

now lying at the Railway Wharf, Port Chalmers, and have held an inquiry at Dunedin into the cause of sickness on board that ship during the voyage from England to Port Chalmers, and into all matters referred to us for inquiry affecting the "Charlotte Gladstone," and the immigrants on board her.

We have examined all available witnesses likely to throw any light on the subject, and append the evidence* taken by us, together with copies of the reports of the Surgeon of the ship, of the Immigration Commissioners at Dunedin, and of the Emigration Officer at Port Chalmers.

We have now the honor to report as follows:—

1. The "Charlotte Gladstone," a wooden ship of 1,304 tons register, is unusually well adapted for carrying immigrants, owing to her dryness, her unusual height between decks, and her great breadth of beam.

2. The accommodation provided for immigrants was sufficient to meet the requirements of the Passenger Act, and ample openings for ventilation were provided; but the manner in which the berths were built against the sides of the vessel prevented the passage of such a free current of air as is necessary in a crowded ship.

The minimum allowance of berth room under the Act, viz. eighteen inches for an adult, and three feet for a married couple (no extra allowance being made for a child under one year old), is not sufficient for reasonable comfort, decency, or health. In cases of illness, the want of room might prove very fatal.

3. The provisions put on board were good, except the medical drugs, which were very bad. These ought to be obtained from Apothecaries' Hall, or some establishment whose reputation would be a guarantee for their quality.

4. The water was good, and supplied in sufficient quantities, although the distilling apparatus was out of order at times on the voyage.

5. The bedding supplied to the immigrants was infamous refuse, apparently from dust heaps having been put up in clean ticking. Some of the immigrants thought that there was vermin in it, and one man positively swore that two days after sailing he threw his bedding overboard, as it was swarming with vermin. There is no doubt that many of the beds were thrown overboard early on the voyage, and that those who threw them over preferred sleeping on the boards of the bunks to keeping the beds. Every kind of disease might lurk in such material as these beds were made of. The blankets also were very bad.

6. The ship was not ready for passengers on the day fixed for embarkation, and cargo was received after they were on board. This is contrary to the conditions of contract between the Agent-General and Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co.; but the confusion on board an emigrant ship on sailing appears insuperable from the system of embarking immigrants without collecting them previously at a *dépôt*.

7. The medical inspection was insufficient. It appears that, in the case of nominated and selected emigrants, all that is required is a certificate from some medical man whom the emigrant may choose, before the contract ticket is given. And in the case of the Brogden emigrants, the medical examination was conducted by a medical man appointed by Messrs. Brogden, who examined the men only. The women and children of these emigrants do not appear to have been medically examined at all before embarkation. There is no examination of the emigrants collectively by any medical officer appointed by the Agency. The examination on board at Gravesend by the medical officer appointed by the Emigration Officer appears to be too much a matter of form.

8. The nominated and selected emigrants were a respectable and healthy set of people; but those sent out for Mr. Brogden belonged, on the whole, to an inferior class, many of them of an underfed and sickly appearance, and with habits and manners which made them very unwelcome associates to the better class of emigrants.

9. The discipline on board was not sufficiently strict; many of the emigrants had very dirty habits, and lounging in the berths during the day was allowed in too many cases. There were one or two instances in which women kept their berths for several days, to the great discomfort and annoyance of their neighbours; and it was usual for some of the single men to lie down in their berths during the day with their dirty boots on. The surgeon does not appear to have known how to manage the emigrants, or to keep them under necessary discipline, and the captain was not strict enough in enforcing it.

10. The measles that broke out on board early on the voyage were of a peculiarly mild type, and engendered no after bad effects; the serious illness and mortality on board were caused by diarrhoea assuming a dysenteric form, and by typhoid fever; 16 deaths occurred among the immigrants on the voyage, and 4 in quarantine after arrival at Port Chalmers. Of these 20 persons who died, 10 were children; only 2 of these died of typhoid fever, the rest from the effects of diarrhoea and other causes. Of the 10 adults, 8 died of typhoid fever, the 2 others from other causes. One seaman died of typhoid fever.

The surgeon reports 57 cases of fever amongst the immigrants, and 3 amongst the crew. It is impossible to trace the outbreak of fever to any one cause; but the following predisposing causes are sufficient to account for the illness on board, and for the mortality which ensued upon its outbreak:—

The weak, underfed, and dirty condition of some of the emigrants.

The disgraceful material of the bedding supplied.

The presence on board of the pigs which were provided for the cabin table. Although efforts were made to keep the pig-styes clean, these pigs were a serious nuisance to the single men, as the styes were close to the hatchway opening into their compartment, and the effluvium was carried below. The pigs' dirt from the decks was also carried down on the men's boots. A strong impression prevails amongst the emigrants that much of the illness was due to the presence of these pigs on board.

The dirty habits of the emigrants, and the want of discipline, which should have been very strict in such a crowded ship.

* The evidence is not printed, but laid upon the Table in manuscript for the information of Members.