

WAR-DEPARTMENT, March 20, 1855.

LORD PANMURE has received a Despatch and its Enclosure, of which the following are Extracts, addressed to His Lordship by Field-Marshal the Lord Raglan, G.C.B.

*Extract from a Despatch from Field-Marshal the Lord Raglan, dated "before Sevastopol," March 3, 1855.*

I BEG now to lay before your Lordship Dr Hall's Report of the state of the Sick, and I will direct him to make one weekly, which I will transmit for your Lordship's information.

Enclosure.

*Extract from a Report from Dr Hall, Inspector-General of Hospitals, to Field-Marshal Lord Raglan, dated March 2, 1855.*

I WILL offer a few observations on the weekly state up to the 24th February; and, in doing so, I may premise that the result of the sanitary condition of the Army up to that period is by no means so satisfactory as the previous improvement during the week of fine weather that we had, had led me to anticipate; but though the unfavourable change in the weather, from the genial warmth of spring to the bitter cold of winter, which took place on the 20th, had an injurious effect on certain classes of disease in weakly subjects, still there is sufficient improvement remaining to enable us to look forward with confident hope to the future; and I am the more inclined to indulge this hope from the favourable change which has taken place in the type of fever prevailing in the General Hospital at Balaklava, in the 93d Highlanders and some other regiments, from low typhoid to that of a remittent, and even intermittent form.

This afternoon 100 patients were to be removed from the General Hospital at Balaklava to the Convalescent Establishment on the plateau of the old castle, overlooking the sea; and when the remainder of the huts are erected, which I expect they will soon be now, I look for the happiest results to follow, from being able to place from 400 to 500 convalescents there, in place of sending them down to the crowded establishment at Scutari. In case of our having wounded men, I should wish, of all things, to keep them in so desirable a locality; and by a very little labour the road up to the huts from the town could easily be made practicable for ambulance mules; and this, I am informed, the Commanding Royal Engineer has been ordered to carry into immediate effect.

The position of the huts I think promises every advantage; they are placed on a dry ridge overlooking the sea, sufficiently removed from the noise and stench of the town, and not too far from our stores and resources.

There is a running stream in a ravine close at hand, of easy access, and fed by a spring higher up in the hills, which could easily be led to the huts themselves by means of gutta percha tubing.

Out of 442 patients, treated in the General Hospital at Balaklava, between the 18th and 24th February, only three casualties have occurred, which I think may fairly be termed a low rate of mortality, considering the class of patients that are generally sent in there for treatment—men brought from camp, and found too ill to embark when they arrive at Balaklava.

The lines in the vineyard in front of the hospital have relieved the hospital, and prevented the necessity of crowding it so much as we were formerly occasionally compelled to do.

The ventilation too of the main building has been improved by boring two rows of large auger

holes through the wooden ceiling of the wards. Mr Hanbury and the Medical Officers doing duty under him are very attentive to their patients. The sick have also the benefit of the care of Miss Langston and the Nurses under her, who are a great comfort to them; and I am glad to be able to assure your Lordship that the state of the Purveyor's store is such as to insure every comfort the sick can require.

The Cavalry Division, encamped in a sheltered valley near Kadikoi, has enjoyed better health of late, and the mortality this week, though high, as compared with service at home, still it cannot be considered excessive; but with the increased comforts the men now enjoy, and their exemption from night duty, further improvement may be expected. The Artillery has also enjoyed good health; so has the Highland Brigade, which occupies the lines in front of Balaklava, part of which are elevated, and much exposed. But being near Balaklava, they have exerted themselves, and got wooden huts up for the accommodation of both the sick and a portion of the men in health. They have had the advantage of house shelter for their sick in the village of Kadikoi, during the whole winter. The men are warmly clad, and have the additional benefit of being nearer their resources than the men in front.

The 2d, 4th, and Light Divisions have improved in health, but the 3d and the Brigade of Guards still continue sickly.

The Guards have just been removed to Balaklava, where rest and better shelter will, I have no doubt, soon have a beneficial effect on their health.

The 3d Division too, will be relieved in some degree by the 39th Regiment, just sent up to join it. The 39th has lately arrived, and is quite efficient. Huts have been erected for them on an eligible site, and they have a fair chance of escaping any serious outbreak of disease.

Bowel complaints continue to be the most prevalent class of diseases; but I think they are not so serious as they were a short time ago, nor is scurvy so manifest as it was since the issue of lime juice daily as a portion of the men's ration. Lately I have instructed the medical officers of regiments to inspect the men, for the purpose of detecting this complaint,—skin diseases, and seeing that the men are clean in their persons, and change their shirts and flannels at stated periods. The last weekly Report is favourable. In the 4th Division, which is the only Report I have at hand in my hut, only 138 out of 2,596 men inspected bore any traces of scurvy; and this is one of the Divisions which was as much, or more, affected with it than any Division in the Army a short time ago. Mr Roberts, the Staff-Surgeon recently appointed to superintend the medical concerns of the Division, is an intelligent, active, and zealous officer, and he has effected wonderful reforms since he joined. If the issue of fresh meat could be insured, together with vegetables and lime juice, I am quite satisfied, now that the men are warmly clad and will soon be better sheltered, a manifest improvement would take place in their health. And if the military operations carrying on would only admit of some longer-exemption from duty, a still greater improvement would be observed.

I am inclined to think our greatest difficulties and miseries have been surmounted, and we may now look forward for better and more cheering times. It was wonderful to see the cheering effect the few fine days had on the health and spirits of the men; and as the winter may now be considered nearly at an end, I am full of hope and confidence.

