

MEDITERRANEAN STATION.

SICK RATE.

Average Sick-rate of the Station for Ten Years, 1,475 per 1,000.

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DURING the twelve months embraced in this report the squadron on the Mediterranean Station consisted of twenty-three vessels. Of these four were iron-clads; three were line-of-battle ships, one of the first rate, one of the second, and one of the third; five frigates, three being of the fourth rate, and two of the sixth; one receiving ship permanently stationed at Malta; four are classed as steam vessels; there were two gun vessels, two sloops, and two gun-boats. The mean force corrected for time was 6,340 men.

The total number of all cases of disease and injury under treatment was 9,366, which is in the ratio of 1477.2 per 1,000 of mean force, and is very nearly the average sick rate of the station taken for a period of ten years.

IRON-CLADS.

The total sick-rate in the iron-clad vessels was more than 200 per 1,000 below the average sick rate of the station. The only vessel that largely exceeded the mean ratio was the *Enterprise*, and in her the diseases were chiefly of a trivial character.

The *Royal Oak*, although only very slightly exceeding the average sick-rate of the station, was certainly in respect of severity of disease the most sickly of the iron-clads. During the Christmas quarter of 1865, diarrhoea was exceedingly prevalent on board, but a much more serious form of disease, viz., enteric fever, prevailed during the Michaelmas and Christmas quarter of that year, and again in the Midsummer quarter of 1866. The disease appears on the first occasion to have been contracted at Malta, where it is endemic during the hot months, and it was probably continued by communication of the infected with the healthy. On the 13th

of November the ship's company was transferred to the *Hibernia*, the vessel being taken into dock in order that additional scuttles might be made on her lower deck, and other improvements effected. On the 21st of December the crew returned to the *Royal Oak*, and during the subsequent quarter, viz., the Lady quarter of 1866, there was a marked improvement in their health rate. Rheumatism, as a sequela of fever, prevailed a good deal indeed, and being very obstinate gave rise to much invaliding, but there was little active, and no epidemic disease. In the early part of the Midsummer quarter, however, fever of an urgent type again presented itself. In accordance with the recommendation of a committee appointed to inquire into the sanitary state of the vessel, preparations had been making to mess a considerable number of the men on the main deck, and these being completed 130 men were removed from the lower to the main deck, after which only one case of fever made its appearance. At the termination of the Midsummer quarter of 1866, the *Royal Oak* may be considered as presenting a fair average sick rate, the percentage on the sick list on the 30th of June being three and a-half.

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IRON-CLADS
continued.

LINE OF
BATTLE
SHIPS.

One only of these vessels, the *Mecanee*, exceeded the average sick rate of the station. During the Michaelmas quarter of 1865, while at anchor in Phalerum Bay, fevers of different types, and manifestly attributable to different causes, prevailed. Periodic fevers were common as the result of malaria, and a large number of cases of a continued form are attributed to the unusually great heat which prevailed, and which appears to have acted with very evil effect on the inhabitants of the Piræus, amongst whom fever was epidemic, scarcely a house being free from it. Rheumatism occurred, as so often happens, as a sequela of these fevers, and added much to the sick rate of the vessel.

In the Lady quarter of 1866, catarrh prevailed as an epidemic in the *Victoria*. Otherwise, however, the ship was very healthy, her sick list averaging about 3 per cent. In the Gibraltar also catarrh was epidemic in the Lady quarter of 1866, but otherwise, with the exception of boils to which the ship's company appear to have been more than ordinarily prone, two epidemics of that painful affection having occurred amongst them, there was not much sickness in the vessel.

The sick rate in three of the frigates was considerably in excess of the average sick rate of the station. These vessels

FRIGATES

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were the *Arethusa*, the *Phœbe*, and the *Cossack*. The *Arethusa* was in the first year of her commission, and would naturally show a larger than ordinary sick rate. There was very little disease of a serious nature, however, amongst her ship's company, the principal affections being common sore throat, and small abscesses and sores.

During the Michaelmas quarter of 1865, diarrhœa was very prevalent in the *Phœbe*, and catarrh was epidemic in the *Lady* quarter of 1866. There was very little otherwise worthy of noting in reference to the vessel. The ship's company appear to have been subject to boils, there being a greater number of days sickness from that form of disease than from any other.

The *Cossack* was stationed on the Coast of Syria in the Michaelmas quarter of 1865, and during that time her sick list averaged about 8 per cent. of the ship's company. Ephemeral fever, diarrhœa, and small abscesses were the most common affections. Diarrhœa continued frequent in the Christmas quarter, and in the *Lady* quarter of 1866, catarrhal affections were most prominent. There was a good deal of rheumatism also in the vessels consequent in all probability on her service on the Syrian Coast.

The *Hydra* was the only vessel of this class which exceeded the average ratio of the station, and in her the excess was by no means great. Considering indeed the exposure to which her ship's company was necessarily subjected in surveying different parts of the Coast of Greece, a larger sick rate might reasonably have been anticipated. Ephemeral, and periodic fevers, catarrh and diarrhœa were the most prominent affections in her returns.

