

THE
CRIMEAN COMMISSION

AND THE
CHELSEA BOARD:

BEING

A REVIEW OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND REPORT OF THE
BOARD,

BY

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INTRODUCTION.



THE circumstances which have led to the present publication are almost too well known to require explanation, and I have rather to excuse myself for having delayed it so long, than to offer any apology for now entering on the subject.

Sir John McNeill and I, having, in February 1855, been sent out as Commissioners to inquire into the supplies of the Army in the Crimea, submitted, in January following, two detailed Reports on that subject, to the Secretary of State for War, which, having been presented to Parliament, created considerable excitement against the officers supposed to be responsible for the due application of these supplies to the wants of the troops.

In consequence of the representations of these officers a Military Board was assembled at Chelsea on 3rd April last, with the view—not merely of hearing such explanation as they might have to offer, but with instructions so to direct its inquiries “that the truth should be made manifest, and that justice should be done to all parties.” Before that Board I ultimately felt compelled to appear, under the circumstances hereafter detailed.

Sec Royal
Warrant, p. 1
of Board's
Proceedings.

Severe illness, brought on by incessant labour for several weeks in a most unusual, harrassing, and painful duty,

unsupported by any legal assistance,* prevented my attendance at the Board after the 5th May, and till lately rendered me incapable of any prolonged mental exertion.

A Report of the Board, adverse to the conclusions of my colleague and myself, having, immediately before the prorogation, been presented to Parliament, I feel it my duty, before it re-assembles, to fulfil the obligation originally incurred in appearing at Chelsea, by submitting, through the medium of these pages, all that I should have stated, had my health permitted me to be present till the Board closed its proceedings.

Before doing so, however, I must be permitted to notice and comment upon some serious and radical defects in the constitution of the Board.

1. The want of all local experience on the part of its members.
2. The manner in which they were chosen for the duty.
3. The objectionable selection of the witnesses,
4. The absence of proper intimation to the Commissioners of the animadversions to be inquired into.

On each of these I propose offering a few observations by way of illustration.

The first and most important requisite for any inquiry of this kind, where so much depended on the circumstances in which the Army had been placed, was local knowledge. Owing to the want of it, the Sebastopol Committee had already felt its inadequacy to deal thoroughly with the subject, and my colleague and I were sent out to obtain, on the spot, that information which had been vainly sought at a distance. When, therefore, it was considered expedient to assemble a Board for the purpose of testing the accuracy of our Report, it was, certainly, not too much to expect, that it should have been composed of persons pos-

* The offer of legal assistance was not made to me till the 17th April. See letter of Mr. Peel, No. 9 of Appendix.

sessing, at least, equal opportunities of information, and fully acquainted with all that had taken place during the eventful period to which it referred.

To review the labours of two Commissioners, who had spared neither time nor trouble to make themselves fully acquainted with all these matters on the spot, was, in itself, a most unusual proceeding; but, to do so through the medium of officers not possessing even the first requisite for accurate conclusions, was to recognize the hitherto unheard-of principle, that want of experience in the Crimea was the most suitable qualification for the solution of all Crimean difficulties; and absence of local information the fittest test for deciding questions mainly dependent on local circumstances.

Not one of the seven Members composing the Board had ever been in the Crimea; and a reference to its proceedings will show that no General, nor any officers who had commanded corps in that country, during the period under review, were examined in regard to the events then passing, except a few belonging to the Cavalry, who were directly or indirectly interested in the result. I point this out in no spirit of disrespect to the Board, but as a possible means of accounting for the errors and omissions by which their Report is characterized.

Most persons, civil or military, will admit that one of the greatest safeguards in the formation of every court is the precaution of choosing its members—not according to the arbitrary selection of any individual, but according to an established roster from which the required number is taken. In the Chelsea Board, however, this principle was completely violated. I do not suppose, far less allege, that this was done with any object hostile to the Commissioners; but, that seven General Officers and a Secretary should have been selected all of one political bias, was in itself a circumstance sufficiently remarkable to shake public confidence in the result. Even the Judge-Advocate-General felt himself

compelled to allude to this peculiarity in the construction of the Court as follows :*

“ The noble Lord complains that the inquiry was
 “ political in its character, owing to the circumstance of the
 “ Judge-Advocate being a Minister and attending the Court.
 “ Sir, so totally opposed is this to the fact that I solemnly
 “ declare that I never, during the whole inquiry, asked or
 “ heard what were the politics of the General Officers, of
 “ which I knew nothing, with the exception of the three who
 “ were in Parliament; but since the noble lord has made this
 “ assertion I have inquired, and upon credible information I
 “ have learnt that every one of the General Officers is of the
 “ same political party as himself. (‘Hear,’ and a laugh.)
 “ And, besides that, there was a gentleman who acted as
 “ private secretary to Sir Alexander Woodford who was in
 “ the room the whole time when the doors were closed, who,
 “ as I believe, was a private friend, and, as I know, was a
 “ strong political partisan of the noble lord, so that he had
 “ everything in his favour; and the noble lord’s judges, they
 “ who tried him, and who judged and acquitted him, were all
 “ his own political partisans. (Cheers.)

I am just as little disposed as the Judge-Advocate-General to infer that this selection was made with any ulterior views; but all who value the semblance even, of fairness, must admit, that it would have been better had the Court been otherwise constituted.

As the Board did not contain in itself the elements of proper information, it was obviously the more requisite that arrangements should have been made to bring home those witnesses from the Crimea on whose statements the Report of the Commissioners had been founded, or, such of them at least, as they considered essential to the establishment of any facts, the accuracy of which was questioned.

* Vide Speech of Judge Advocate General in the House of Commons on the 21st July last, in reply to Lord Lucan’s statement in the House of Lords.

While, however, the officers, who complained of the alleged animadversions in their Report, were afforded every facility in this respect at the expence of the public, no steps were taken to ensure any similar advantage to the Commissioners, though, when a Board of Officers in London were to sit in judgment upon evidence taken in the Crimea, it was most essential they should have the parties who gave that evidence before them. The first official intimation, however, that the Commissioners received of the existence of the Board, was a notification, dated 4th April, 1856, from Mr. Peel, that the General Officers wished them to be informed that they would commence proceedings on the 7th of that month.

To the fairness of such an inquiry, it was further essential that the Commissioners should have been informed, in due time, of the animadversions complained of, that they might be prepared with evidence to establish their statements; but in the cases of Sir Richard Airey and Colonel Gordon, all information of this kind was withheld: indeed, up to the very hour when these officers opened their cases, not the slightest hint had been conveyed to either of the Commissioners of the parts of the Report intended to be assailed, or whether objections were to be raised at all.

A Board thus constituted, and of which public rumour predicted the object and the verdict, even before the proceedings commenced, my colleague and I could scarcely have been expected to recognize; but events soon proved that we stood in very different positions as regarded our obligations in this respect. Sir John McNeill being unconnected with the military profession, the decision of seven General Officers, whether adverse or otherwise, could not have affected him; but it might have had a very material influence upon my future career, for however slight the effect it might have produced elsewhere, any opinion coming from such a body could not be otherwise than deferred to, by the General Commanding-in-Chief who had appointed them. My colleague and I were consequently no longer on

the same footing,—to him the decision of the Board could be of no moment—to me, though no party to its constitution, it might be fraught with very serious consequences.

Even this risk, however, I might have encountered in order to retain the valued co-operation of my colleague; but in the opening of the proceedings regarding the Cavalry, assertions were made before the Board by Lord Lucan seriously affecting my character as an Officer, as he expressly charged me with having made a Report “totally at variance with the fact and truth,” with “having invidiously made statements for the purpose of throwing discredit on the Cavalry,” and with having been actuated by motives of “malice and malignity” towards that body.

To have allowed such a charge to pass unnoticed, even if casually made, would be in direct opposition to the usual practice in the Army; but to sit tamely under it when deliberately uttered before a Board of General Officers, not one of whom made the slightest attempt to protect an absent man, would have indicated a want of spirit and feeling, ill becoming a member of my profession.

The course usual on such occasions in the army is for the Officer accused to take steps to clear his character, by requesting a Court of Inquiry; but the Board was already sitting in that capacity: I saw no alternative, therefore, but to appear before it, even at the risk of sacrificing the benefit I should have otherwise derived from the advice and co-operation of my colleague.

Lord Lucan subsequently expressed his regret for having attributed such motives to me; but this came too late to prevent my being forced, in my own defence, before a Court, to the constitution and proceedings of which, I entertained objections quite as decided as Sir John McNeill.

Though this circumstance, much to my regret, rendered a separate course of action necessary, it never for a moment interrupted that unanimity of feeling with which my colleague and I had so long laboured to accomplish the great

object of our mission. In evidence of this I have much pleasure in annexing two letters from Sir John McNeill, the one addressed to the Secretary of State for War immediately after the presentation of our Report to Parliament, the other addressed to myself, on receiving the proofs of this volume, which I had forwarded for his perusal.

No. 1 and 2 of
Appendix

What took place after I appeared, up to the period when I was suddenly attacked by severe illness it is unnecessary for me to comment upon ; but surely I had a right to expect, that, though absent, my reputation would have been safe under the protection of the Board, and that no statement to my prejudice would have been admitted into their Report, except upon the clearest and most unquestionable evidence ; that, above all, care would have been taken to sift that evidence thoroughly, considering that it was not given upon oath, and that almost every witness was directly, or indirectly, interested in discrediting the statements of the Commissioners.

In reviewing the Board's proceedings it will be observed that I have selected—not any particular part or parts of their Report, for I am well aware that there are few inquiries of an extensive nature, in which some mistakes may not be found ; but, even at the risk of being tedious, I have gone through the whole, taking every section *seriatim*, and I trust I have been able satisfactorily to show that it presents features of so extraordinary a character as to deserve the serious consideration of every one who wishes well to the profession of Arms, or is interested in the reputation of those who belong to it.

But, the injury such a Report might have done to me individually, sinks into insignificance when compared with its effect, present, and prospective upon the Service ; for what hope can reasonably be entertained that the same frightful calamities may not occur again, if a Board of General Officers gravely arrive at the conclusion that these were solely attributable to the want of pressed hay from

England? Whether such a conclusion is warranted by the evidence, and whether hay would have supplied the men with fresh meat; recovered the clothing lying useless in their squad-bags and knapsacks; provided fresh bread, and supplied lime-juice and medicine for the sick; roasted green-coffee for the healthy; and secured shelter for the horses which perished, because, nothing was done, in one Brigade, at least, for their protection, the public will now be able to decide for themselves. I can only say that I would prefer such a conclusion being promulgated to the world under the authority of seven General Officers, rather than by any statement of my colleague and myself.

It requires no demonstration to show, that could we conscientiously have disposed of the question in this summary manner, it would have been our best interest to have done so. As regards myself in particular, many painful circumstances have resulted from arriving at conclusions of a different complexion.

