

Appendix  
(W.)

22nd March.

Two distinct  
evils—viz., the  
sickness, and  
the class of  
the Emigrants.

Two topics, it will be observed, have to be considered—viz., the sickness, and the destitute or helpless condition of the people who emigrated. These grounds of complaint appear distinct from one another. For should the former admit of being more effectually opposed in future years by any new regulations, it might still remain a question whether persons of unsuitable age or habits could be successfully prohibited from effecting, or proprietors be prevented from assisting them to effect, their removal to the Colonies. Both evils, we believe, to the extent to which they prevailed in the recent season, will be found traceable to the extraordinary state of suffering in Ireland. The chief questions that will suggest themselves are, probably, what were the causes of these misfortunes—whether they could have been averted this year—and whether they admit of prevention hereafter.

Enormous extent of the Emigration.

Before proceeding to more general considerations, there are two preliminary statements which appear to us essential to remove misconception. In the first place, we would point to the enormous extent of the Emigration. In 1846, which was a year of larger Emigration than any that preceded, it amounted to 129,851 persons. But in the first three quarters of the present year, the Emigration has extended to no less than 240,732 persons, almost the whole of them consisting of Irish Emigrants to North America. Whether the probability of this vast efflux of people ought to have led to any special legislative measures, is a question which we by no means propose to pass over or neglect. It will be considered in its proper place. But, in the meantime, it is important to bear in mind, that the very fact of the departure of such enormous and totally unprecedented multitudes, and still more the cause by which it was produced, could not fail, with the best arrangements, greatly to augment the probability of suffering and distress.

Not selected by the Government.

In the next place, it is necessary distinctly to remember, that none of the people were in any way selected or sent out by the Government. Nor does there even appear reason to conclude that any very large proportion of them were sent out by their landlords. On the contrary, we are assured, on high authority, that long beforehand the people were engaged in their preparations to escape from the want and misery of their own country. All the money that could be spared was laid by, and the Savings' Banks were laden, as is well known, with deposits, which the best-informed persons did not doubt to be destined to this purpose. No Emigration could have been more thoroughly spontaneous. Whether it would have been right or possible to stop it, is a question which may be asked, and on which we shall be ready to submit a few remarks before we close this Report. But for the purpose of forming any clear judgment on what actually occurred, it is essential to understand that the Government had nothing whatever to do with the selection of the Emigrants, but that they consisted of people who, seeing starvation impending at home, used the pecuniary means they possessed to provide themselves with a passage to a country where they thought that they would be able to live.

Having thus endeavoured to guard against two misapprehensions which we believe are not of infrequent occurrence, we would observe that, although it has not hitherto been deemed that Government could interfere with the kind of people who go out to the colonies, it has always been considered part of its duty to seek from the Legislature, and duly to enforce, such general regulations as might tend to

protect the passengers against frauds on shore or disasters on the voyage. We proceed, therefore, to mention how far there was ground, from previous experience, to suppose that sufficient precautions existed for these objects; what would appear most obviously to have been the causes of the change which occurred this year; and especially how far there is any reason to suppose that it can be ascribed to any neglect of duty in the officers entrusted with enforcing the law.

State of health of Emigration in previous years.

The annual returns show, that in no earlier period of five years had so many people emigrated as in the five years ending with 1846; and yet the whole of this large Emigration was effected healthily and prosperously. We annex a return, by which it will be seen that the deaths on the voyages to Canada did not exceed one-half per cent., or 5 in every 1000 persons embarked, and that the deaths in Quarantine did not exceed  $1\frac{1}{2}$  for every 1000 persons embarked. And as evidence of the state of health and efficiency in which they landed, we annex a summary of the successive statements of the Emigrant agents in Canada, showing that the people found no difficulty in getting employment, and had become readily absorbed in the mass of the population. The Government, therefore, at the commencement of the present year, was in possession of this fact, that in the preceding five years a greater number of persons had emigrated to North America than had ever done so before, and had emigrated, under existing arrangements, without any serious difficulty or disaster.

Rate of Mortality this year ascribed to the fever in Ireland.

But in 1847, a famine having occurred in Ireland, followed by a fever, it appears by some of the latest returns from Canada, that the deaths on the voyage have increased from 5 in every 1000 persons embarked to 55, or to eleven times their previous rate, and that so many more having arrived sick, the proportion of deaths in Quarantine to the numbers embarked has increased from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to no less than 60 in the 1000, making a total mortality of nearly 12 per cent. One example is even mentioned where, by extreme care, the fever having been averted during the voyage, it broke out after arrival, so deeply laid were the seeds of disease. Can there be any doubt of the reason why, all public arrangements remaining the same, so sudden a change had occurred? How violent had been the disease in Ireland may be seen from a part of the Poor-Law Commissioners' Annual Report. The number of inmates in the workhouses having increased from 50,000 in April, 1846, to upwards of 100,000 in April, 1847, the number of deaths among those inmates had increased from about 160 per week to no less than 2700, or from 3 in 1000 to 25. It appears that, in the first four months of this year, 54 officers connected with workhouses, including 7 clerks, 9 masters, 7 surgeons, and 6 chaplains, died out of the number of 150 who had been attacked by disease taken in the discharge of their duties.

No sickness in common ships from uninfected ports.

We have seen it mentioned as a matter of reproach to Government, that, whilst British Emigrants have this year suffered so much, no unhealthiness appeared amongst foreign Emigrants. But this very fact points to the true cause of the evil. German passengers have made the voyage healthily, because there has been no fever in Germany. In like manner, it is a remarkable fact, that the ship returns after arrival do not exhibit great sickness amongst vessels sailing from the majority of Scotch or English ports, nor even from several of the Irish ports. But from Liverpool and from Cork, where the fever which had been pro-

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