

infectious, so that it would, perhaps, spread in the same way as the fever.

The spreading of these diseases would have been much less, if it had not been aided by want of medical advice—an over crowded state of the ship—an absence of due cleanliness—want of exercise on deck—and of proper cooking of the food.

But, on the other hand, in many of the ships, there is no reason to suppose that typhus, or its infection, or dysentery, was embarked, and the fever which appeared after leaving port, is sufficiently accounted for, by the over-crowding, and the deficient ventilation, aided by the predisposing cause of low diet. Typhus arising in this way, afterwards spreads by infection, and so the remaining passengers ran two chances of being taken ill—that is, from the original cause, and from infection.

The same remark may be made regarding the dysentery; it would, in the first instance, arise from the uncooked victuals, and improper diet, and would then both continue to be produced by the original cause, and, perhaps, also be communicated by infection.\* The sickness from embarked typhus, or its infection, and from dysentery, might have been much checked, and the sickness from typhus, or dysentery, springing up on board, might have been prevented by proper regulations. In some ships, from obstacles thrown in their way with regard to cooking, and, in others, from laziness, carelessness, or whatever it may be called, the passengers often did not cook their provisions at all. In others, in obeying the calls of nature, they invariably did so into the hold, and sometimes would not even leave their sleeping-berths; sometimes they would not allow the captain or crew to come down among them, afraid of being forced to wash, and to go on deck; in others, again, they were smoked out, and so forced to go on deck; and however well-intended on the part of the master this may have been, it cannot be forgotten that some, and, perhaps, many, may have been too weak either to move, or, even to be moved. Considering all these things, instead of wondering that the mortality was so great, we may feel surprised that it was not greater.

#### THE PASSENGERS' ACT.

The Acts of the Imperial Parliament by which emigration to North America is regulated, are the *Passengers' Act*, which was passed on the 12th August 1842, and the *Amended Passengers' Act*, which was passed on the 22d July 1847. Of the former Act—

Section 2. Exempts passenger-ships to North America from having to carry a surgeon. It prohibits a ship

\* Some physicians consider that dysentery is not infectious; others, that it is so, occasionally; and others, again, that it is so, only when complicated with infectious fever.

from carrying more than one person to every five register tons; and it enacts that, on the lower deck, each passenger is to have ten superficial feet of space “unoccupied by stores not being the personal luggage of passengers.”

*Note.*—Ships ought to be obliged to carry surgeons, in cases to be afterwards mentioned. The Act ought to specify so many cubic feet of space for each passenger, exclusive of the space occupied by his personal baggage, for most emigrants have large chests or boxes taking up the room allowed for their owners. These boxes are often nearly empty, or, at best, contain apparel of little value even to those to whom they belong. This defect in the Act is a most important one, and ought to be immediately rectified.

Section 4 and 5. Omit to regulate the height of the berths, and also the distance between any two rows of berths.

*Note.*—The height of the lower deck is said to be six feet, and the floor of the lower berth six inches above the deck, so that each berth ought to be, at least, two feet eight inches high. The space between any two rows of berths might be six or more feet.

Section 6. Provides that provisions be issued not less frequently than twice a week, and the following is the scale to be issued by the ship to those passengers who do not provide their own provisions: one pound a day of one of the following articles, namely, bread, biscuit, flour, oatmeal or rice, and half of the diet may be of potatoes, and five pounds of potatoes are to be considered as equivalent to a pound of one of the other articles.

*Note.*—Considering the improvidence of most of the emigrants, only one day's provisions ought to be issued at a time, as, when issued only twice a week, many of the passengers consume on that day the three or four days' provisions, and starve on the other days, and so injure themselves in three ways. Firstly, having nothing to eat on five days in the week; secondly, eating too much on the other two days; thirdly, when the intestinal canal is not distended by food to the usual extent, and on one day a quantity of it, and perhaps of a hard nature (as ship-biscuit), is eaten, painful distension of the canal, or griping, or inflammation, is apt to be induced. This irregularity in diet is also favourable to the production of diarrhœa and dysentery.

With regard to the *quality* of the diet:—Bread may be left out of the question, as, for any great number of persons on ship-board, there is no convenience for baking it. Oatmeal is much preferable to wheat flour, and care ought to be taken, and very often is not taken, that it be cooked properly, and not taken with cold water only, and also that it be eaten with salt. Taking the diet as above, a good arrangement of it might be, on three days a week, half diet of potatoes, and half diet of oatmeal; on two days, biscuit; on one day, flour; and on another day, rice; and any deviation from this, to be towards oatmeal.

But with respect to the *quantity* of provisions, the