For upwards of twenty years I had been constantly employed at the War Office, either as Military Superintendent of Pensioners, or in other duties connected with the administration of the Army. During that period I had always been on the best possible terms with the Staff at the Horse Guards, and from the late Commander-in-chief in particular, under whom, when Secretary at War, I had served for several years, I received, previous to leaving England, the strongest mark of confidence, in his suggesting that I should have the local rank of a General Officer in the Crimea, to place me on the same footing as the British Commissioner with the French army, and in a position better corresponding to the heavy responsibilities likely to devolve upon me, than my present rank of Colonel.

It may, therefore, be supposed with what feelings of regret I found it my duty, to join with my colleague, in reporting that defective departmental arrangements in the Crimea had contributed, in no inconsiderable degree, to the

sufferings of the troops, and in pointing out that the system hitherto relied on as sufficient to provide for every emergency, had totally failed under the exigencies of the Crimean Campaign.

There was every inducement, too, of professional sympathy, in my case at least, to have prevented any allusion to the delay of the Cavalry in sheltering their horses; but fortunate was it for the Commissioners that, in the stern path of their duty, they allowed no such consideration to weigh with them; otherwise, in how discreditable a position would they have been placed when the publication of the censures in Lord Lucan's Divisional Orders, hereafter referred to, revealed that important fact.

It has been maintained, however, both by Lord Lucan and Sir Richard Airey, that the Commissioners were under no obligation to report at all, except on Commissariat matters, and that in doing so they exceeded their instructions. In making such an assertion, these officers must have omitted to refer to the second letter of instructions received by the Commissioners the day previous to their leaving England, and which was as follows:—

“ War Department, 22nd February, 1855.

“ Referring to your instructions of the 19th instant, I have further
“ to desire that you will make it your business to ascertain what may
“ have been the sources of supply of provisions, forage, and other articles
“ supplied to the troops in the Crimea.

“ You will further make inquiry into the alleged delay in unshipping
“ and *distributing the clothing and other stores* supplied for the use of the
“ Troops, and, having obtained all the information in your power, you
“ will submit to me a *full report* on the subject.

“ I am, &c.”

PANMURE.

Nothing, surely, could have been more explicit than this; and, accordingly, several months after forwarding a preliminary Report respecting the supplies more immediately under the charge of the Commissariat, the Commissioners

submitted a second Report, confined exclusively to the clothing and other stores referred to in their last letter of instructions.

The mere circumstance, however, of the former of these Reports being dated from Constantinople, and the latter from England, has been gravely commented upon as an objection, though they would, in the opinion of most persons, have been far more exceptionable, could it have been alleged that they were prepared, amid all the din and bustle of daily warfare in the Crimea, so opposed to that calm examination and careful consideration which the subject, as well as the extent and intricacy of the materials, required.

That the Commissioners spared no pains in collecting the information which was to form the basis of their Reports, will, I apprehend, be conceded even by those who have been foremost to question their accuracy; but it is necessary to explain that, with regard to a most important part illustrative of the enormous mortality in some corps compared with others, they laboured under the very serious disadvantage that, while their conclusions and deductions were published, the facts on which they had been founded were only partially made known.

At a very early stage of their inquiry the Commissioners saw the necessity, before venturing on any report as to the sufferings of the troops from the non-distribution of the supplies, into which they were specially directed to inquire, that the extent of the sickness and mortality during the previous winter, and the diseases which occasioned it, should be carefully examined. It is true they had no authority for this extension of their inquiries; but the verbal statements made to them on this subject were so overwhelming in some instances, and so conflicting in others, that it appeared absolutely requisite to test them by numerical evidence before allowing them to influence their conclusions. The medical officers of corps supplied the information readily, as affording one of the best evidences of their unparalleled exertions,

and of the difficulties they had to contend with, at a time when the whole army was, in a manner, one vast hospital.

Information thus cheerfully given, the Commissioners felt assured they could not be wrong in receiving, and arranging in such a manner as to exhibit the results in a comprehensive form; but, appreciating an objection which was made to publishing such facts while the war continued, and every exertion was still requisite to recruit the Army to its full establishment, they at considerable disadvantage restricted themselves on that occasion to a mere statement of the total loss. The necessity for withholding such information having now, however, happily passed away, I am permitted in justification of the conclusions at which my colleague and I arrived, to submit it to the public, as well as some details relative to the amount of duty performed by the force in front during the winter.

From this information, the particulars of which are given in the latter part of this volume, it will be found that after dividing, according to the several arms of the service in which it occurred, the aggregate loss from sickness alone, during the winter of 1854-55, in the Crimean army, including what took place at Scutari, and on the passage, the following results are obtained:—

The average loss of Infantry, as roughly estimated in the Commissioner's Report, was	....	....	39 per cent.
But in the Naval Brigade, which took a very prominent part in the operations during the whole siege, it was under			4 per cent.
The loss of Cavalry was	....	....	15 per cent.
Of Artillery	....	....	18 per cent.
While the loss of Officers, of all arms, was about	....	....	6 per cent.

But dividing the Infantry into groups, according to the periods of their arrival in the Crimea and the localities they occupied, the following are the results:—

The average loss of four regiments which arrived in and about January, and did not for nearly a month take any part of the duties in the front was only	....	7 per cent.
The average of four other regiments, which arrived in December, and were sent immediately to the front, was	....	27 per cent.
In the Highland Brigade, stationed at Bala-klava, the average was	....	24 per cent.
While in the regiments employed in front, on which the duties of the siege chiefly devolved, the average was	....	45 per cent.
And in eight of these corps which suffered most, it was	....	73 per cent.

This loss, be it observed, occurred within the short period of seven months, and was exclusive of men killed in action, or who died of their wounds. How far it may have been caused by the privations of the troops hereafter referred to—how far attributable to the excessive amount of duty they had to perform, the details of which are fully given at the end of this volume, must remain matter of conjecture; but that it could not have been in any important degree the result of climate, must be inferred from the circumstance of this loss having occurred in a country which, by the concurrent testimony of nearly all the Medical Officers, as well as the experience of the following year, appears to have been almost as healthy as Great Britain, except perhaps as regards Cholera.

Out of about 10,000^o men who died during these seven months, belonging to the Crimean Army, only 1,200 were cut off by that epidemic, the remainder perished by no foe-man's hand—no blast of pestilence, but from the slow, though sure, operation of disease, produced by causes, most of which appeared capable at least of mitigation.

Compared with this, the mortality in our Army on all previous occasions sinks into comparative insignificance; even

that of Walcheren, which threw the nation into mourning, and for years convulsed our Senate, did not exceed a fourth part of the average here recorded. Armies have perished by the sword—they have been overwhelmed by the elements, but never, perhaps, since the hand of the Lord smote the Host of the Assyrians, and they perished in a night, has such a loss from disease been recorded as on this occasion.

With the graves of ten thousand of their countrymen before their eyes, with the mouldering remains of Britain's choicest Cavalry beneath their feet, and with an overwhelming mass of evidence in their possession, to show how much of this loss might have been averted by a proper application of the supplies, could the Commissioners be expected to arrive at the conclusion of the Board of General Officers, that for all this no one in the Crimea was to blame.

I have only to request those who are interested in the solution of this important question to peruse the following remarks on the Proceedings and Report of the Board and to judge for themselves.

ALEX. M. TULLOCH,

Colonel,

Late Commissioner in the Crimea.

63, *Eaton Square, London,*

24th January, 1857.

REMARKS

ON

THE PROCEEDINGS AND REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF GENERAL OFFICERS

APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE STATEMENTS OF

SIR JOHN McNEILL AND COLONEL TULLOCH,

ANIMADVERTING UPON THE CONDUCT OF CERTAIN OFFICERS ON THE GENERAL STAFF, AND OTHERS, IN THE ARMY OF THE CRIMEA.

FOLLOWING out the course indicated in the preceding Introduction, I now propose adverting to the case of each complainant in the succession adopted by the Board. First in order comes that of

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL THE EARL OF LUCAN.

The first point to which Lord Lucan directed the attention of the Board of General Officers, was the alleged inaccuracy of “the Calculations of the Commissioners with respect to the Deaths of the Cavalry Horses.” The paragraph objected to by him is in the following terms :—

“ With reference to the effect of the deficiency of forage, and the other privations to which the horses of the army were exposed, we have ascertained the loss among them, from various causes, in the Cavalry and Artillery. A summary of the Returns obtained on that head will be found at page 193 of Appendix, which shows

Page 20 of
Commission-
ers' Report.

the loss attributable to sickness to be as follows, for the six months from October to March inclusive:—

	Strength.		Died by Sickness.		Rates per Cent. of Deaths.
Heavy Cavalry ..	1055	-	493	-	47
Light Cavalry ..	1161	-	439	-	38
Artillery.. ..	2832	-	1190	-	42
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	5048		2122		42

On this head the Board reported as follows:—

Page IV. of
Board's Re-
port.

“ We are of opinion that the mode in which the percentage of deaths has been stated by the Commissioners is calculated to convey an erroneous impression, inasmuch as, though the figures are perfectly accurate, neither the rate percentage of deaths, contained in the table given at page 21 of the Report, nor the percentage of deaths according to the average strength given in the summary subsequently furnished by Colonel Tulloch, give the actual percentage of mortality.”

I regret that Lord Lucan had nothing of more general interest with which to commence his objections, than so intricate a matter as the best mode of calculating percentages of mortality. If, from the want of acquaintance with such subjects, the Board were unable to come to any decision as to what the proper rate should be, it appears rather an unusual course to find fault with the Commissioners for giving their view according to the best information they could obtain. That information, though based upon the numbers originally landed in the Crimea, had, at least, the advantage of being divested of all the complication consequent on the daily changes in the force which decreased so rapidly by death, that it was manifestly beyond the power of figures to present any result which would not have been liable to some exception.

Whenever the Board are prepared to offer a better solution of the question than that given by the Commissioners I shall be ready to join issue with them on the subject, but till they do so I must rest satisfied with the admission that the figures of the Commissioners “ are *perfectly accurate.*”

The Board do not seem to have been aware that

percentages of mortality are, at best, only approximate results, and that on precisely the same principle, though in a minor degree, objections might be taken by them to all the calculations which form the basis of the Vital Statistics of this country. To remove every difficulty on a question which, unfortunately, the Board did not appear to understand, I offered to refer the calculations to Dr. Farr of the Statistical branch in the Registrar-General's Department, as being probably the best qualified person in the kingdom to offer an opinion; but I regret that they neither availed themselves of that source of information, nor inserted in their Report a letter from that gentleman, confirmatory of the calculations objected to by them.

