

infection on the premises, the channel being in all probability the privies infected by the first sufferers. Other emigrants passed through the dépôt during the time, but the disease was almost, if not altogether, confined to the emigrants from the "Oxford," who were detained there some weeks, pending the repairing and refitting of their ship; while the other emigrants lodged there for two or three days only, which would mean probably such exposure to infection as would be occasioned by one or two visits to the privies. And this fact appears to offer explanation for the distribution of the disease. I was not aware that the emigrants on board the "Oxford" suffered after the second embarkation. I applied to the Agent-General respecting the health of the emigrants of the "Oxford" and other ships, and his reply was dated before he heard news of the arrival of the "Oxford" at New Zealand. With regard to the condition of the Plymouth dépôt, I visited it three or four times quite unexpectedly, and on each occasion found the condition such as to enable me to state in my report that "the buildings were well ventilated and lighted, and in every respect well adapted to the purpose" (page 16), and, again, that "the buildings throughout were well ordered, and in a very satisfactory cleanly condition" (page 17).

23rd November, 1883.

F. H. BLAXALL.

#### Sub-Enclosure B.

EXTRACT from Dr. Blaxall's Report to the Local Government Board on Emigration and Immigration (now in the Press), pp. 16 and 17.

(3.) *Plymouth*.—Emigrants from this port are chiefly sent out by the agents of the Australasian Governments, who have arrangements with the proprietor of a large dépôt at Plymouth for their being received and lodged there pending embarkation. The site of the dépôt has much to recommend it, standing on the west shore of Deadman's Bay, having the water of the harbour on the east and south side, the Citadel on the west, and the Commercial Wharf on the north. There is a good yard for the emigrants to walk about in, overlooking the busy harbour. Tug-steamers can come alongside to embark passengers for ships in the Sound. The building consists of three blocks, A, B, C, substantially built, well ventilated and lighted, and in every respect well adapted to this purpose. Block A contains, on ground-floor, dépôt-master and colonial agents' offices, a surgery, and a large mess-room (58 feet by 41 feet six inches) for single women. On the floor above, a dormitory (73 feet 6 inches by 41 feet 6 inches, fitted with washstands, &c., with accommodation for 248 single women, and a separate berth for the matron. Block B, ground-floor, dépôt-master's quarters, and two large store-rooms for baggage; and over these a dormitory (57 feet 6 inches by 41 feet), available for married couples or single men, as required; Block C communicates with Block B by means of a covered way. On the ground-floor are situated the kitchen, provided with ample and excellent cooking apparatus, a large provision store-room, separate lavatories, with baths for men and women, and a disinfecting chamber heated by gas, in which, I am informed, a high temperature can be maintained. On the first floor are two large mess-rooms, fitted with tables and forms; on the second floor, dormitories for 100 married couples; and on the third floor, dormitories for 120 single men. At the end of this block, on the first and second floor, and cut off from the remainder of the building, are two wards well adapted for the reception of suspected cases of infectious disease. The waterclosets are situated in the yard, and discharge into the harbour: thus the contents are removed by the tide. There is, however, a considerable surface of rock above high-water mark upon which excrement lodges and decomposes.\* The drainage of the dépôt runs direct to the harbour, and there is no communication with the town sewer. At the entrance to the dépôt there is a lodge for the gatekeeper. Paper, pens, soap, and other articles which emigrants are likely to require are kept for their use and supplied to them at a reasonable cost, to prevent the necessity of their going into the town. The buildings throughout were well ordered, and in a very satisfactory cleanly condition. The Urban Sanitary Authority possess an infectious hospital, situated in the workhouse grounds. It is a small building, insufficiently ventilated, crowded with beds, and altogether ill adapted to the purpose of a hospital. In the spring of 1881 the Port Sanitary Authority obtained from the Admiralty the loan of the "Pique," an old wooden sailing frigate, to be used as a hospital. She is now anchored in the Sound in charge of a man and his wife, whose duty it is also to attend upon the patients. I visited the "Pique," and found her lying in an exposed position, where, indeed, I have myself seen vessels driven on shore by force of the wind and sea. The ship is roomy and a fair height between decks, the sides of the cabins and sick bays are painted, and the deck overhead whitewashed. She has been thoroughly lime-washed below, and was generally clean throughout. The bilges were fairly free of water, and there was no perceptible smell from them till the water in them was disturbed, when it gave off offensive effluvia. The ventilation of the decks was effected by means of hatches, ports, and side-scuttles, and that of the bilges by two canvas windsails. There is no provision for heating the air between decks, nor for the efficient disinfection of clothing, &c. The old cooking-galley remains, and, in addition, there is a smaller one, affording together ample provision for culinary purposes, heating water for baths, &c. There is only one accommodation-ladder, but the ship is fitted with a derrick, by means of which the sick can be hoisted on board in a canvas cot prepared for the purpose. Some five or six cases of small-pox have been treated on board, but there is no separate accommodation set apart for such cases.

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\* June, 1883.—Whilst this report is passing through the Press several cases of typhoid fever have occurred at the dépôt, amongst certain emigrants who had embarked in health, but returned after an absence of twenty-four days, owing to the ship having become disabled at sea. The fever manifested itself within a day or two of their return, and was attributed to impure water on board the ship. Subsequently the disease spread at the dépôt, and continued to prevail there more or less for some six or seven weeks; the channel of infection there was probably the privies, which had become specifically infected by the evacuations of the first sufferers. August 6th.—I am informed that the offending privies have now been removed, and self-cleansing trough-closets of approved pattern substituted.