady and industrious habits, might be advantageously located annually upon the wilderness lands in this part of the province, if sent out under the auspices of Government, say with two years or eighteen months' provisions in advance, less will not do. Emigration upon such a system would be of infinite service, and soon be the means of replacing our black forests with fields of corn, and fill the country with a hardy and robust peasantry; the climate healthy, the lands easily cultivated, and agriculture simple. Emigrants of this description, and with such encouragement, cannot fail to make a comfortable livelihood. I have thus given you my ideas upon this subject, formed principally from observation and from information I have been able to collect from those who are aware of the manner in which these emigrants are picked up and shipped off in the old country. I believe what I have said is quite in unison with the opinion of all the principal inhabitants of this place, certainly with all with whom I have conversed upon the subject.

I remain, my dear Sir, yours truly,

(signed)

A. Street.

Richard Simonds, esq.

&c. &c.

Fredericton.

Enclosure,
4.

Liverpool, Co. of Kent, August 3d, 1827.

Sir,

Enclosure
5-

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the 24th ultimo; I have endeavoured so far as possible to obtain all the information from ship-masters (in the habit of carrying passengers from the mother country to North America, I could) on the subject of the late alteration in the regulation for bringing out passengers from Great Britain and Ireland to this country.

It appears that the difference of price on the old, and the present system, is comparatively speaking nothing, as ships are generally chartered by brokers for the purpose of bringing out passengers; the broker fixes the price and agrees with as many as the law did allow, and now as many as the ship will carry, the price per head being much the same, without regard to the health or comfort of the passengers or crew; at the end of the voyage, the former (under the present regulations) are landed with their health generally impaired by the voyage, owing to the great number, being almost literally starved on board, and are unable to labour for some time, even if it should be offered; whereas on the old system the passengers would land in good health, ready and able to go to work at once; such I am told is not unfrequently the case in Newfoundland.

There being so few passengers arriving at this port, that I can form no opinion from my own observations.

I am, &c.

(signed) *John W. Weldon,*
Secy Kent Agricultural and
Emigrant Society.

Richard Simonds, Esq.
Secy N. B. A. & E. Society.

— 2. —

Copy of a DESPATCH, and its Enclosure, from Sir Howard Douglas to
Viscount Goderich, dated 16th October 1827.

Fredericton, 16th October 1827.

My Lord.

IN my Despatch of the 14th September, N° 6, of 1827, I had the honour to transmit to your Lordship some documents on the important reference made in Earl Bathurst's despatch of the 10th April 1827, desiring me to report the result of my inquiries as to the effects produced from the repeal of the Act for Registering Vessels carrying passengers to Foreign Ports.

The petition which I have now the honour to transmit from His Majesty's Justices of the peace for the city and county of St. John in this province bears forcibly upon this important reference, and I beg to forward it accordingly, for the serious consideration of His Majesty's Government.

I am well aware of, and can certify the truth of the statements contained in the petition; and whilst I can safely repeat my assurances that a well organized system of emigration, with provident resources managed by the Government in the manner and to the extent which I have already reported, would be beneficial to the province, and to the persons so adventuring, I must express in the strongest terms that some restraint should be laid to check that current of pauper and totally destitute emigration, which has, within the last season, produced the sad effects set forth in the petition, and which has laid a heavy burthen on the people of this province, in various quarters, on the approach of a long winter, and in a very distressed state of its affairs; vast numbers of these poor emigrants have been forced to move to the States; many of them would have been glad to return to their own country; but the vessels which bring them hither in ballast, for trifling sums, cannot relieve us of them for triple the amount; and as this importation is made for the profit of the captain, it may be well to consider whether it would not be very expedient to adopt, in any new Bill that may be enacted, some such security as that submitted in the petition against the recurrence of the evils complained of.

It is by measures similar to this that the inhabitants of the sea-ports in the States protect themselves from such repeated and expensive calls upon their charity and humanity; and as the absence of such a regulation here naturally tends

tends to bring to these ports great numbers of persons, who leave our own country for the express purpose of proceeding to the United States, but choose this as the cheaper passage, it may on this account be considered the more expedient to entertain the measure prayed for, viz. an enactment authorizing the officers of His Majesty's Customs to exact from every ship, bringing passengers into the province, 15*s.* sterling for each passenger, excepting only small vessels from the contiguous colonies of Canada and Nova Scotia; the said sum to be paid over to the province treasurer, to be applied only to the support of such emigrants as have, or might become destitute.

