

CHINA STATION.

SICK-RATE.

Average Ratio of Sickness for 10 Years, 2164.1 per 1,000.

DURING the twelve months embraced in the present report, thirty-seven vessels of different classes were employed on this station. In this number were comprised two line-of-battle ships of the second rate; four frigates; five sloops; seven gun vessels; one steam-vessel; one troop-ship; one store-ship; one receiving ship, permanently stationed at Hong Kong; fourteen gunboats; and one surveying vessel. The mean force corrected for time was 4,195, and the total number of cases of disease and injury placed on the sick-list 7,159, which is in the ratio of 1706.5 per 1,000 of mean force, being not only below the mean sick-rate of the station, but the lowest ratio of cases that has occurred within a period of ten years.

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By referring to Table I. in the Appendix, it will be perceived that neither in the line-of-battle ships nor in the frigates did the sick-rate reach the average of the station.

The returns from the *Conqueror* are for little more than six months, she having left the station for England in the end of 1865. She was chiefly stationed at Japan, and during the Michaelmas quarter of the year, although diarrhœa was somewhat prevalent it was in a mild form. Syphilis, contracted at Yokohama, was very common, however.

SECOND
RATES.

The ship's company of the *Princess Royal* were very healthy, and were it not for the prevalence of syphilitic disease amongst them, contracted, as in the previous vessel, at Yokohama, her sick-list would have been exceedingly small. In the Michaelmas quarter of the year there were a few cases of ephemeral fever, but they were of no importance.

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FRIGATES.

Ephemeral fever prevailed in the *Leopard*, in Japan, in the Michaelmas quarter of 1865, and seems to have affected all the vessels of the squadron stationed there. That mild form of fever, indeed, and syphilis, appear to have been the only diseases which they suffered from. Subsequently, in the *Lady* quarter of 1866, while at Hong Kong, and the Mid-summer quarter at Singapore, rheumatism was the most prevalent affection.

The *Barrosa* was very healthy while at Japan, but on proceeding to Shanghai, about the end of the Michaelmas quarter, diarrhœa became frequent amongst the men.

The *Pelorus* was the most sickly of the frigates, and this altogether arose from her being stationed at Amoy during the Michaelmas quarter of 1865, when dysentery, diarrhœa, and syphilis were of frequent occurrence amongst the ship's company. She was subsequently stationed in Japan, where a rapid and permanent improvement in the health of the men took place.

The *Scylla*, in the Michaelmas quarter of 1865, was at Japan, where, with the exception of ephemeral fever and syphilis, her ship's company enjoyed a large measure of health. Subsequently, however, while on the coast of China, at Amoy and Hong Kong, bowel affections became rather prevalent.

SLOOP.

The only vessels of the sloop class that exceeded the average sick-rate of the station were the *Argus* and the *Basilisk*. The latter vessel may, however, also be considered as much below the average, the returns from her only being for three months, which, of course, in the necessary reduction of her complement in correcting for time, gives an exaggerated value to the number of cases placed upon her sick-list. She arrived on the station in April 1866, and did not reach Hong Kong until nearly the end of that month. The only disease of any numerical importance mentioned in her returns was diarrhœa of a mild character, which attacked a considerable number of men in the month of May after leaving Amoy, and subsequently in June at Shanghai. The average duration of each case was only three or four days, and the affection ultimately entirely disappeared, so that for some days at the end of June there was not a case of sickness of any kind on the list.

The sick-rate of the *Argus* was 2887.5 per 1,000 of force. This was almost entirely attributable to the prevalence of

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diarrhœa while the ship was at Shanghai in the early part of the Michaelmas quarter of 1865. The disease was of an exceedingly obstinate character, and for a length of time appears to have resisted every form of treatment. Only one case of dysentery occurred at Shanghai, but it was of a virulent character, and proved fatal. The ship left Shanghai in August for Japan, and there the ship's company rapidly regained health. Ephemeral fever, catarrh, and syphilis were the other diseases in this vessel of greatest numerical importance.

The only gun-vessel that did not exceed the average sick-rate of the station was the *Algerine*, and in her the ratio of sickness was very small. She was stationed in the north of China during the whole year.

The sick-rate in the *Coquette*, although high, was not occasioned by any prevalence of serious disease. It was, in fact, chiefly owing to an epidemic of ephemeral fever which prevailed amongst the ship's company at Singapore in the Midsummer quarter of 1866. Diarrhœa, boils, and more or less trivial casualties, furnished otherwise the largest number of cases on the sick-list.

