

Newspaper extracts from The New York Tablet, 1857 and The Irish American, 1859

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Transcript:

The New York Tablet, New York,

Saturday, aug. 22, 1857

The City of Mobile

'Female emigrants and ship-discipline'.

The case of the unfortunate female emigrants who came over in The City of Mobile has attracted a good share of attention in the press ... To us, the readers of the Tablet, it is and must be poignantly painful.

Here was a shipload of innocent country girls of unquestioned character in their own neighbourhoods, which after a voyage of a few weeks contributed at least half a dozen souls to sailors' boarding-house brothels, belched several on the streets, and sent others in-land with their maidenly robes tarnished forever, and all because, and simply because, you, and I, and that other person, with the same blood in our veins, and the dearly bought wisdom that the failings of our country women will be inevitably cast upon our heads, closed our eyes to the necessity of a stringent Law for the regulation of intercourse on board passenger ships, and left unused the power we possessed to have it proposed and carried into effect.

While we were taking sides with pot-house factions on petty issues, libidinous captains and brutal sailors were forging arguments for our enemies out of the very innocence or thoughtlessness of Irish females.'

The Irish American

City of Mobile

New York, Aug 29, 1859

With regard to the poor girl of whom it is stated that she remained voluntarily in the den of infamy into which she had been betrayed, will any one dare to say that she would have so chosen had she been pure as when she first set foot in the accursed moral pest-house - the emigrant ship - in which her ruin was plotted and effected?

The unsullied virtue which has ever been the characteristic of Irish females is a sufficient argument against such a supposition: but we have more; we have seen, in the hands of Mr. Foster, the written testimony of their pastors and employers that these poor creatures, now so fallen from the highest estate of womanhood, had been all their lives remarkable for industry, propriety of conduct, and the faithful performance of every duty.

They had been selected for those very qualities to be the instruments of raising up and bettering the condition of their respective families; with high hopes and the tearful blessings of those they were leaving, they had set out upon their mission with the fairest promise of its speedy accomplishment, - But the tempter met them in the way; and dazzled by the allurements held out, they were induced to quit the straight but narrow path of rectitude.

Too late their eyes were opened, and they found themselves as we, unhappily, are too often compelled to see them, lost to all but the redeeming mercy of Heaven.