The Right Honourable
Viscount Goderich,
&c. &c. &c.

I have, &c.
(signed)

Howard Douglas.

To His Excellency Sir Howard Douglas, Bart., Lieutenant-Governor,
Commander-in-Chief in the Province of New Brunswick, &c. &c.

The Petition of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the City and County
of Saint John, in Sessions assembled.

Humbly Showeth,

That they approach your Excellency on the subject of support for destitute emigrants with regret; well aware of the attention your Excellency has given the matter, and of how ineffectual the assistance granted has been, either in relieving every instance of misery, or in enabling your memorialists, as magistrates for this city and county, to reduce the assessments made upon the inhabitants for the support of emigrants.

Enclosure.

That it is not necessary for your memorialists to question the policy of throwing so many of the helpless peasantry of Ireland on the shores of this colony, nor is this the place, even if to your Excellency such detail were necessary, to enter into a description of the general character of the emigrants—their poverty—the diseases they bring into the country—their inability, for a length of time, to do the work required here—or their vices; but your memorialists do conceive it to be their duty, fully to state to your Excellency that the fact of so many persons, from a distant country, being thrown on the scanty population of this city and county for support, (12 or 13,000 being the whole population,) is most oppressive, and even unjust. And that the taxes annually imposed by your memorialists for the support of these emigrants, and of numerous black persons brought from the United States during last war, and left here, are so deeply felt as to make this appeal necessary, more particularly as the evil, (owing to the former restrictions, in respect to emigrants from Britain, being at an end,) is much on the increase, as appears by the custom house books, which show the numbers landed in this port during 1825 as 1,865, for 1826 as 2,752, and for this year, to this date, as 3,200.

That as the passage money is paid to the ship master in advance, it becomes a matter of consideration with him, how many human beings he can take on board; and that of course the passenger vessels are crowded to excess, no regard being had to their age, the state of their health, or their capability to procure a livelihood in America. On landing here, the young and active push their way on to the United States (their destination on leaving Ireland, though they came this way, as being less expensive than a direct passage, where the numbers are very limited,) leaving the old, the infirm, the diseased, here.

That it appears to your memorialists there are only two plans by which the city and county of St. John, and the province in general, can be relieved from the burthen they now complain of, and that neither of those plans can be carried into effect by your memorialists; viz. either that an Act of the Imperial Parliament pass, authorizing the officers of His Majesty's Customs to exact from any ship bringing passengers into the province *fifteen shillings sterling* (25*s.* being paid in the United States) for each passenger, (excepting only small vessels from the contiguous provinces of Canada and Nova Scotia,) which sum should be paid over to the province treasurer, and be applied only to the support of such emigrants as were, or might become destitute; or that an exact account, on oath, be kept of the expenses attending the emigrants, and that the British Government make provision

for the same, on the requisite documents being sent to London through your Excellency or the Lieutenant Governor for the time being :

That your memorialists have suggested the above two plans, under the hope that your Excellency will take the necessary steps to bring the subject before His Majesty's Government, and that they do so under the certainty of your Excellency's being perfectly aware of the evil, and fully disposed to procure relief; and also that it appears to your memorialists that the first plan is not only a definite measure, and one attended with no difficulty in collecting, but likewise that it imposes no material tax on the parties paying the same, though relief would from it be given to your memorialists.

By attending to the prayer in the above petition, your memorialists will be obliged to your Excellency, and, as in duty bound, will ever pray,

By order of the Court,

(signed) *Ja^s Peters, jun., Clerk.*

St. John, 2d October 1827.

— 3. —

Copy of a DESPATCH, and its Enclosure, from Sir James Kempt to Viscount Goderich, dated 7th September 1827.

Halifax, 7th September 1827.