The second objection refers to the loss of Cavalry horses as compared with that of the Commissariat baggage animals, in regard to which the Commissioners had reported that—

“On referring to the loss sustained by the Commissariat animals during the same period, it will be found rather less than in the Cavalry or Artillery, the deaths among them having, according to a Return furnished by Deputy Commissary-General Adams, amounted to 889 out of 2,329 originally imported into the Crimea, or in the proportion of 38 per cent, a result which could scarcely have been expected, considering the advantages which cavalry horses might be supposed to have over hard-worked baggage animals, to whom little attention could be paid at such a period.”

Page 21 f
Commission-
ers' Report.

On this the Board of General Officers came to the following conclusion:—

“We are not enabled to offer an opinion thereon, as, on examining the Returns which were furnished to us by the Audit Office relative to the matter in question, we found that the difficulties of ascertaining the periods at which the Commissariat animals arrived in the Crimea, and of distinguishing between those lost or stolen, and those that died, were so great, as to render any comparison of deaths between them and the Cavalry impossible.”

Page IV.
of Board's
Report.

The circumstance of the Board not being able, in this matter either, to offer any opinion, is not, I presume, to invalidate that expressed by the Commissioners, who had better opportunity for research, and perhaps a greater disposition to exercise it. Many

cases will be quoted throughout this volume, in which the Board have been unable to avail themselves of information, even when in a more tangible form ; and, therefore, their failure in this instance to come to any satisfactory conclusions, however much to be regretted, will not, perhaps, excite much surprise.

Page 60, 3rd
Report Sebas-
topol Commit-
tee, also p. 460
of Appendix to
Board's Report.

Had the Board, instead of referring to the Audit Office, consulted the different volumes and documents before them, particularly those noted on margin, a fair approximation to the dates of arrival of most of the baggage animals might have been obtained ; and had they then assumed, even the whole number unaccounted for, as deaths, they would have found the loss not to have equalled that sustained by the Cavalry.

Leaving, however, these statistical questions to remain a matter of opinion, I shall proceed to that portion of the inquiry which tends to show *how the horses died, and why they died*, as to which, Lord Lucan's information is, fortunately, of a more definite description.

One of the main causes of the heavy loss among the Cavalry, both with respect to men and horses, was the want of shelter during the severity of winter in the Crimea, and as that arm of the service appeared to have had considerable facilities, compared with the rest of the army, for providing shelter, and as they had been ordered to provide it several months before they did so, the Commissioners considered it their duty, in accounting for the non-application of the hutting supplies sent out from England, to make the following observations :—

Page 36 of
Report.

“The date at which the hutting of the Cavalry commenced was, in no case, earlier than the end of January or beginning of February ; and it was not completed before the middle of March, by which time the severity of the season had so far abated that this shelter was of comparatively little importance. Considering that these men were within about a mile of the store where the wood might be obtained, that they had no work in the trenches, and that the only duties likely to interfere with the application both of horses and men to this important object, was the carrying up of their own forage from Balaklava, and furnishing parties occasionally to bring down sick and carry up provisions to the front (which seems never

to have occupied more than about a fifth of the whole), it appears strange that more rapid progress was not made in obtaining the advantage of hut accommodation, particularly when they are described as having suffered so much in their tents.

“Considering also the suffering and severe loss of horses from exposure to the weather in the commencement of the winter, there appears to have been a want of promptitude or ingenuity in devising for them some means of temporary shelter, such as saved the baggage-horses of the Sappers and Miners at Balaklava. Experience has now proved, that even a very moderate degree of shelter would have been sufficient to save the lives of many of the horses, if not to maintain them in serviceable condition: and it must be presumed that such measures were considered practicable; for a proposal to erect, with the assistance of his men, some sort of cover for the horses of the corps appears to have been made by the officer commanding the Scots Greys; but the manner in which it is stated to have been received by the Lieutenant-General commanding the Cavalry was calculated to deter other officers from making any similar proposal.”

The first part of these paragraphs, which was intended to apply to the hutting of the men, Lord Lucan affected to consider as relating to the stabling of the horses. This impression was, however, removed by the explanation that he had been misled by the accidental displacement of part of the running margin. It only remains, therefore, for me to establish the accuracy of the assertion which follows, that the unusual duty imposed on the Cavalry, of bringing down sick and carrying up provisions to the front, never occupied more than one-fifth of the whole, as Lord Lucan, in his address to the Board, has attempted to cast discredit on that statement.

See p. 19 of Proceedings.

The Commissioners founded their estimate on two Returns—the one obtained from Colonel Hodge, the officer commanding the Heavy Brigade, the other from Lieutenant-Colonel Mayou, the Assistant Quartermaster-General of the Light Brigade—both had been furnished to the Commissioners as correct; but it was alleged before the Board by Lord Lucan, that that of Colonel Hodge had under-stated the number of men employed, particularly during the first week.

1 to 3 of Commissioners' Appendix.

See pages 458 and 602 of Appendix to Proceedings of the Board.

So careful, however, had the Commissioners been to keep within the truth, that, even admitting the

See pages 413
and 414 of
Board's Ap-
pendix.

numbers employed to have been as stated by Lord Lucan, the proportion in both brigades would only have exceeded, by a mere fraction, *one-fifth of the whole*; and this excess was but for a week, as may be seen by comparing the strength of the brigades, extracted from the War Office Returns, with the numbers employed. This objection, consequently, though brought prominently forward by Lord Lucan, failed so signally, that the Board appear to have considered it undeserving of notice, except incidentally, in their Report.

The second paragraph last quoted, Lord Lucan has thought himself justified in denouncing as being "totally at variance with the fact and the truth," and prompted by "malice and malignity," and in reference to it he pledged himself to remove "the slightest breath of reproach" from "himself and the Cavalry," and to show—

See p. 8 of
Proceedings.

"That no loss of horses could be justly charged on himself, or the Cavalry Officers generally; but, on the contrary, that they did all in their power to mitigate and arrest what, unhappily, under the circumstances in which they were placed, and the orders to which they owed submission, proved entirely beyond their control, declaring in the strongest language that he was prepared to show that *every endeavour, every strain, and every thing on earth* that could be done to promote and hasten the building of those stables was done; that *not an hour was lost*; that the operations commenced actually before the troops had taken their winter quarters, and that they were superintended by himself, and carried out by the other officers with an energy which deserved credit and not discredit; and that he was prepared to show *by his orders*, for he had no other means of proof, that so far from the stables not having been commenced till the end of January, they were nearly completed by that time."

See p. 13 of
Proceedings.

At the very time Lord Lucan made this statement the orders to which he referred, and which were then in his hand, gave a direct and unqualified contradiction to this solemn assertion, and showed beyond question that if the Cavalry had really been maligned, the origin of the imputation was due, not to the Commissioners, but to his Lordship. Let those who doubt, peruse the following extract from his Divisional Order of 20th January, 1855:—

“The Lieutenant-General is sorry to observe, that in the Light Brigade no exertion whatever—*not even an attempt has been made to put any of the horses under cover*, a fact *not creditable* to commanding officers. They should have shown *some desire to save the few that remain*; and as the disproportion between men and horses is, in this brigade, far more favourable than in the Heavy Brigade, *it is impossible to explain, far less to justify*, why, whilst the one brigade has huddled more than one-half their horses, the commanding officers of the Light Brigade have *done nothing*. Each of these commanding officers will be good enough to report daily how many disposable men he had the day previous, and what progress they have made.”

Page 439 of
Appendix to
Board's Pro-
ceedings.

This Order, it will be observed, is dated at the very period when it “appeared strange,” in the opinion of the Commissioners, that no progress whatever had been made in providing shelter, and in consequence of which they thought it their duty to state the circumstance, for further inquiry, if the Government thought it necessary.

Even so late as the 7th February, within a week of the period when his Lordship gave up his command, the following paragraph appears in his Divisional Orders regarding the unnecessary exposure of the horses of one of the regiments.

“Whilst the Lieutenant-General yesterday was much pleased by finding the whole of the horses of the 4th Dragoon Guards under cover, well groomed, and with horse clothing clean and in repair, he was as much displeased with the ———, who, with house-room at their command, *positively had their horses exposed to the weather*; the horses were encrusted with mud and dirt;” and again, “but few horses had clothing at all, and that clothing in filth and rags. Lord Lucan scarcely ever visited a camp with less satisfaction.”

Page 440 of
Appendix.

These extracts must be sufficient to convince even the most sceptical, that the Lieutenant-General commanding the Cavalry had formed an opinion, from the facts under his own observation, at least equally strong as that expressed by the Commissioners. These severe strictures on the dilatory conduct of the Light Brigade, were either merited or not merited. In the former case, how could his Lordship find fault with the Commissioners for

repeating, but in milder terms, his own remarks—in the latter, how could he be surprised if, with less opportunity for observation, they should have adopted the same belief as himself, regarding the want of promptitude evinced by this part of the Force ?

It is difficult to imagine what excuse his Lordship can possibly offer for having occupied so many days of the proceedings of the Board, in his attempts to controvert facts established by the testimony of his own Divisional Orders, or for his extraordinary inconsistency in first endeavouring to shield himself from future responsibility by unlimited censure, and then endeavouring to prove that those censures were unmerited, by the evidence of the very men whom he had severely reprimanded.

And here I must call attention for a moment, to the awkward predicament in which these untoward Orders place the evidence of Sir Richard Airey, Major Connolly, and Major-General Scarlett, the first of whom declared it to be “utterly extraordinary” that a cavalry soldier should be able to do anything towards the construction of stables, even at a time when, owing to the absence of all care and grooming, the horses were in the state hereafter described by Lord Lucan in his Divisional Orders; the second, that it was impossible there could have been more promptitude displayed in sheltering the horses; and the third, that he was not aware more could have been done—all, be it observed, in direct opposition to the recorded reprimand of Lord Lucan to the Light Brigade for having “done nothing.”

Sir Richard Airey, from his position as Quartermaster-General of the Army, must have known of this Order, relating, as it does, in so important a degree, to providing shelter: a matter intimately connected with his own Department. It was the especial duty of Major Connolly, as one of the Brigade-Majors of the Division, to circulate it, and General Scarlett, as commanding one of the Brigades, was the first person likely to have seen it, after being made public;

yet not one of these Officers makes the slightest allusion to so important a circumstance, which, if known, must at once have closed the proceedings of the Board, so far at least as the Cavalry were concerned.

But this is not all. Lord Lucan, in his anxiety to establish his case against the Commissioners, called as witnesses Colonels Douglas and Low, two of the cavalry officers of the Light Brigade, especially censured by the Order of the 20th January, an event, it may be presumed, they were not likely to forget, and he put to each of them the following question:—

“Do you consider that there might have been, on the part of myself, or of the officers commanding brigades or regiments, more promptitude or ingenuity in sheltering these horses, than was displayed under the circumstances in which we were placed?” See pages 144 and 160 of Proceedings.

