

PACIFIC STATION.

SICK-RATE.

Average Sick-rate of the Station for Ten Years, 1526.2 per 1,000.

Pacific
Station.

THE squadron in the Pacific during the period of this Report comprised thirteen vessels, of which two were frigates of the fourth rate, one a frigate of the fifth rate, two were frigates of the sixth rate; besides which there were seven sloops; and one store-ship permanently stationed at Valparaiso. In addition to these vessels there was a small detachment of marines at Vancouver's Island. The average force of the station, corrected for time, was 2,775, and the total number of cases of disease and injury under treatment was 4,581, which is in the ratio of 1658.8 per 1,000 of mean force, a very considerable increase over the average sick-rate of the station, taken for a period of ten years.

FRIGATES.

In the frigates of the fourth and fifth rates, the sick-rate was below the average of the station; but the *Clio* and *Scout* exceeded the average very considerably.

The *Clio*, during a portion of the Michaelmas quarter of 1865 and the whole of the Midsummer quarter of 1866, was stationed on the coasts of Mexico and of Central America, and during these periods her ship's company suffered much from fevers of different types, but chiefly of an ephemeral nature, and from rheumatism, which is a very common form of disease in these localities. During the former quarter there was a great prevalence of small painful abscesses amongst the crew, indicating an enfeebled habit of body, the result of climatic causes. In the Christmas quarter of 1865 and the Lady quarter of 1866, she was almost altogether employed off the coast of Vancouver's Island, and there, with the exception of the prevalence of catarrhs and

an epidemic of scarlatina, the ship's company appear to have been tolerably healthy.

Pacific
Station.

FRIGATES
1898-1899.

The Scout was a recently commissioned vessel, and the different affections which contributed to raise her sick-rate higher than that of any other ship on the station were probably the result of repeated climatic changes, undergone on the passage out to the Pacific, acting deleteriously upon a newly raised ship's company. Ephemeral fever, catarrh, diarrhœa, and rheumatism were the most prevalent diseases, but upon the whole they do not appear to have been of much severity.

Of the three larger frigates in which the sick-rate was below the average ratio of the station, the Leander and Sutej were chiefly stationed at Vancouver's Island, and at Valparaiso and Callao; the Tribune was for a short time off the coast of Central America, where she had a good many cases of fever; afterwards she was at Vancouver's Island, and finally at Valparaiso, on her passage to England.

The Cameleon, Columbine, Devastation, Mutine and Shearwater exceeded the average sick-rate of the station; the other two vessels were below it. Although the five vessels named above show an excess of sickness, there was in reality very little disease of a serious nature in any of them. The great variety of climate to which the Pacific squadron is exposed is liable to swell the sick-lists of the different vessels with affections of a comparatively slight and passing nature, such as mild febrile attacks, catarrh, and diarrhœa; and it is the prevalence of such diseases, for the most part, that gives an exaggerated importance to the ratios of sickness in vessels of this class.

SLOOP.

The returns from the store-ship Nereus and from the Marine detachment do not call for any comments. In both instances they were below the average sick-rate of the station.

INVALIDING.

Ratio of Invaliding for Ten Years, 32 per 1000.

During the period embraced in the present return seventy-five men were invalided from the Pacific Station which is in

the ratio of 27· per 1,000 of mean force, a considerable reduction, as may be perceived, on the average invaliding rate of the station.

Of the frigates, the Scout was the only vessel in which the ratio of invaliding exceeded the average. She had only been recently commissioned, and on the passage from England to the Pacific several men, labouring under constitutional diseases, such as phthisis and varicose veins, broke down, and were found to be unfit for further active service. Fourteen men altogether were invalided from this vessel.

Three of the sloops, the Alert, the Columbine, and the Shearwater, exceeded the average invaliding rate of the station. Seven men were invalided from the Alert; one being for debility following fever, two for epilepsy, two for phthisis, one for dysentery, and one for the effects of an injury. Of six men invalided from the Columbine, one was for disease of the heart, three for rheumatism, one for the effects of an injury, and one for hernia. Four men were invalided from the Shearwater; one being for apoplexy, one for phthisis, and two for rheumatism. None of the other vessels of the squadron exceeded the average ratio of invaliding of the station.

Of the total number invalided, amounting to seventy-five, two were for the sequelæ of fever, eight for various affections of the brain and nervous system; sixteen for disease of the lungs, chiefly phthisis; nine for disease of the organs of circulation; two for dysentery; one for disease of the spleen; three for diseases of venereal origin; seventeen for rheumatism; four for affections of the skin and cellular tissue; three for debility from climatic causes; and ten for the effects of injuries of different kinds and hernia.

Rheumatism, for which this station has always been notorious, was the disease for which the largest number of men were invalided.

DEATHS.

Average Ratio of Mortality for Ten Years, 9·4 per 1,000.

The total number of deaths on the station was twenty-eight, which is in the ratio of 10· per 1,000 of mean force.

This is fractionally in excess of the average death-rate of the station. Of these twenty eight deaths, however, fourteen were the results of injuries of various kinds and of drowning, so that the ratio of mortality from disease alone was only 5 per 1,000.

Of the fourteen deaths from disease, three were from diseases of the brain and nervous system, one in the person of an officer, being from delirium tremens, one from serous apoplexy consequent upon drunkenness, and one from softening of the brain; seven were from diseases of the respiratory organs, chiefly of an inflammatory nature; one from disease of the spleen; one from abscess of the liver; one from secondary syphilitic disease; and in one instance the cause of death is not stated.

The nature of the fatal injuries will be seen in Table IV. of the Appendix.