

With this explanatory remark, I have to present the following statement of the per-centage of passengers of the three classes of age, beginning with 1837 and continued to 1839 :

No. 1.
Agent General
for Emigration
to the Marquess
of Normanby,
15 August 1839.

			Adults.	Children over Seven.	Children under Seven.
1837	- -	10 ships - -	51	15	34
1838	- -	1st six ships - -	55	16	29
"	- -	2d ditto - -	56	18	26
"	- -	3d ditto - -	58	21	21
"	- -	4th ditto - -	62	20	18
1839	- -	1st six ships - -	68	20	12

From this statement it appears that the adults have been increased from 51 to 68 per cent. and the youngest children reduced from 34 to 12 per cent., or from more than one-third to less than an eighth of the whole number ; and that this change, as I have said elsewhere, has not been sudden or accidental, or intermixed with reverses, but that from the beginning up to the present time, and both as regards the numbers of adults and of the younger children, there has been one unbroken progress of improvement.

I enclose a return, in the same form as last year, of the ships and passengers despatched to New South Wales under the direct management of Government. It will be seen that the number of large vessels sent in this manner, which used to be four, and in 1837 was increased to 10, amounted to no less last year than 24.

Return of ships
sent under the
direct care of Go-
vernment.

I regret to say, however, that of this list the "Asia" did not finally quit the shores of England till after the close of the year 1838. This ship was engaged in the Thames for the conveyance of a party of emigrants from Cromarty in Scotland, and, in common with all other emigrant ships hired in the river, was procured through the Board of Admiralty. She underwent the usual survey in dry dock required by the standing practice of the Admiralty, and in the autumn she sailed from Cromarty with her passengers ; but having met with bad weather and become leaky, she put into Plymouth, and on being put into dry dock there, and further examined, it was found that, although in all other respects a sound and good vessel, the fastenings termed Tree-nails were extensively defective. The Admiralty sent immediate orders that the ship should be given up, and stated that another should be procured in her stead ; but, at that time of the year, every delay which could be avoided was much to be deprecated, both on account of the health of the passengers while detained, and of the season at which the voyage could be completed. The loss of time which might be incurred in advertising for and preparing a fresh ship to call at Plymouth was uncertain, and it was reported by high and entirely disinterested authority that the vessel then at Plymouth could be made quite as good as a new ship. It was determined, therefore, that the "Asia" should proceed. She was repaired in the royal dock-yard, under the immediate eye of the public officers. During her detention the passengers were liberally maintained, and their health carefully attended to ; and there was not one of them who did not acknowledge their good treatment in these respects. They, not unnaturally, felt some alarm as to going on in a vessel in which the commencement of their voyage had been so unprosperous ; but the ship was not suffered to proceed until not merely the officers of Her Majesty's dock-yard had reported in the most unqualified and emphatic terms that she was perfectly safe and fit for her destined voyage, but until also Mr. Bayley, Lloyd's principal surveyor for the port of London, whose services were obligingly rendered available by the committee to Lloyd's Registry, had repaired to Devonport, and in concurrence with the committee's resident surveyor on the spot, expressed a similar opinion. The whole of the passengers then embarked, and the ship sailed again on the 22d of January in this year.

Cases of the "Asia"
and "Juliana."

The "Juliana" is another vessel of which I regret to have to give an unfavourable account. This ship was likewise engaged in the river, through the
536.—I.