Both officers replied to the effect, that they thought all ranks did their duty in every respect, so far as sheltering their horses was concerned. Neither of them apparently thought it necessary to recall to Lord Lucan's recollection that they had been censured in the very strongest terms for having “done nothing” during five weeks of the direst extremity of the Cavalry, and that consequently either his Lordship or they must have been wrong in their conclusions.

But what must be thought of the conduct of the Board in the matter? Never surely in any Court, civil or military, have such proceedings come before the public, as that an officer should charge others with “malice,” “malignity,” and even “falsehood,” for repeating, but in very modified terms, what had been expressed in the strongest possible language by himself, and that the members should pass unnoticed the fact that they had before them an official document under his own hand, expressly contradicting his repeated and most emphatic assertions on that head.

The Commissioners knew nothing of this Order, it was never communicated to them, nor did they see it till the proceedings of the Chelsea Board were made public; they grounded their remark on what they had

seen and heard in the Crimea; but the seven General Officers had it before them for several months, yet not one ever thought of asking Lord Lucan the simple question, how he could possibly reconcile his complaint against the Commissioners, with the facts stated in his own Divisional Order.

The importance of such a question could hardly have escaped the combined intelligence of so many members of the profession, if they really had read the Orders, which it must be inferred they did from their expressing themselves satisfied "by a perusal of "his Lordship's Divisional Orders, that he used every "exertion to meet the peculiar difficulties which he "had to contend with." What deduction, then, must be drawn from such an important document never having been even alluded to, in the course of the investigation? Was this a compliance with the Board's instructions so to direct their inquiries "that the truth should be made manifest," or did they imagine that portion of the Warrant applicable only when they conceived the Commissioners to be in error?

And here it may be useful to mention as illustrative of the injury done to the Commissioners by bringing their Report before a Board of Officers who were never in the Crimea, that had even one of the members had the benefit of local experience, he must have witnessed the charnel-house scenes which the cavalry camp exhibited during the winter; he would, in occasionally passing through the lines, have seen the horses standing, or rather dying at their pickets, so late as the 20th of January; nay even so late as the 7th of February. He would, probably, have known of these very Divisional Orders of Lord Lucan, and by drawing attention to the obvious contradiction they presented to his assertions, have spared me the pain of commenting on them in terms which I would gladly have avoided.

The Board, however, ignoring altogether the Order of Lord Lucan, of 20th January, 1854, reported as follows:—

“ It appears that after the Cavalry went to Kadekoi, the hutting was not carried out until January or February, owing to delays and difficulties which appear sufficiently to explain it, inasmuch as in addition to the ordinary duties of a Cavalry soldier in the field, the duties performed by the cavalry from the 12th December to the 19th January, in conveying stores to the front, and afterwards in transporting the sick, materially interfered with the operation of hutting the men and putting up stables for the horses.

Page 4 of
Board's Re-
port.

“ The insufficiency and bad quality of the intrenching tools added to this difficulty.”

In arriving at this conclusion respecting the delays and difficulties to which the Cavalry were exposed the Board of General Officers appear to have left out of view :

1. That these could not have been accounted for by any uncertainty with regard to the occupation of the Plateau, because the most serious part of the delay occurred during the seven weeks after the Cavalry were withdrawn from that position, during which, as Lord Lucan's Order expressly points out, the Light Brigade had “ done nothing ” towards providing shelter for their horses.

2. They could not have been accounted for, by any deficiency in the number of men, for Lord Lucan's Divisional Order states, that the Light Cavalry, who did nothing, was comparatively better off in that respect than the Heavy Cavalry, who in the same time had erected stabling for half their horses.

3. It was not the want of tools, as suggested by the Board, for these must have been issued more than a month before the 20th of January, the Divisional Order of the 16th of December having stated that “ the ground for the stabling is already marked out, the regiments are in possession of a certain number of entrenching tools, and, if required, more shall be given them.”

4. It was not the Commissariat Duties, for these had early in January been reduced to one-half of their former amount, yet nothing whatever was done by the Light Cavalry, at least, so states Lord Lucan.

To what extent the ordinary duties of a cavalry soldier in the field, referred to by the Board, may have had the effect of preventing the men from procuring shelter for their horses during so long a period, depends, of course, on how these duties were performed, as to which it may be as well here to give the opinion of Lord Lucan, from one of his Divisional Orders, dated 30th January, 1855.

Page 439 of Appendix to Proceedings of Board. “It is with great concern that the Lieutenant-General has to complain of the manner in which regimental duties are carried on. The men’s kits and appointments are unnecessarily dirty, the horses are badly groomed, and all uniformity of dress appears to be purposely avoided, horses are sent on duty without shoes, or so badly shod, that some shoes are sure to be lost. It is inconceivable how the different duties pass the inspection of officers and non-commissioned officers. Exposed as the Cavalry are to the criticism, not only of the other branches of this army, but of foreigners, it is matter of surprise that a greater anxiety is not shown by commanding officers for the characters of their regiments. It would be more agreeable to Lord Lucan to have to approve instead of disapprove so constantly of the manner in which the duties are performed; but it is his duty, so far as he can, to preserve the discipline, efficiency, and character of the Cavalry Division; and he is resolved that no consideration towards corps or individuals, shall induce him to overlook a system of irregularity and neglect, which, if allowed to continue, must seriously damage the character of all.”

When cavalry soldiers have to turn out in the same high state of equipment as in this country, a considerable portion of their time may no doubt be occupied in their ordinary duties; but that nothing of the kind could be pleaded for the delay in this instance seems clear by Lord Lucan’s own showing.

It still remains, therefore, to be explained what were the delays and difficulties which appear sufficiently to account for the postponement of the erection of stabling till the greater part of the horses were dead; and if such really existed, the Board certainly omitted a most important part of their duty in not pointing them out to Lord Lucan, and calling on him to account for his Divisional Order of the 20th of January, 1855, *which, so long as it remains on record, must ever be considered as sufficient proof that all the*

Commissioners stated, in regard to want of promptitude, was very much within the mark.

By this Order, which at length roused the Light Brigade into activity, Lord Lucan no doubt rendered an important service to the army; it is only to be regretted that he should have forborne all notice of the fact that, between the 16th of December, when he made a forcible appeal to his officers, as to the necessity for "scarping away the ground in their front, and paving under their horses' feet;" and the date, when the Light Brigade commenced acting on that Order, no less a period than five weeks elapsed. During all that time, he, as well as his staff, from their residence within the Cavalry lines, could scarcely have avoided being daily witnesses of the want of progress of which he ultimately complained in such strong terms; indeed, his Lordship expressly states, "after our arrival at Kadekoi, I rode nearly daily to the camp of one or more Regiments, to see the progress made in the hutting." The camp of the Light Brigade must have shared occasionally in these visits, yet till the 20th January the Divisional Orders are altogether silent as to their having done nothing, though the loss of horses in the Division during the interim is stated by Lord Lucan at 426, and though every horse that died must have left one soldier at least available to provide shelter for the survivors.

Yet, with this striking fact before them, the Board arrived at the following conclusions:—

"With regard to the general charge of want of promptitude or ingenuity, as attaching to the Cavalry under the command of Lieutenant-General the Earl of Lucan, it appears by the statement made to us by Colonel Tulloch, and by the whole course of his examination of witnesses, to have been founded in the assumption that tools, and materials (including canvas), and labour, were either at hand, or might have been procured from the fleet or from Constantinople, an assumption which does not appear to be borne out by the evidence. Page 5 of Board's Report.

"The uncertainty with regard to the occupation of the Plateau by the Cavalry, appears to us to form a very material element in the consideration of this matter, added to which, the difficulty of trans-

port to that place was such, that even if it had been possible to have procured the before-mentioned tools and materials (including canvas), they could not have been there made available.

“It further appears, that after the Cavalry arrived at Kadekoi, the Earl of Lucan was unceasing in his endeavours to erect shelter for the horses.”

I do not propose to enter here at length upon any discussion as to the particular description of temporary shelter which might have been made available for the protection of the horses. Men differ in nothing more than in the degree of fertility of resource with which they are endowed; Lord Lucan considered that to place a horse in a pit was to consign him to a “grave,” and that to shelter him with canvas was the act of a madman, and he saw between 800 and 900 horses out of 1,600 perish, without even an attempt to devise any other kind of protection, and he makes the following statement as to the difficulty of sheltering horses there, which the Board appear to have considered quite conclusive on the subject:—

See p. 185
of Proceedings.

“In that country, with that soil, a soil that puddles after three or four hours' rain, consisting chiefly as it did on the plateau, of a strong brick clay, I say that without a roof, or unless you could have paved, such a trench as is talked of would have been totally useless; and it would have been mischievous, because it would very much have obstructed you in what is far more essential, namely, the constant removal of your horses. When you talk of a pit—a pit is not only useless, but it is perhaps the most mischievous thing into which a horse can possibly be put. It has been tried—and there is an officer in this Court now, who could establish the truth of what I say, if he were examined upon the subject, he belongs to the Land Transport. They did make pits for their horses, and those pits were dug on the side of hills; still it was found impossible to drain them sufficiently, and the horses suffered so much that the Turks who had charge of them could not be got to use the pits after they were dug. In short, a pit that is neither roofed in nor paved, would be more appropriately called a grave than a pit.”

Now, considering the fatal results of Lord Lucan's experience in such matters, he should certainly have been more chary of alluding to any other description of shelter as being “*a grave*,” especially as the only testimony to which he refers in support of so strong

an assertion, is that of an officer whose name he does not even mention, and who was never examined by the Board; forgetting apparently altogether, that the evidence of his own select witness, Admiral Lyons, to which he clings so strongly in other particulars, was very much in favour of this mode of sheltering horses.

See p. 152
of Proceedings.

It may be useful to contrast this theory of Lord Lucan's, with the experience of Captain Measom, formerly of the 10th Hussars, who recently accompanied a Division of the French army in Algeria, and has published a narrative, from which the following is an extract:—

See "House-
hold Words,"
Vol. xiv. p. 49.

"Shortly after we rejoined the head-quarters of the column, an example of how horses can be protected in wet weather when in the field, was practically illustrated by the French Cavalry.

"The commencement of the undertaking was, marking out in white lines the length and breadth of the intended pits in which the horses were to be placed. This was done in about an hour. Then the men began in earnest to dig, as if making the foundations for a street of houses. In twelve or fourteen hours every horse in the detachment was well protected against the weather. The animals stood in a space sunk some three feet below the level of the ground, which was sloped as well as drained, so that it would retain no water. The spare earth turned up from these spaces was plastered into rude walls to windward, so that the horses were protected up to their chests against the weather, although there was neither time nor materials to cover them over head. The precaution had not been taken in vain, for a more fearful storm than that which burst over our heads before the job was over, or a more lasting soaking rain than that which then commenced and continued for four days, it was never my fate to encounter.

"Had the horses been left unprotected, they would all have broken away. As it was, when the bad weather came to an end, they were one and all in as good condition as if they had just come out of one of the best stables in France."

