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ART. XXXVIII.—ON TYPHUS OR SHIP FEVER, AS WITNESSED AT GROSSE ISLE.

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Typhus and Typhoid Fever, popularly known at different periods, from its prevalence in particular localities, as *Jail, Camp, Hospital, Ship, Road, or Irish Fever*, is unquestionably one of the oldest diseases of which mention is made by historians. From the earliest ages, it has been remarked, that the accumulation of ill-fed people, in situations where ventilation and cleanliness are neglected, generates fever of a malignant type, which propagates itself in a manner more certain than any other disease. Thucydides ascribes the first great plague of Athens to the introduction by Pericles of multitudes of rustics into the city, and who were crowded together in huts within the walls; and Livy imputed the first great plague of Rome to the number of inhabitants pent up within its narrow limits. Medical writers are agreed in attributing to these causes the great plagues that devastated the city of London at different periods. Defoe, in his *History of the Plague*, very wisely counsels the authorities, "that they would consider of separating the people into smaller bodies, and removing them in time farther from one another, and not let such a contagion as this (plague), which is indeed chiefly dangerous to collected bodies of people, find a million of people in a body together again." The great fire of London did this for them the following year. The progress of civilization, the improvement in the moral and physical condition of the masses, and the great and increasing attention paid to cleanliness, ventilation, and drainage, together with a more regular and certain supply of food, have tended to remove many of the causes of fever in Europe. In Ireland we still find it indigenous; and though I am not prepared to go the length of Dr. Lombard, who asserts, that the freize coat of the Irish labourer is its depository and vehicle, yet we have in this country abundant proofs that Typhus Fever is every year imported by the Irish emigrants, and by no other. Mr. Farr, the Registrar-General, has also shown, that in the three great "avenues by which the Irish labourer enters England, viz., Bristol, Liverpool, and Glasgow, their crowding to excess in lodging-houses.

their loathsome diet and filth, are productive of fever in these cities." And he remarks, at the same time, "that in thus directing attention to a weighty sanatory fact, it is far from our intention to convey any reflection upon the Irish people, as it can be shown that a few years back the English were as bad."—(*MacCulloch's Statistics.*)

A reference to the Tables annexed to this, will exhibit a yearly importation of fever into Canada by emigrants. The greater or less prevalence of the disease in Ireland, has been observed to depend upon the crop of the common food of the people, the potato. The almost total failure of this esculent for the last two years, has produced a scarcity amounting to famine in some parts, and has thus augmented, to a degree hitherto unknown, the usual concomitant of famine, *fever*. Hence we witnessed last year the melancholy sight of every passenger vessel, with Irish emigrants, arriving freighted with this disease. The same was seen at all the ports of this continent where emigrants landed. The greater mortality in vessels coming to the British Provinces, may be attributed principally to three causes: 1st, the greater length of the voyage; 2d, the character of the passengers; and 3d, to being more crowded.

1st, The average length of a passage to Quebec may be estimated at one-third more than to New York, in consequence of the tediousness of the Gulf and River navigation, and the inferior class of vessels employed in the timber trade.

2d, The higher rate of passage, and the restriction imposed by the system of bonding in New York, have the effect of driving all the aged, sickly, poor, and destitute, to seek the route of the British Provinces. And

3d, The law limits, in the United States, the number to one adult to every fourteen superficial feet, and counts all souls on board. The English Passenger Act limits the number to one adult to every ten feet, and permits infants under twelve months to pass free. These causes will explain the greater mortality and *morbidity* of passengers arriving in the British Provinces.

The chief circumstances which tend to render fevers communicable from one person to another are found to be,

1st, Humidity of the atmosphere,