The sick-rate in the *Cormorant* was also high. Unfortunately in the Michaelmas quarter of 1865, disease of an urgent character prevailed on board, the vessel being at that time employed cruising between Hong Kong and Macao, and at Manilla. While in the former locality sixty cases of fever of a mild type were placed on the sick-list; but they were followed by great debility, and in many instances by crops of painful boils. At Hong Kong the ship's company suffered much also from diarrhœa and dysentery. In July the vessel proceeded to Manilla, where she remained until the 2nd of August. Cholera and choleraic diarrhœa, which were prevalent on shore, made their appearance on board, and out of sixteen cases three proved fatal. During the following quarters there was very little sickness of a severe character, and no epidemic disease in this vessel.

The returns from the *Leven* are only for six months, and during most of that time she was employed at Hong Kong and in the Canton River. Diarrhœa was rather prevalent in the month of July, and in August several cases of a mild form of remittent fever occurred, but otherwise there was very little sickness amongst the ship's company in this vessel.

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In the remaining gun vessels there was little or no active disease worthy of notice.

STEAM
VESSEL.

The sick rate in the *Manilla* was very high. This vessel was stationed altogether in the north of China during the twelve months, and catarrh and diarrhœa appear to have been the most prevalent affections amongst her crew.

TROOP SHIP.

In the *Adventure*, which was employed conveying troops between Hong Kong and Japan, the large ratio of cases placed on the sick list was almost entirely attributable to an epidemic of remittent fever which occurred while the vessel was at Hong Kong in the Michaelmas quarter of 1865. She had arrived at Hong Kong from the north of China on the 23rd of July, the ship's company being then in excellent health. The ship was anchored at a considerable distance from the town, and in a position to get the full benefit of the S. W. monsoon. Fever was prevailing very extensively on shore, and Her Majesty's 9th and 11th Regiments of Foot were suffering much from it. On the day after she anchored, two men were placed on the sick-list with fever, and from that time the attacks gradually increased, until, at the conclusion of the epidemic, seventy-eight cases had been placed on the list, many of them of great severity. Fortunately, however, no mortality was occasioned by it. This fever was accompanied with so much prostration that, within a few hours of its onset, the strongest men were so prostrated that they could neither stand nor help themselves in any way.

During the same quarter there were a few cases of dysentery and a good many of diarrhœa. In the Midsummer quarter of 1866, diarrhœa again prevailed in an epidemic form, and no fewer than twenty-one cases of ague were placed on the sick-list. The medical officer observes, that while at sea and at Japan the ship's company always enjoyed good health, but that sickness invariably ensued upon entering Hong Kong harbour.

With the exception of the prevalence of venereal diseases and catarrh, there is nothing else noteworthy in the returns from this ship.

STORE SHIP.

In the *Hesper* at Hong Kong there were several cases of cholera and choleraic diarrhœa in the Michaelmas quarter of 1865, one of which terminated fatally. The disease, it is stated, was prevailing extensively on shore, and its outbreak in the *Hesper* was coincident with her deck being

taken up, and the consequent going on board of a number of Chinese to work at it. The disease confined itself to those who were employed at that particular work, and two of the weakest individuals who had been on the list with debilitating diseases for a week or two previously, suffered from the more malignant form of the disease.

The sick-rate in the receiving ship, the surveying vessel, the gun-boats, and the Marine Brigade, was below the average of the station, and there is nothing in their returns to call for notice.

INVALIDING.

Average Ratio of Invaliding for Ten Years, 65 per 1,000.

Two hundred and thirty persons were invalided during the twelve months, which is in the ratio of 54·8 per 1,000 of mean force, one of the smallest ratios of invaliding that has occurred during a period of ten years.

Of these, sixteen were invalided for various diseases of the brain and nervous system; thirty-nine for diseases of the organs of respiration, chiefly phthisis; nine for functional or organic disease of the heart and blood-vessels; thirty-nine for diseases of the alimentary canal, mostly dysentery; eleven for diseases of the liver; thirty-four for diseases of the genito-urinary organs, almost altogether of venereal origin; thirty for rheumatism and disease of the bones and joints; three for affections of the special senses; thirteen for diseases of the skin and cellular tissue; twenty-three for various forms of dyspepsia and debility, for the most part the effect of climate; and thirteen for wounds and injuries of various kinds.

DEATHS.

Average Ratio of Mortality for Ten Years, 42·5 per 1,000.

There were eighty-nine deaths during the twelve months, seventy-four of which were the result of disease, and fifteen of wounds and injuries and drowning, as detailed in Table IV.

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in the Appendix. The total ratio of mortality was 21·2 per 1,000 of mean force, being the smallest death-rate that has occurred on this station for a period of ten years.

Of the deaths from disease ten were from continued or remittent fever, and one from small-pox; four from inflammation of the substance or the membranes of the brain; two from apoplexy; two from epilepsy; one from delirium tremens; seventeen from phthisis; three from pneumonia; one from disease of the heart; eighteen from dysentery; nine from cholera; two from inflammation of the bowels; two from abscess of the liver; one from pyæmia; and one from debility, from what cause is not stated.