This is one of the descriptions of temporary shelter to which I referred before the Board, as having been practicable for the Cavalry in the first instance, and if twelve hours sufficed to obtain it in a French corps, there seems no good reason why an English Division should have been without it for nearly twelve weeks. Lord Lucan will find that none of the con-

sequences he so graphically describes as arising from the occupation of these pits or "graves," were observed upon this occasion. He may rest assured that in the Crimea, as well as in Algeria, water usually finds its level, and that on the side of a considerable declivity, such as the Cavalry occupied in the Valley of Kadekoi, the floors of these pits only required a proper slope to prevent any considerable quantity of water lodging in them. With every respect for his Lordship's testimony, and the soundness of his opinion, both must be doubted when opposed to the laws of nature.

Page IV. of
Board's Re-
port.

It is much to be regretted that in their comments on the description of temporary shelter obtained for the baggage horses of the Sappers and Miners, the Board should, apparently from their want of local knowledge, have assumed that the Commissioners contemplated sheltering the whole of the Cavalry by precisely the same means, whereas they merely adduced that, as an illustration of the facility with which three dwarf walls might be made to support canvas, without the assistance of the usual frame work. Such walls might not be found ready-made, as at Balaklava, but there was nothing to prevent their being formed, as in the case of the French Cavalry just referred to, by digging into the side of the valley of Kadekoi, and throwing up the earth, on which canvas, or any other covering, might afterwards have been fixed. It was not necessary, as the Board of General Officers appear to conclude, that labour should be obtained, otherwise than from the ranks of the Cavalry; on the contrary, I expressly called attention to the short period in which the required excavations for such a purpose might have been made by that Force, and the number likely to have been available for such employment.

See p. 55 of
Proceedings.

The possibility of providing sailcloth from the Fleet, or from Constantinople, has been the subject of much controversy, but that was only requisite for a more advanced stage of shelter, and judging from

the experience of the French Cavalry in Algeria, the excavations would have proved useful in the meantime, whether ultimately covered with sailcloth or not; but unfortunately the Light Cavalry, according to the official statement by Lord Lucan, did "nothing."

The discussion with regard to the use of sailcloth, which occupied so much of the time of the Board, first arose, it must be observed, during the inquiry at Chelsea. It formed, therefore, no part of the question as to the accuracy of the Commissioners' Report; but, as it has excited much attention, and the Board refer to it in their conclusions, it may be well to advert briefly to the subject. In doing so, it is painful to cast even a doubt on such testimony as that of Admiral Lyons or Admiral Dundas, particularly on a professional subject; but neither of these officers seems to have been aware, when he made the statement of all the spare canvas having been landed for the use of the Naval Brigade, that Captain Hillyar, who had been serving with that brigade in the the winter of '54-55, had previously been questioned by the Sebastopol Committee as to the tent accommodation, and his replies were as follows:—

See p. 320,
Vol. III.
Qu. 17186.

"Were they Ordnance tents that they had?"

"All of them.

"Were they the same as the army had?"

"Precisely the same.

"Were they good tents?"

"Some were good, and some were worn tents that had been used by the army at Varna,"

To this testimony that of the Commissioners themselves may be added, as they repeatedly visited the Naval Brigade, in order to see the arrangements for enforcing cleanliness, on which occasions they found the tent accommodation of precisely the same description as in the other parts of the camp, with here and there a few erections of sailcloth of an irregular form, used for cooking and cleaning purposes; but which were not likely to have required more than a fractional part of the supply put on board the fleet when it left England, viz. :—

See Admiralty's Return, p. 605, of Appendix to Proceedings,

			Yards.
Old Canvas	..	..	4,410
New do.	..	..	9,890
In spare sails	..	..	85,355

Of the latter, no doubt a considerable proportion consisted of duplicates of sails, which could not, perhaps have been readily dispensed with, in case of any accident to the originals; but this could not apply to the vast extent of light canvas, such as studding sails, royals, &c., never likely to be wanted in boisterous weather, and of which not the duplicates, but the originals even, as well as the extensive awnings usually on board ships of war in southern latitudes, might surely have been spared for so important an object as the salvation of the Cavalry.

See p. 453 of Appendix to Third Report of Sebastopol Committee.

Besides this source of supply, every transport is bound by its charter-party to have on board, on leaving England, 50 yards of old, with about 480 yards of new canvas, reckoning each bolt at forty yards; and as thirty-five steam and fifty-four sailing transports were employed in the Black Sea, in December, 1854, of which the majority were in Balaklava harbour, or its vicinity, that supply might, of itself, have afforded the requisite cover, even had none been obtainable from the navy.

Page 147 of Proceedings.

But it was of little consequence what store was on board, when the sailcloth was never asked for, and certainly the doubt whether there was enough for the whole could afford no sufficient reason for the use of it not having been resorted to by a portion of the Force, particularly in the sheltered valley of Kadekoi. Had the experiment been tried, it would probably have been found, as in the case of Major Barker's Battery, and Captain Thomas's Troop of Horse Artillery, that it would have sufficiently answered the purpose, even for a considerable period.

As if expressly to show the futility of these objections to the use of sail-cloth, as a means of affording rapid covering for horses, it has since been used extensively for this purpose at Aldershot, without

any of those serious consequences anticipated from it by Lord Lucan and some of his witnesses. If resorted to in a country where any other description of shelter could have been obtained, how triumphant a refutation does this afford to the objections urged against its adoption on a spot where there was no other alternative but to leave the horses exposed entirely to the weather.

The want of suitable scantling, referred to by some of the witnesses, could not have been experienced after the 25th December, when the vessels began to arrive from England with the frame-work of the huts; and if the Infantry at Balaklava could, under the directions of Sir Colin Campbell, carry up to the front such heavy articles as shot, shell, and gun-platforms, during the greater part of two months, as shown in his letter to the Quartermaster-General, dated 29th January, 1855, there was, surely, nothing to prevent the Cavalry, even without the aid of their horses, from carrying up the comparatively lighter scantling for their stables.

The alleged difficulty of obtaining sailcloth from Constantinople scarcely requires a comment. To suppose that during a period of active warfare the quantity necessary to equip a single man of war, or to provide tentage for a brigade, could not have been obtained in the Turkish Arsenals, would imply a degree of improvidence on the part of our Allies which exceeds all that has yet come to light. That, however, may be within the bounds of possibility; but that in a port such as Constantinople, crowded with vessels from all parts of the world, and forming the emporium of commerce for the Black Sea and upper part of the Mediterranean, there should be any difficulty in purchasing sailcloth, as the Board seem to have inferred from the evidence of Major Hackett and Captain Derriman, requires a facility of belief for which I, at least, am not disposed to take credit.

A very slight, but important, explanation may, however, reconcile the statements of these witnesses

Sec p. 152 of
Evidence of
Commission-
ers' Report.

Pages 331
and 332 of Pro-
ceedings.

Page 331 of
Proceedings.

with the actual fact, and afford at the same time another illustration how much the conclusions of the Board have been affected by the exclusion of all officers possessing local information. The sailcloth used in the East, whether for tents or naval purposes, is made of strong cotton; the witnesses probably sought only for canvas made from flax, of the description usual in the British service. Hence the statement by Colonel Wetherall that "the Pasha who had the direction of the Tophana Arsenal wrote to say, that he could not get any canvas either from the Arsenal or by purchase, and he begged that *cotton* might be substituted." Had the Colonel, and the other witnesses tried this cotton, they would have found it quite as useful for covering the horses or for awnings as British canvas, with the advantage of being much lighter. It is to be regretted that of seven General Officers not one attempted to elucidate the reason why cotton was refused, though it might have been presumed that the Pasha would not have offered it for the purpose of making hospital tents, if unfit even for covering horses.

See evidence
of Sir De Lacy
Evans, Vol. 2
of Sebastopol
Report, p. 34.
Qu. 625.

It only remains to notice the opinion expressed by the Board with reference to the threat used by Lord Lucan to Colonel Griffith.

The Commissioners never pledged themselves for the correctness of this statement, but merely gave it as detailed to them. Colonel Griffith, when examined before the Board, strictly adhered to it, not only so far as regarded the threat of arrest, but also that such threat was in consequence of his proposition regarding temporary shelter. Lord Lucan, as the complainant, had the power of calling any witnesses he thought proper to establish his case; but as he did not call *even one*, it must be presumed that he thought the matter had better rest as it stood, viz., upon the conflicting testimony of himself and Colonel Griffith. In this he very probably consulted his best interests; but if any conclusions adverse to his Lordship are drawn from that course, he has himself to blame.

As to other officers having been influenced by the misunderstanding between the Earl of Lucan and Colonel Griffith, it seems only necessary to observe, that the Commissioners never made any such assertion, but merely affirmed that, to threaten an officer with arrest because he pressed on his commander a suggestion which he considered for the benefit of his corps, was calculated to deter other officers from following his example, a truism in which it is believed every one must concur. The statement by the Board that no officers were thus influenced, is one exceedingly difficult of proof, considering that they could not have made an admission to the contrary, without rendering themselves amenable to military law. Even supposing, however, no such effect to have been produced, the inference by no means follows that Lord Lucan's proceedings were not calculated to have that tendency, which was all the Commissioners asserted.

Before concluding my observations on this branch of the Report, there is a point to which I think it important, not merely in justice to my colleague and myself, but also to the Cavalry to direct attention. From the evidence obtained in the Quartermaster-General's Department, it had been made to appear to the Commissioners that the Orders for the Cavalry providing shelter for the horses had been issued as early as the 8th and 12th of November, about three months before that object was finally accomplished: but no explanation had accompanied this statement, that a month at least elapsed before those Orders could be obeyed, owing to the want of tools, materials, assistance, and a proper site.

It was of the utmost importance that this circumstance should have been noticed by the Board as affording some explanation of the extreme delay which the Commissioners had mildly designated as a want of promptitude. No one perusing the Report of the Board, however, would suppose that such a circumstance had ever been brought under their

See pages
179 and 188 of
Evidence of
Commission-
ers' Report.

consideration at all, though repeatedly adverted to and commented on by me. The General Officers might, perhaps, naturally feel disinclined to enter on a subject which placed the testimony of the Quartermaster-General in a very questionable light; but as it was their duty to make the truth manifest, such a consideration should not have been allowed to operate to the prejudice of the Commissioners; and, in self-defence, I must now call attention to the following details on the subject.

Page 93 of
Proceedings.
Qu. 523.

On the question being put to General Airey, why, when he received the written queries which gave him an opportunity of explaining such matters, he had never pointed out the want of tools, materials, assistance, &c., which for upwards of a month had prevented the Cavalry from complying with his Orders of 8th and 12th November, in providing shelter for themselves, that officer replied:—

“My own examination in writing, I have already stated two or three times, was merely general and superficial answers to general questions. I had no indication whatever of the leaning of the Commissioners, or that they implicated any body, or thought that there was blame attached to anybody; if I had the slightest idea of that, I should have been able to explain things perfectly.”