The *Assurance* presents the largest ratio of sickness of any vessel on the station. During the Michaelmas quarter of 1865, she was stationed in the River Danube, and there the health of the crew, which previously had been very good, suffered much. Diarrhœa and ague were exceedingly common, and this latter form of fever clung to the men during the whole year. At Sulina cholera was imported into the vessel, and of four cases three proved fatal. After leaving the Danube the *Assurance* remained at Malta until January 1866, when she proceeded to Patras, where she was stationed, visiting occasionally the islands of Zante, Cephalonia and Corfu. During the Midsummer quarter of 1866 while at Patras, ague was very prevalent among the ship's company.

STEAM
VESSELS.

GUN
VESSELS.

The sick-rate in both vessels of this class exceeded the average sick-rate of the station, although there was no great amount of active or urgent disease in either. The Chanticleer was employed chiefly amongst the Ionian Islands, and the Pelican on the coast of Syria. Catarrh and diarrhœa were tolerably common in both vessels; and in the Chanticleer two cases of cholera, both of which proved fatal, were contracted at Malta, where the disease was prevailing epidemically on shore. In the Pelican, during the prevalence of diarrhœa, a considerable number of cases of ephemeral fever appeared amongst the ship's company.

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SLOOP.

The sick-rate in the Tyrian was also above the average sick-rate of the station. The cases of disease which appear in her return, however, are neither in any nor severe. The complement of the vessel being small a few cases of disease give a somewhat exaggerated importance to her ratio of sickness.

GUN BOATS.

INVALIDING.

Average Ratio of Invaliding on the Station for Ten Years, 403.

The total number invalided during the period embraced in the present abstract was 254, which is in the ratio of 40 per 1,000 of mean force, being almost precisely the average rate of invaliding on the station. The diseases which occasioned the greatest loss by invaliding were those affecting the respiratory organs, after which, in point of number, came rheumatism, chiefly as a sequela of fever, or as a consequence of the peculiar form of cachexia which is liable to be engendered in the Mediterranean. Venereal diseases hold a prominent position as a cause of invaliding, but they are not necessarily attributable to this station, being more probably the result of disease originally contracted in our home ports.

It will be observed, by referring to Table II. of the Appendix, that of the iron-clad vessels the Enterprise and Royal Oak show the largest ratios of invaliding. In both of those vessels the diseases which chiefly tended to cause this result were those of the lungs and rheumatism to which, indeed, more than one-half of the invaliding in each vessel was attributable.

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butable. One-third of the invaliding in the Royal Oak was for rheumatism following fever.

Seven men were invalided for the sequelæ of fever; twenty-three for various affections of the brain or nervous system; fifty-six for diseases of the respiratory organs, chiefly phthisis in its incipient or more advanced stages; twenty for diseases of the organs of circulation; seven for diseases of the alimentary canal; five for diseases of the liver; twenty-two for various affections of the genito-urinary organs, chiefly venereal; forty-seven for rheumatism and diseases of the bones and joints, seven for affections of the special senses, seventeen for diseases of the skin and cellular tissues, seventeen for diseases not classed, such as different forms of dyspepsia, worms, &c.; and twenty-six for the effects of wounds and injuries of various kinds.

DEATHS.

Average Ratio of Mortality for Ten Years, 10·4 per 1,000.

There were fifty-eight deaths on the station during the twelve months, of which forty-six were the result of various forms of disease, and twelve of injuries accidentally sustained, and drowning, as detailed in Table IV. of the Appendix. The total ratio of mortality was 9·1 per 1,000 of mean force, which is 1·3 per 1,000 below the average death-rate of the station.

Although the ratio of sickness in the iron-clads was small, the death-rate was fractionally in excess of the average of the station. This was almost altogether owing to the prevalence of specific fever in one ship. Of thirteen deaths from disease in these vessels, six were from fever and four from disease of the lungs. The other fatal cases were apoplexy, diarrhœa, and erysipelas. Four of the deaths from fever occurred in the Royal Oak.

There were fifteen deaths altogether from fever in the force, and almost all were cases of the enteric form of the disease which prevails endemically in almost all the towns on the sea board of the Mediterranean. Next to fevers, the largest number of deaths was occasioned by pulmonary diseases, and by diseases of the alimentary canal. Pulmonary consumption is very frequent in the Mediterranean, and unless the subject of it is speedily removed from the station it commonly

commonly runs a rapidly fatal course. From diseases of the alimentary canal there were ten deaths, of which one was the result of dysentery, one of diarrhœa, one of intus-susception, and seven of cholera. Cholera prevailed epidemically in the Mediterranean in the autumn of 1865, and Malta in particular suffered very severely from it. Four of the deaths in the squadron are referrible to disease contracted there; viz., one case in the *Magicienne*, one in the *Hibernia*, and two in the *Chanticleer*. Three deaths from cholera occurred in the *Assurance* while she was lying at Sulina, in the River Danube, where the disease was epidemic on shore and amongst the merchant shipping. That this fatal disease did not cause more mortality in the squadron in the Mediterranean was doubtless altogether attributable to the care displayed in keeping the different vessels as much as possible away from infected ports.

Besides the fifteen deaths from fever mentioned above, and the ten deaths from diseases of the alimentary canal, there were four deaths from diseases of the brain and nervous system, ten from diseases of the respiratory organs, one from heart disease, three from diseases of the liver, one from acute rheumatism, one from erysipelas, one from scrofula, and twelve from injuries of various kinds, and drowning.

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