My Lord,

IT will be my duty, at a future period, to communicate with your Lordship more fully than I am now prepared to do relative to the pernicious effects that have come under my own personal observation resulting from the late repeal of the Act of Parliament "for regulating vessels carrying passengers;" but an alarming instance of this evil having been this morning made known to me, I think it right not to defer any longer calling your Lordship's attention to the subject.

I always considered the 17th section of the 6 Geo. IV. c. 117, exempting vessels carrying passengers from Ireland to any of the North American colonies, from the excellent provisions of that Act, as an unwise enactment, notwithstanding the controlling power vested in the Lords of the Treasury over vessels desirous of availing themselves of such exemptions; but even that restriction, insufficient as it has proved to prevent abuse, is now removed, and the result is as might have been expected.

There this day arrived in the brig James, from Waterford, 120 passengers of the most wretched description, all of whom, as well as the whole crew, are labouring under the typhus fever, as will appear by the enclosed copy of a letter from the health officer.

One hundred and sixty embarked in Ireland; five died at sea; and the vessel being obliged to put into St. John's, Newfoundland, for medical assistance and provisions, thirty-five were left behind there, too ill to proceed.

The disease among these miserable people was occasioned solely by their scanty nourishment during the voyage—by the crowded and filthy state of the ship, and by a want of medical assistance. I wish that this were the only case of a like nature that I could adduce.

During the summer five vessels have arrived at this port from Ireland, all crowded with passengers, among whom sickness, produced by the same causes, prevailed to so great an extent as to oblige me to establish an hospital expressly for the reception of these poor emigrants.

Nor are the fatal consequences of the repeal of the Act in question confined to the passengers, their disease is contagious, and many of the inhabitants of the town have been and are afflicted with it.

What I have stated will probably be sufficient to satisfy your Lordship of the expediency of re-enacting the Passenger Act, (with the exception of the objectionable clause to which I have alluded,) or of substituting some new regulations before next season, to guard against the continuance of the existing evils; but as the medical gentlemen in charge of the hospital, and the committee I have appointed to administer relief to those unfortunate emigrants, are preparing a report

of their proceedings, and as your Lordship might wish for a more detailed statement than that I now offer, I shall do myself the honour of addressing your Lordship again upon the subject.

I have, &c.

The Right Honourable
Viscount Goderich,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *James Kempt.*

Halifax, September 7th.

Sir,

I BEG leave to state, for the information of his Excellency, the arrival of brig James, Grace, master, from Waterford, last from St. John's, Newfoundland, which port she left 29th August, with 120 passengers, all labouring under typhus fever, which has extended itself to the crew who are dangerously ill; I have therefore ordered the said vessel to remain at quarantine till his Excellency's pleasure shall be known; several deaths occurred during the vessel's stay at Newfoundland, and two on the passage from Newfoundland here.

Enclosure.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

Sir Rupert D. George, Bart.
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Charles W. Wallace.*

— N° 4. —

Copy of a DESPATCH, and its Enclosure, from Sir James Kempt to Mr. Secretary Huskisson, dated 25th November 1827.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, 25th November 1827.

Sir,

IN my Despatch of the 7th of September last, addressed to Lord Goderich, (to which I beg to refer,) I had the honour of bringing under his lordship's notice the pernicious effects that had resulted from the repeal of the Act of Parliament "for regulating Vessels carrying Passengers," and I now take leave to transmit to you, and to call your particular attention to the enclosed copy of a report made to me by a Committee of His Majesty's Council, representing in very forcible terms the necessity of reviving those Regulations, or the substitution of some other legislative enactment to prevent the recurrence of the alarming evils that have been experienced in this province in the course of the present year.

I stated in that letter that I had been under the necessity of establishing (and at a very considerable expense) an hospital expressly for the relief of the emigrants who had arrived from Ireland in the wretched state therein described.

Sickness has now so far disappeared as to enable me to discontinue that establishment, but I am sorry to say that the mortality that has taken place in this town within these few months is quite unprecedented.

Although the climate is particularly healthy, and the most humane and judicious measures were adopted to prevent the diffusion of disease, yet out of a population of 11,000, more than 800 have died since the month of January last, two-thirds of whom were either emigrants from Ireland, or whose deaths were occasioned by infectious disease introduced by them.

I feel that I need say no more to induce His Majesty's Government to take the subject into serious consideration.