Unfortunately for General Airey's explanation, however, there was a letter from Colonel Gordon, acknowledging receipt of these queries, which told a very different tale. It is dated 4th June, 1855; and he there states:—

Page 163 of
Proceedings of
Board.

“As these questions to General Airey are fifty-two in number, nearly every one of which contains an implied accusation of neglect or carelessness, he begs me to say that he cannot consent to answer them in this off-hand way, but will examine each question, and prepare his replies as rapidly as the other duties of his Department will permit, which you must be aware, from the evidence you have taken, are of a very extensive and varied nature.”

It is not denied by General Airey that this explanation was given by his authority, and the manner in

which he endeavours to get out of the difficulty appears worth quoting:—

“ The Preliminary Report was sent to Lord Raglan, and Lord Raglan put it into the Military Secretary’s hands and mine. The very first sentence of the Preliminary Report states, that the inquiry was completed, and I am only showing that my answers, written at a subsequent period to that, were entirely written in a different spirit, considering that the Commissioners had completed their work; and the document then goes on very much in the terms of the Constantinople Report now before the Board, and without indicating any prospect of an attempt to cast blame either upon Lord Lucan or myself, or, I believe, upon any of the military authorities.

Page 252 of
Proceedings of
Board.

“ Now it was quite the latter end of July, if I rightly recollect, that I answered the written queries that had been left with me, I having then become acquainted with the Preliminary Report, which purported to be the result of the inquiry that was completed, and to be thoroughly and almost enthusiastically favourable to the military authorities. I of course looked upon the written queries then in a totally different light from that in which Colonel Gordon had regarded them some weeks previously, before the Preliminary Report had appeared. That Preliminary Report did, in truth, so to speak, appear to extract all the poison from the written queries; therefore, Colonel Gordon in the month of June, and I at the end of July or the beginning of August, were both justified in the views which we successively took of the same queries at different periods. To Colonel Gordon, in June, the queries had all the aspect of a live shell; to me, in August, after the Preliminary Report, and after the departure of the Commissioners from Constantinople, they had of course a perfectly innocent appearance, and I accordingly answered them in a slight and superficial way, as questions which were stripped of all their practical significance by the contents of the Preliminary Report, and it was with an accurate memory of that impression, and in perfect accord with that, that I answered Colonel Tulloch’s questions before the Board.”

I shall leave this explanation of the Quartermaster-General to persons who can understand it; those who peruse the last paragraph of the Report he alludes to, and which it is presumed he must have read as well as the commencement, will probably be disposed to consider the second contradiction worse than the first. The Commissioners there stated:—

“ The evidence in regard to some of the subjects of our inquiry has not yet been corrected by the officers last examined; having been sent to them for that purpose only the day before our departure

Page 498 of
Board’s Ap-
pendix.

from Balaklava. When we have received that evidence, and the answers to queries transmitted at the same time, we shall have the honour of reporting upon the matters to which they relate."

Now the queries here referred to, as General Airey very well knew, were those he was requested to answer; the evidence of the officers last examined was that of Colonel Gordon and Colonel Wetherall, on receiving which the Commissioners were to report respecting the matters to which they related, so being thus forewarned, that their future Report would depend on the explanations then given, it was more than ever necessary that the explanations of the Quartermaster-General should be of such a character as to prevent the possibility of error.

Page 610 of
Appendix to
Board's Re-
port.

General Airey seems to have forgotten that a *Preliminary* Report necessarily implies that another is to follow; and had he referred to the letter of Lord Raglan, acknowledging receipt, he would have seen that, though the Commissioners had concluded their inquiry, they certainly had not concluded their Reports, and that the "live shell" to which he professionally alludes in his explanation, still remained in a condition to explode.

Though this is not exactly the description of evidence which might be expected from an officer holding so distinguished an official position, I do not so much complain of it, as of the Board for not having brought prominently to notice so important a circumstance. Fortunately, since I have obtained Lord Lucan's Order of 20th January, in support of the Commissioner's conclusions, this omission is a matter of comparatively little consequence; for *if Lord Lucan was justified in finding fault with the Cavalry for want of promptitude, when he knew that the necessary preparations could not have commenced sooner than the 16th December, how much more were the Commissioners entitled to draw similar conclusions, when they had every reason to believe, from the evidence before them, that the preparations might have been begun nearly a month earlier.*

I now come to the consideration of the case of

MAJOR-GENERAL THE EARL OF
CARDIGAN.

The statement in the Commissioners' Report, of which this nobleman complained, was as follows:—

“The Light Cavalry Brigade, which had for some time previously been stationed in the valley adjacent to Balaklava, was removed, first to the vicinity of head-quarters for two or three days, and thereafter, on the 1st or 2nd of November, to Inkerman, where it was stationed near the Windmill, a distance of at least seven or eight miles from Balaklava. This change, at a time when the roads were in an extremely bad state, and when there was great difficulty in obtaining the means of transport, created very serious obstacles to a proper supply of forage being obtained.

Page 19 of
Commissioners'
Report.

“It is alleged by Deputy-Assistant Commissary-General Crookshanks, that there was a certain quantity of hay at Balaklava, but not the means of carrying it to the front; occasionally he managed to bring up a little, till the 14th November, when the supply failed entirely. After that date the want of transport affected the supply of barley also, which on several days did not exceed from $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. to 2 lbs. daily per horse, being all that they had to keep them alive. The Returns of one of the regiments show that, for the last four days they were on the ground, the average was only about $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. for each horse, previously exhausted as they had been by the want of hay or straw during the early part of the month.

“When the supply began to fail, the Commissariat Officer referred to, who appears to have done everything in his power to meet the difficulties of the case, proposed—as he knew there was plenty of barley at Balaklava—that if a detachment of the horses were allowed to go down daily, he would engage to bring up enough for the rest of the Brigade. This proposition appears to have been brought specially under the notice of Lord Cardigan by Lieutenant-Colonel Mayou, Assistant Quartermaster-General of Cavalry, who states that his Lordship declined to accede to it, as he had previously done when a similar proposition was made to him to send the horses down for hay before that supply failed.

“The whole Brigade remained in this state till the 2nd of December, when it was directed to return to its previous position, but by that time the horses were reduced to such a state from starvation, that they could no longer bear the weight of their riders; they had to be led down; many were left on the ground in a dying state, and of the remainder seventeen died on the road before

they could reach their former station, a distance of only about six miles.

“It is no part of our duty to enter into the military reasons which may have led to the detention of this Brigade on a spot where the horses could not be foraged by the Commissariat, or which may have induced a refusal to adopt the only measure by which apparently they could be subsisted; we merely call attention to the fact, as one of the instances of a deficiency of supply which formed the special subject of our inquiry.”

Lord Cardigan assumed that the Commissioners here charged him with an error in judgment, in having contributed to the ultimate inefficiency of the Light Brigade by his refusal to adopt a suggestion which, in their opinion, was calculated to improve its condition, viz., the sending of the troop horses down to Balaklava for forage.

In this assumption, as will be seen by reference to the Report of the Commissioners, Lord Cardigan and the Board were entirely mistaken. No opinion whatever was expressed by the Commissioners, who merely stated the fact, which is undisputed.

The Board of General Officers exercise a similar reserve, and leave the question raised by Lord Cardigan undisturbed. Their conclusions on this subject are in the following terms:—

“It appears that at the latter end of November, the greatest number of horses in the encampment of the Light Brigade was 330, of which, owing to so many men being sick and absent, only 286 could be mounted.”

“From this number, it would have required 120 horses to have brought up forage from Balaklava, and to have detached so large a proportion of the force would have diminished it to such an extent as to have rendered it virtually useless for the purpose for which it had been placed in the position it occupied.

With reference, therefore, to the military reasons noticed by the Commissioners, it appears to us, that Lord Raglan alone could judge of the fitness of the measure; and that it could not have been resorted to without his sanction.

“He appears to have been made acquainted by the Major-General Commanding the Brigade, by the Lieut-General Commanding the Division, and by Commissary-General Filder, with the hardships which the Cavalry were suffering; but there is no evidence to show that Lord Raglan’s attention was particularly called to the proposal of the Assistant Commissary-General, that the horses should be sent to bring forage from Balaklava.

“What steps, therefore, might have been taken by Lord Raglan, had that proposal been distinctly brought to his notice, can now only be matter of conjecture. The military reasons for keeping a large proportion of the Cavalry in the position they then occupied, seem to have rendered the case peculiarly embarrassing; for these reasons appear in some degree to have been irrespective of considerations of forage.”

It may safely be presumed that the purpose for which the Cavalry was placed in this position, was— not to exhibit an array of living skeletons to invite attack on the part of an enterprising enemy, but to afford protection to our own army, and that of our Allies, and surely the experience of seven General Officers might have discovered that this could be done better by a single troop, in a fit condition to be led into the field, than by a whole brigade of spectres, who for ten days had received scarcely a tithe of their regulated allowance.

Even, therefore, had the numerical statements on which the Board formed their conclusions been correct, few would be disposed to concur in them; more especially when it is taken into consideration that if there were only 286 men to 330 horses, as is alleged, there must have been an excess of 44 horses, which, for want of riders, could not have been made available in the ranks, and might, therefore, have been employed in carrying up forage without diminishing, in the slightest degree, the force which could be brought into the field.

The total number of animals required to carry up the full allowance of barley to the brigade, is stated by Assistant Commissary-General Crookshanks at sixty-three. Of these, about the 18th of November, when he made his second application, he could obtain only thirty-five, which ultimately were reduced to ten. The Board of General Officers appear to have altogether ignored the fact, that it was by no means necessary for the Cavalry to have provided horses to bring up *all the barley*, but merely so many as would make up the complement required by the Commissariat. There appears not the shadow of a reason for

the assumption, merely on Lord Cardigan's statement that so large a proportion as 120 horses must necessarily have been taken from the effective force for this purpose. In a matter of life and death, one man might have sufficed to guide two laden horses; the diet at Inkerman had certainly not been of so exciting a nature as to render the poor animals very unruly, and at a time when the infantry had not only to walk to Balaklava, but to carry up heavy loads upon their backs, and this, too, with the prospect of an evening's hard work in the trenches before them, it was perhaps not too much to expect that the Cavalry should lead horses on foot, at least half way.

It was, however, a deficiency of horses to carry, and not of men to lead, under which the Commissariat laboured; and if the forty-four horses admitted to have been in excess of riders had only been placed at the disposal of that Department, with a few Dragoons to protect them from ill-usage, there cannot be a question that every difficulty might have been overcome, without trenching unduly either on the comfort or the efficiency of the Light Brigade.

See p. 209
of Board's Pro-
ceedings.

