

graver offences are specified ; so that honorable gentlemen will see that nearly 300 out of the 489 are for merely trifling offences, and the offence of drunkenness, of course, is one which we may very reasonably expect immigrants to fall into, upon their first landing from a voyage. This, to my mind, points to a very satisfactory moral state of the immigrants brought to the colony. Then, with regard to the question of lunatics, I have seen statements in the papers to the effect that the Agent-General had been very careless in this respect, and the Government has been greatly blamed for introducing a large number of lunatics. In one case the writer went on to say that of the patients admitted to a certain asylum 50 per cent. were Government immigrants. I immediately made inquiries, and found that the total number of patients who had been committed during the period to which this writer referred was two, and one of them was a Government immigrant. Thus the writer was absolutely correct in his statement, but the impression that he conveyed to the public was certainly not accurate. The total number of persons who have been committed to lunatic asylums out of the 60,000 brought into the colony is 47, and of these 20 have been discharged, so that the number now in the asylums is 27 out of 60,000 immigrants. Sir, I think that also shows there must have been very considerable care in the selection of immigrants ; and we may fairly assume that out of such a number some would be likely to become lunatics during the voyage, or from circumstances arising in the colony. That, I think, proves there can be no blame fairly attached to the Government on this head.

I regret to have to state that the death-rate of immigrants on board ships has been very unsatisfactory. I may say it has caused me a great deal of uneasiness ; and the Government have endeavoured not only to find out the cause, but to remedy it, and render the voyage really healthy. Honorable gentlemen who came to the colony years ago will remember that it was quite a rare thing for anybody to die in those days. I remember in my own province it was considered a most extraordinary thing for anybody to die ; and although in the early ships all the appliances were very inferior to the present ones, it was also a very rare thing for immigrants or their children to die on the voyage. I am sorry to say that the death-rate, and especially among children, has been exceedingly large ; but the Government have taken steps which I hope will result in it being considerably reduced, although I must confess to the House I have not been able to satisfy my mind as to the real cause of the very numerous deaths. The total number of deaths is 1,244. I have had the deaths classified as nearly as possible in the manner adopted in publishing the vital statistics of the colony. The total number of infants shipped was 2,670, and of these 502 died. The total number of children was 15,879, of whom 1,094 died. The total number of adults, which includes all of twelve years and upwards, was 43,582, of whom 150 died. The average death-rate of infants is 18·8, an enormous proportion, about one-fifth, in a voyage the average duration of which was about three months. The average death-rate of children from one to twelve years was 3·73, and of adults 0·34. The death-rate among children especially was one of the chief reasons why the Government altered the dietary scale, which has much increased the expenses of the voyage ; but I will refer to that more particularly when I speak of the new dietary scale.

Of the total number of immigrants that have arrived, 6,850 were nominated. The nomination system is no doubt the very best we can adopt for introducing people into this country. It is of immense advantage that a new arrival should have friends who can advise and look after him on his first landing ; for no Government officer can possibly assist any stranger in the same way that his friends can. But there would appear to have been great recklessness on the part of those in the colony in nominating their friends ; for, although no less than 32,485 have been nominated, yet up to the present time we have only succeeded in getting 6,850. I have taken some pains to put this matter on a better footing, and I trust that the present arrangements will tend in that direction. The Agent-General is, I believe, thoroughly alive to the great desirability of encouraging this class of immigration, and does, I believe, take every pains to ascertain where the parties reside, and to endeavour to get them to come out if they are fit and proper persons.

The average cost of an immigrant, including all expenses, except that of building the depôts, and without counting as an asset the promissory notes which