

from Liverpool, Captain Christian, had to bring up the bodies of the dead from the hold on his shoulders; neither passengers nor seamen could be induced to assist. This humane and excellent man, whose attention to his sickly passengers was beyond all praise, fell a victim to fever a few days after the arrival of his vessel in Quebec. In another vessel, the "Erin's Queen," the master could only get the dead brought up by paying his seamen a sovereign for such body.

I regret that it is not in my power to suggest any means by which the great sickness and mortality among emigrants on their voyage out may be avoided. Much may be done by strict attention to cleanliness and ventilation as far as this is practicable, in the hold of a ship, by having the berth places and new wood-work of the 'tween-decks, whitewashed with quick lime at least once a-week during the voyage, and by obliging the bedding and clothes of passengers to be taken on deck whenever the weather will permit. And, in the fitting up of the sleeping berths, the accumulation of much filth might be prevented if the lower boards were carried down flush to the main deck. It is customary, to leave the few inches of space which they are obliged by the Passenger Act to have from the deck, open, this enables the passengers to keep their pots and vessels under the berths, which, in the rolling of the ship, get capsized, and the place becomes a receptacle of filth and dirt, which remains undisturbed as it is not seen, and cannot be readily got at to clean out. As I have already observed, the health of passengers would be better if a small quantity of animal food was issued three times a week in addition to the usual allowance of bread stuffs.

All the remedial means that may be adopted, however, will not prevent the occurrence of sickness and death to a fearful extent on ship-board so long as fever and destitution prevail in Ireland as it now does. Some one of the many passengers is sure to embark either just recovering from fever, with foul clothes and bedding, or with the seeds of the disease latent in his system, which the change of life and the discomforts of a sea voyage rapidly develop in so favourable a locale as the hold of a vessel.

Medical men are generally agreed, that the three grand measures to be taken to prevent the spread of fever, are *separation, ventilation, and cleanliness*, from the nature of things the two first of these are rendered impracticable in a crowded passenger-ship, and the last, of difficult attainment. Sea-sickness and the mental depression which usually attends it render it a matter of extreme difficulty to induce people to practice a virtue which they have never been accustomed to. Hence there is much reason to apprehend that next season will bring with it a recurrence of the sickness and mortality of this year, limited only in extent by the numbers who may emigrate.

It is gratifying to know, however, that there now exists hospital accommodation at Grosse Isle, with bedding, and every requisite for 2000 sick; and there are two convalescent hospitals at the east end of the island, containing 150 beds each, together with sheds capable of lodging 3500 emigrants, with cook-houses, wash-houses, police barracks, and dwelling-house for medical officer, and deputy agent for emigration. The only requisite necessary to render the establishment complete, is a landing-place near these sheds, where emigrants may land and embark with their baggage, to wash and purify. And to enable the feather beds and woollen clothes to be more effectually purified, I would suggest the erection of a large oven, where these might be subjected to dry heat, which is generally admitted to be the readiest and most effectual means of freeing feather beds and woollen garments from febrile miasma. If, in connexion with this, there could be an apparatus for cleaning the hospital bedding, by subjecting them to the action of a stream of hot vapour, it would save many valuable lives lost every year, in the disgusting and dangerous work of washing articles saturated with the ejecta of the sick and dying. I have witnessed the use of an apparatus of this kind in the Hanwell Lunatic Asylum, near London, by which the clothes and bedding of 1200 pauper lunatics are washed, and by another machine are wrung out of the water with comparative little labour or handling by the servants. To show the necessity of some such means, I would mention that, at one period last season there had accumulated upwards of 5000 pieces of hospital bedding, consisting of blankets, rugs, paillasses, which it was found impossible to get any one to undertake the dangerous duty of washing. I was obliged, in consequence, to adopt a plan suggested by Mr. Julyan, the Commissariat officer, of making a wicker-work in the tide-way of the river; in this, the foul bed-clothes were placed, and allowed to steep for 24 hours, from thence they were carted to the wash-house, and lowered into large boilers by means of a frame-work moved by pulleys; after being thus boiled, the articles were spread out, partially dried and washed. But this was a work necessarily tedious, and still exposed those engaged in the labour more than they would be by the means above suggested. On closing the station there still remained upwards of 4000 articles of soiled bedding to be washed, which is now being done by a washerwoman and two assistants, who remain on the island during the winter for the purpose.

Though perhaps uncalled for in a report of this nature, I cannot conclude without adverting to the devotion shown by the clergy, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, in their attendance upon the sick and dying throughout the trying scenes of the past year. His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal visited the island two different periods, and passed several days each time in unremitting attendance in the tents, sheds, and hospitals, when most crowded.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

G. M. DOUGLAS, M.D.

Medical Superintendent.

The Hon. D. Daly, Secretary,
&c. &c. &c.