It seems almost puerile to point out expedients of so simple a character; but when it is shown by the evidence of Mr. Crookshanks, that the idea of sending the horses half way down for the barley, while the Commissariat carried it up the other half, never occurred even to the collective wisdom of a whole brigade, perhaps such suggestions may appear not altogether out of place. The circumstance of so extravagant an assertion being adopted, as that nearly one half of the brigade would have been necessary to carry up barley for the other half, affords another proof how deeply is to be deplored that peculiarity in the constitution of the Board, by which all officers who had any practical experience of Crimean difficulties, or of the best way in which they could be surmounted, were carefully excluded from it.

The conclusions of the Board on this subject appear necessarily to resolve themselves into this:

that because Lord Cardigan might have had some difficulty in carrying up *all the barley* to which his corps was entitled, he was, therefore, justified in bringing up *none*. A half or even a quarter of the regulated allowance, in addition to what was supplied by the Commissariat, might, for a few days at least, have preserved life and health ; but, forgetting apparently the homely adage, that “half a loaf is better than no bread,” his lordship and the Board seem alike to have evaded all such middle courses.

The Board conclude their observations, on this branch of the case, in the following terms :—

“The opinion, however, expressed by Lord Cardigan, that to have sent the horses for that purpose to a place so distant as Balaklava, would only have augmented the losses of the Brigade, although not in entire accordance with some of the opinions offered in evidence before us, appears to be supported by a reference to the difficulties experienced in the Royal Artillery at the same period. For it is in evidence that the horses in that force were on two occasions, between the 23rd and 27th November, 1854, at great wear and tear, sent down to Balaklava for hay, at the urgent request of the Commissariat, and on their arrival there it was found that no hay was procurable.”

Page VIII. of
Board's Re-
port.

What the want of hay here referred to had to do with the case, as stated by the Commissioners does not appear ; their observations bore reference merely to barley, that being the description of forage by which horses could be maintained in life for a limited period, with least difficulty as to transport ; and it had long before been stated by Mr. Crookshanks, that “after moving to the front the supply of hay gradually fell off till the storm of 14th November, when it ceased altogether ; but that there was plenty of barley at Balaklava if the Light Brigade had only assisted him with the means of transport.

There is little need, however, for going minutely into what the Light Brigade might have done to aid themselves, when it is known that the whole of the Heavy Brigade were within three or four miles, and

about an equal distance from Balaklava, and that the assistance of even a tenth part of their numbers would have been sufficient to have removed every difficulty in the required supply of barley. This resource was so apparent, that the attention of the Board was called to it, even by the daily press, which may, perhaps, have led to the following questions being at length put to Lord Lucan :—

Page 228 of
Board's Pro-
ceedings.

“Where was the Heavy Cavalry Brigade stationed on the 16th November ?

“They were stationed on the plateau near the Colline.

“What were their duties at that time ?

“First of all we were always prepared for an attack ; we had a party in Balaklava for a certain time ; we had, independently of that, a strong picket in the valley ; we had inlying pickets, and the foraging for our own brigade.

“Could they not have afforded some assistance in the conveyance of forage for the Light Cavalry Brigade, say one day in three ?

“First of all, *there was no application for any such assistance at all.* Then, if you will refer to Mr. Crookshanks's letter, you will find, that up to the 21st there really was no positive deficiency ; and I should say, from the state of the Heavy Brigade after the 21st, that they could not. It was quite enough for them to forage for themselves ; *but there was no application for assistance.*”

It might naturally have been supposed that the next question to Lord Cardigan would have been, why did he not, in such an emergency, make application for assistance from the Heavy Brigade, when he found the Commissariat transport failing, and he was unable or unwilling to detach any portion of his own force ? This would have brought out the necessary evidence as to how far Lord Lucan could have afforded such assistance ; but not another question was put, and the Board dismissed the subject, quite as well satisfied apparently with Lord Lucan's explanation, as if the Brigades had been a hundred miles apart.

Now, surely, seven General Officers were not assembled for the purpose of receiving the mere allegations of the very officers implicated in the mismanagement into which they were directed to inquire, as evidence sufficiently contradictory of the

statements of the Commissioners, and this when they had before them a summary of the War Office Returns, showing that the Heavy Brigade must, at that time, have numbered from 800 to 900 men and horses. They also knew nat' about a fortnight after the starvation of the Light Cavalry, Lord Lucan, even from a diminished force, had been able to spare 494 horses, and half that number of men, daily, to carry up provisions to the Infantry, yet not one could be spared for the salvation of the Light Brigade at so momentous a crisis.

The Board, too, must have been aware, from the statement of Lord Lucan and the reference to the duties in the Return of Major Connolly, that no real difficulty on that head could have stood in the way. There was no unusual amount of sickness either of men or horses; otherwise, according to the usual practice, it must have appeared on the face of the Returns before the Board. What then was the state of the Heavy Brigade after the 21st November, which made it quite enough "to forage for themselves"—a duty which usually occupied only one-fourth of the Force,—Lord Lucan never mentioned, nor did the Board think proper to inquire, though the exculpation or culpability of that nobleman, or of Lord Cardigan, or of both, depended mainly on the explanation.

See p. 458 of
Appendix to
Board's Pro-
ceedings.

As Lord Cardigan had not impugned the accuracy of the Report, I was precluded, by previous arrangement, from directing any questions myself on the subject. The investigation was, therefore, entirely in the hands of the Board; how they conducted it the results have shown; yet no matter required stricter investigation: for, unhappily, there was but too much reason to fear, from the official correspondence of these noblemen, that there had not been between them that cordiality of feeling which is essential to effective cooperation in the field, and it was but just, by a rigid inquiry, to have afforded them an opportunity of showing that their private

feelings towards each other had not been allowed to operate to the prejudice of the public interests, and, that the starvation of the Light Cavalry Brigade could, in no respect, have been attributable to the one of these officers having been too proud to ask, and the other too hostile to offer assistance, in so dire an emergency.

I now come to that part of the Board's Report entitled

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR RICHARD AIREY'S CASE.

Before entering upon the alleged animadversions on the Quartermaster-General's Department, it may be useful to give some explanation with regard to a portion of the evidence of Sir R. Airey, from which it might be inferred that the Commissioners had, through ignorance of the details which usually come under the cognizance and direction of that Department, called on him to answer questions relating to matters with which he had no connection. A reference to the correspondence in which he had been engaged during the winter of 1854, however, will show how little ground there was for any such inference, particularly when it is borne in mind that the Commissioners were sent to the Crimea,—not to ascertain whether each individual officer had attended to the supplies which, strictly speaking, belonged to his own Department, but to obtain from those who appeared best able to give it, information as to whether these supplies had been duly distributed, or why they had not been so. The references quoted below will show how far the Commissioners were, in this view of the case, justified in putting questions to General Airey connected with the following subjects, though not strictly belonging to his Department.

In regard to lime-juice, for instance, the Commissioners found Sir R. Airey in correspondence with the Commissariat.

See p. 76 of Commissioners Appendix.

In regard to the supply of vegetables, in correspondence with the same Department.

Ib. pages 7 and 75.

In regard to fuel, in correspondence with the same Department.

Ib. pages 77, 78, and 79.

Page 184 of
Evidence in
Commissioners'
Report.

As to fresh meat, roasted coffee, and tea, the Quartermaster-General states that he was constantly the channel of communication between Lord Raglan and the Commissary General.

Pages 10, 85,
and 87.

Forage, General Airey affects to consider as an Adjutant-General's question, but a reference to the Appendix to the Commissioners' Report will show how extensive was the correspondence of his Department on this subject, while not a single letter appears from the Adjutant-General.

See p. 21 of
Appendix.

Even as to soft bread, when a communication was made to Lord Raglan, it was the Quartermaster-General of the Army who replied to it.

The question of Transport and Labour, too, was so much a subject of correspondence with the Quartermaster-General, that the Commissioners may well be excused for calling on him for explanations on that head, in order to contrast them with the counter-statements of the Commissariat.

The Quartermaster-General, in short, appears to have been, except during the period of his illness, a party in almost every important transaction emanating from Head-Quarters. To use his own words, "The Commissioners found traces of his labours in almost every Department of the Service." It cannot, therefore, be matter of surprise, that they should have addressed to him extensive queries, whether relating to matters strictly within the sphere of his own Department or not, as no one was more capable of giving the required information.

With this preliminary observation which appears called for, under the circumstances, I shall now proceed to review the conclusions of the Board on the case of this officer, under the head of

"SEPARATION FROM KNAPSACKS."

This subject is summarily disposed of by the Board as follows:—

“As regards the separation of the men from their knapsacks on landing in the Crimea, it appears to the Board that this was a matter entirely within the Department of the Adjutant-General, who, under the orders of the General Commanding, could alone see the measure carried in execution; but Sir Richard Airey, having stated his readiness to give any information in his power, has said, that when the Force recovered its communication with the sea, active measures were taken for restoring them, and it is in evidence, that in consequence of the physical weakness of the men who embarked at Varna, a discretionary power as to landing with or without knapsacks was given to officers commanding regiments, and that most of them availed themselves of that power to lighten the men's burdens.

See p. IX.
and X. of
Board's Re
port.

“It also appears that no blame is attributable to the Quartermaster-General's Department, although much delay was occasioned in recovering knapsacks from the transports, in consequence of various obstacles over which that Department had no control. It may, however, be observed, that the packs contained very little that could have added to the comfort of the men, a proportion of the men's necessaries having been left in the squad-bags at Scutari.”

No one perusing these paragraphs could ever suppose that they related to a subject of so much importance as the deprivation of the men, for nearly two months, of almost every article of clothing, except what they had upon their backs, and this, too, at a time when they were suffering from the severest weather and constant exposure, by night, and by day, and were employed in the trenches on fatigue duties, which soon reduced their only suit to rags.

The destitution of our troops in this respect, as they landed, fever stricken, and covered with filth and vermin on the shore at Scutari, had excited the astonishment, and awakened the sympathy of all Europe; well, therefore, might the Crimean Commissioners inquire what had occurred to reduce these men to so wretched a condition. Was it the result of circumstances beyond control, or was it one of those events against which a moderate degree of foresight might have provided?

The Chelsea Board first puts forward the statement that the separation of the men from their knapsacks was entirely a matter within the Department of the Adjutant-General; but the evil which the Commissioners commented on, was—not the separation of

See p. 177 of
Evidence in
Commission-
ers' Report.

the men from their knapsacks, but that no prompt measures were taken to recover them. For this, judging from the alleged communications of Colonel Gordon to the Generals of Divisions on the subject, the Quartermaster-General's Department was responsible, otherwise why should it have originated any such proceedings in the matter? So far as depends on the evidence taken before the Board, there appears nothing whatever to controvert the assertions of the Commissioners, that

Page 23 of
Commission-
ers' Report.