I have, &c.

The Right Honourable
W^m Huskisson.
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *James Kempt.*

Copy of a Report of a Committee of H. M. Council; dated Halifax,
20th November 1827.

Enclosure.

The Committee of His Majesty's Council appointed to examine the accounts rendered for the expenses of the Hospital established at Bankhead, for the reception and relief of the sick among the unfortunate emigrants who arrived during the season from Ireland,—

Report, That they have examined the said accounts, and find regular vouchers for all the payments; they think that the establishment has been conducted with as much attention to economy as was practicable, and that the public are much indebted to the zeal, activity and humanity of the committee appointed by his Excellency, and the commissioners of the poor for the town of Halifax, by whose unremitting exertions the distresses of the unfortunate sufferers have been much alleviated, and the progress of disease checked.

The Committee cannot close this report without calling the attention of his Excellency and the board, to the pernicious effects which have ensued from the removal of those regulations, which the wisdom and benevolence of Parliament established for the government of vessels bringing emigrant passengers from the mother country. These unfortunate beings are no longer protected by the wholesome restraint which was formerly imposed upon the cupidity and want of principle of those who engage to provide them with passages across the Atlantic, and are now crammed together on board of vessels, without any adequate means of subsistence, without medical aid, or room to afford them decent accommodation. Under these circumstances, disease is inevitable, and the wretched beings are not only thrown on shore in a state which renders them incapable of procuring their own subsistence, but they carry infection among those who may charitably receive them; the law which restrained these evils is no longer in force in Great Britain, and we have no legislative enactment here to prevent the recurrence of the calamity which we have endured this year, or to punish the authors of it. The United States, on the contrary, have most wholesome regulations upon this subject; and while this state of things continues, it is obvious that the refuse only of the superabundant population at home will come to us, while all the valuable and useful emigrants will embark for the United States. No decent person, who has the means of procuring a comfortable passage for himself or family, will venture on board one of these receptacles for filth and disease; he will seek for accommodation in some American vessel, which will convey him to the United States, where he will be lost to his country for ever, while we shall be overwhelmed with as many ignorant paupers as the artful and unprincipled men can carry on this traffic can delude.

Your Committee therefore suggest the propriety of bringing this matter under the consideration of His Majesty's Government, without loss of time, in the hope that those useful regulations may be revived, or that some legislative enactment may be resorted to, to prevent the recurrence of so alarming an evil.

(signed) *Ja^s Stewart,*
Brenton Walliburton,
S. B. Robie.

Committee Room, Halifax, 20th Nov. 1827.

—5.—

Copy of a DESPATCH from Sir Thomas Cochrane to Viscount Goderich,
dated 25th September 1827.

Government-House, St. John's, Newfoundland,
25th September 1827.

My Lord,

IN the month of May, a vessel named the "Freedom," arrived from Waterford in Ireland, partly laden with salt, and having a number of passengers on board in a very sickly state, several of whom died on the passage, and a number were landed in a most deplorable condition.

Other vessels laden with passengers have since come in, either bound direct to this port or on their way to Qubec or Halifax, more or less similarly afflicted by disease, which has been communicated to the lower orders of people in this town, spreading itself in the first instance in a manner to excite much alarm; but I am happy to say the deaths only amount as yet to eighty-one, and all serious cause for apprehension has ceased.

Of the vessels that have thus brought passengers and disease to this port, I will now have the honour of bringing two of them under your Lordship's more immediate observation; the first is the "Freedom," a small brig, burthened only 119 tons; the accompanying particulars contained in two reports from the surveyor of navigation, will more fully depict the state of that vessel than any detail of mine can give, nor will any remarks from me be necessary to excite your Lordship's sympathies in learning that fellow-creatures have been so inhumanly dealt with as the poor wretches embarked on board this vessel; but it is incumbent on me to state to your Lordship, that from every information I at the time received, of the condition of these people either oral or in writing, I do really believe there are not many instances of slave traders from Africa to America exhibiting so disgusting a picture, and that the affecting narratives which the public prints so often detail of the state of slave vessels boarded by British cruizers would apply in all its force to the case of the "Freedom," and might with almost equal truth have been published to the world by any foreign vessel of war, that unfortunately might chance to have fallen in with her; and I have no hesitation in assuring your Lordship, that the most favourable account that reached me of this vessel, admitted of no sort of comparison between her and a French slave brig, captured by me four years ago, when in command of a frigate on the Leeward Island station.

The second vessel is the brig "James," of Waterford, bound to Halifax, having on board 164 passengers, 21 of whom, and 4 of her crew, were ill with typhus fever on her arrival, and who put in here for want of provisions. There is no complaint made of the room in this vessel for the number of persons on board, but the system adopted in her, and which now very generally prevails, of making the passengers supply themselves with provisions during the voyage, is one which calls for your Lordship's serious consideration. Many of the individuals who came out in these vessels probably never saw one before, and all of them are totally ignorant of the necessary provisions to lay in for so uncertain a voyage as that of crossing the Atlantic; and even were the stock of each calculated on first sailing to meet the longest passage, it may with as much reason be expected that sailors, if supplied each with an adequate allowance for a voyage round the globe, should make it last until their return, as that these ignorant people should economize their provision for the period it was provided for; and it is to be apprehended that some serious consequence will ensue if the present system is permitted to continue, for a vessel named the "Maria" came in under similar circumstances to the "James," with the addition of the passengers in a state of mutiny, several of them in irons, and the master armed to protect his own provision from seizure by the remainder.

Until the year before last the Passenger Acts applied to Newfoundland, except in the case of hired servants, when another Act was passed, from the operation of which Newfoundland and the Labrador were altogether expressly excluded; upon what principle such exclusion took place, or at whose instigation His Majesty's government were induced to make the exception, I am entirely ignorant; and I have little doubt but false representations must have been made on the subject, by those persons who make a trade of importing paupers here in the spring, and pro-

vided they can get a freight for their vessels, which would otherwise come in ballast, are indifferent as to the consequences that result from it.

I must further trespass upon your Lordship's time, while I explain the system at present pursued by those who carry on this unprincipled trade. Proclamations, such as I have the honor to enclose, are posted up in different parts of Ireland, &c. as your Lordship will perceive, totally falsifying the real state of the vessel intended to transport those wishing to emigrate; the parties either pay down four pounds, and find their food, or six pounds and are victualled; if they cannot pay themselves, they procure a bond from their friends, to be cancelled if they can, on their arrival at the port of debarkation, obtain the required sum upon the strength of their future labour; if not, the bond is sent home and enforced; the more passengers, therefore, the merchant can put on board his vessel, the greater his profit; and although disease may assail the whole or part of them, the advantage to him is the same, who is not even at the expense of the meanest medical attendant for the moltey and dense crew he takes on board.

Should it hereafter be deemed advisable to re-enact the Passengers Act, or enact a new one, I must beg to draw your Lordship's attention to that part of it (6 Geo. IV. c. 116,) which exempts from its operation all hired servants coming to the fishery. I am not aware of the grounds for this exemption; if inserted from the supposed interest the hirer would have in the welfare of his servants, it quite fails to secure them the expected advantage, for in point of fact it scarcely ever occurs, except at some few establishments in the out-ports, that the hirers make use of them in the fishery; the ideal master only so shipping them as servants, to evade the operation of the Act, disposing of them on his arrival at the port of destination.

If I may be permitted to offer an opinion, I would observe, that at once to do justice to the shipper and passenger, medical men duly qualified, and others conversant on these subjects, should be consulted as to the extent of space absolutely necessary for the health of each individual who embarks; the quantity of water and provisions that should be provided per diem, and the rules and regulations that should be adopted for cleanliness; and when this is once satisfactorily ascertained, it would be as cruel to the passengers to admit of an increased number on board, as it might be unfair to the merchant to restrict him to a smaller limit; but the law should then make it penal, by summary process, the transgressing the prescribed bounds and regulations; and I would further beg to suggest to your Lordship, that the offenders should be liable to be proceeded against in the colonies, as well as in Great Britain, a defect in the late Passenger Act, which limited the proceedings in such cases to the mother country.

I have, &c.

(signed *Tho^r Cochrane.*

The Right Honourable Viscount Goderich,
&c. &c. &c.