“ Had the whole of the knapsacks and valises been collected under a proper guard in one or two vessels, selected for the purpose, and instructed to proceed along the coast till the army arrived before Sebastopol, no bad effects would probably have resulted from an arrangement which enabled the men to lighten the fatigues of the march; but for want of this precaution, the troops, with few exceptions, had to commence the siege operations in the beginning of October, with hardly any clothing beyond what they had on.”

Whether it was the Adjutant-General, or the Quartermaster-General, or the General Officers of Division who were to blame for all this, was no affair of the Commissioners, they merely stated a fact, the truth and importance of which is universally admitted. They did not arrogate to themselves the power of determining who was answerable for the fatal consequences of such an omission.

The Board next endeavours to make light of the inconvenience by stating, on the evidence of General Airey, that the packs contained very little that could have added to the comfort of the men, a proportion of their necessaries having been left in the squad-bags at Scutari.

These General Officers must have known well, though the British Public might not, that his knapsack is valuable to the soldier, not merely for what it contains, but as a means of keeping his necessaries together; that for want of it, the shirt, boots, and socks, brought in his blanket on landing, were in most cases lost even before he reached Sebastopol; for, before the tents were got up, if he unrolled

his blanket to lie down, he had no place in which to deposit its contents. Little as the knapsack contained, therefore, the Commissioners were by no means disposed to look lightly on the inconvenience occasioned by the want of it, more especially as it contained among other things a pair of trousers, of which the soldier was much in need.

But where was the rest of the soldier's clothing all that time? The Commissioners had given the Quartermaster-General, or whoever was responsible, the credit of supposing that it was in the knapsacks, and therefore not readily attainable, whereas his evidence showed that a shell-jacket, shirt, and socks, besides various minor articles, were lying in the squad-bags at Scutari.

Page 253 of
Board's pro-
ceedings.

This would, at first sight, appear a most fortunate circumstance for the soldier, because the squad-bags being stationary, though the knapsacks were sailing about the Black Sea, there could be no difficulty in knowing where to find part, at least, of the soldier's equipment. Scutari was within a couple of days' voyage of Balaklava, and vessels were constantly passing and repassing;—the natural inference, therefore, was, that the contents of these squad-bags were forthwith made available for the use of the soldier; unhappily, however, in most cases the whole of the first winter was allowed to pass without their being sent for.

The result of inquiries by me on this subject has shown, that out of a total of twenty regiments, of which I have been able to trace the dates of the return of the squad-bags, none recovered them till the end of December or beginning of January, when five Regiments had that good fortune; two did not receive them back till February or March, and the remainder not till April or May, the soldier being left during most of the interval almost in rags, a prey to vermin, and without a change of any kind.

The omission to make these squad-bags available was not, however, confined to the Crimea. Thousands

of the army landed at Scutari in the early part of the winter, in a state of lamentable destitution with respect to clothing. There, at least, it might have been expected that the necessaries they contained would have been useful in affording a change for the men; but still these phantom garments mocked their search, and it was to the charity of a few private individuals, administered by the hands of Miss Nightingale, that the sick soldier was at length indebted for that covering which cleanliness and decency required:

How comes it that the Board of General Officers were altogether silent on this part of the inquiry? Readily did they adopt the statement of General Airey with respect to the limited inconvenience caused to the soldier by the want of his knapsack, though tending to put the Commissioners in the wrong; but why stop there, when a few questions regarding the fate of the squad-bags would have cleared up the whole matter? No such course, however, appears to have occurred to them; and the Commissioners were left to incur the charge of having overstated instead of under-stating, the inconvenience.

This brings me to the next section of the Board's Report, entitled,

“ISSUES OF WARM CLOTHING FROM ENGLAND.”

On this head the Board reported in the following terms:—

“Sir Richard Airey has stated, that the Quartermaster-General's Department had no stores, no storehouses, no store-keepers, no issuers, nor means of landing transport, none, in fact, of the machinery necessary for receiving stores, or for keeping them, or for transporting or delivering them to the men; and that the only duty of the Department, in relation to the issue of stores, was that of determining the proportions in which they should be shared by the troops.

“It appears to us material to observe, that though the term ‘Quartermaster-General's stores’ seems to have been applied by the Commissioners to all stores for which the Quartermaster-General made requisition, the responsibility of that officer must be under-

stood to be limited to the duty of making requisitions for certain stores, and not to their safe custody, stowage, or even issue."

The absence here commented on of all the accessories for rendering the abundant supply of clothing which had arrived available to the troops, appears meant to convey the impression that the Quartermaster-General had really nothing to do with the matter, and that so defective was the organization of the British Army, which had till then been considered perfect, that thousands might perish for want of clothing, while it lay almost within reach. I should be sorry to assume that this was really the state of the case; but, fortunately, it is not necessary for me to enter into any discussion as to the special duties of the Quartermaster-General in regard to the custody and stowage of stores, the remarks of the Commissioners having been chiefly confined to those which either were never apportioned to the troops at all, or were apportioned in more limited quantities than the supply on hand warranted, and for which his responsibility cannot be questioned.

The scarcity of transport was a difficulty which the Commissioners were certainly neither disposed to conceal nor underrate; but whatever it may have been, it could afford no excuse to the Quartermaster-General for not having made the Regiments or Divisions acquainted with the quantities in store, if they chose to send for them. He could not be aware what exertions the men might be disposed to make themselves, or their officers to make for them, in order to get up supplies so essential to their existence; no such exertions, however, could be expected when nothing was known, by either, of the stores being there.

If Sir Richard Airey's views as to the limited nature of his duties and responsibilities in regard to these stores be correct, both ceased when he made the apportionment and issued the requisitions, on which each division or regiment could have its share; but, under no circumstances, can it be held to have

ceased, when he took neither of these steps, and when his subordinates could give no better reasons for the omission, than were assigned by Colonel Gordon and Colonel Wetherall with respect to the rugs, blankets, and great coats.

There are some officers, however, and these too of long experience, who would be disposed to go much further, and in a common-sense view of the matter, to contend that the Quartermaster-General was bound, when he saw no disposition on the part of the Commissary-General to provide transport for the conveyance of the clothing, to have brought specially under the consideration of the General Commanding-in-chief the consequent difficulties in which he was placed, and the necessity for imperative orders being given to the Commissary-General to bring over, independent of all other requirements, as many of the transport animals from the opposite coast as would suffice to carry up these supplies. The history of the Alicante mules, specially ordered by Lord Raglan, affords an illustration of what might be done by independent action in this respect; and the obstinacy or opposition of a subordinate officer in such a matter, ought surely not to have been permitted to imperil the existence and efficiency of a whole army.

It might have occurred to a Board of General Officers that, while so great a difficulty was made about conveying to the front a comparatively limited weight of warm clothing, immense quantities of shot, shell, cannon, and platforms were daily carried up, in preparation for another attack; and that, before the Quartermaster-General can be considered as having relieved his responsibility with regard to transport for his stores, it would appear necessary for him to have shown that he had suggested to Lord Raglan the expediency of applying a proportion, at least, of the same means of transport, for the conveyance of the warm clothing and winter stores so much required by the men.

A reference to the evidence of Sir Colin Campbell

before the Commissioners, will show that, during the very period that the Quartermaster-General maintains the impossibility of transport as a reason for not issuing the greater portion of his stores, there had been carried to the front, during the eight weeks preceding the 29th of January, by the Infantry regiments stationed at Balaklava, the following ordnance stores, besides a quantity of shot and shell of which no account was taken :—

	Men.	
33 platforms of 60 pieces each, being a load for	3,960	See p. 152 of Evidence in Commission- ers' Report.
120 large platform sleepers, loading - -	1,200	
New shoes for platforms in 90 packets - -	90	
450 pickaxes - - - - -	220	
About 60 fascines - - - - -	120	
About 30 cut cowls for platform shoes &c. -	1,236	
	6,926	

in addition to 4,000 bags of biscuit, carried as far as Lord Raglan's, being thirteen days' consumption for 25,000 men.

How can the Quartermaster-General's statement, as to the difficulty of transport, be listened to, with such facts as these before us? The weight thus carried was, at least, three or four times as great as all the stores, the non-issue of which had attracted the attention of the Commissioners; and, surely, there was little utility in devoting every means to the transport of munitions of war, when the hands which were to wield them, were paralysed for want of clothing and covering. Policy, at least, if not humanity, should have dictated a different course.

Supposing, however, there had been no means of transport but what the regiments in front could have devised for themselves, did it never occur to the Board how very small a proportion of them would have sufficed to carry up those stores? Even where there were no bāt horses to use, and no regimental chargers that could be borrowed, the employment of one hundred men from each regiment for a single day, in the early part of December, would have carried up all the rugs,

great coats, and watch coats, and another day and a like number of men, would have sufficed in the end of that month, when further supplies of these and the additional blankets had arrived. If the men sent down, had been selected from those who stood in the greatest need of coatees and trousers, they could also have exchanged their rags for new clothing at Balaklava, without involving any difficulty in carrying back the former.

Besides, the larger portion of the force at Balaklava and Kadekoi had no difficulties as to transport; they were close to the stores, and yet, apparently, shared no better in the division of them, than the men in front. Indeed, it must ever prove a fatal objection to the line of defence adopted by the Quartermaster-General, that to make further issues dependent on the circumstance of whether the whole of those previously authorized for the army had, or had not been carried away, was in fact to regulate the supply by the minimum, instead of the maximum facilities of transport, leaving entirely out of account the very different circumstances in which several divisions of the force were placed in that respect. Why, for instance, should not the troops at Kadekoi and Balaklava have at once been allowed to obtain their full proportion of the supply either on shore or in harbour, as soon as it arrived? Why should they have had to wait till the regiments at the furthest extremity of the camp, near Inkerman, could send down for their proportion? Several of the Divisions which had bat animals could, of course, more readily bring away their supplies than those which had none; why, then, should the former have been left to suffer from cold, because in other Divisions, nothing could be done except by borrowing the officers' horses, or sending down men for the clothing, which involved frequent delays? Could the ingenuity of the Quartermaster-General's Department devise no better course than that all should suffer alike? Might not corps in the immediate vicinity, or which had the amplest

means of transport, have been allowed to supply themselves on shipboard, and the issue from the stores have been confined to those which had come from a distance?

It is painful to suppose that everything was not done which circumstances admitted, to prevent men perishing from cold, while there was clothing, almost in sight, sufficient to relieve their sufferings; but, when even the simple expedient of bringing over the squad-bags from Scutari was not resorted to, how is it possible to give credit for the best arrangements having been adopted in regard to the distribution of the warm clothing, which was necessarily so much more complicated a matter? The working of a Department must in some measure be judged by its antecedents, and so important an omission certainly can not be claimed as a recommendation by that of the Quartermaster-General.

It must always be kept in view, that at the period when these various supplies of clothing were not made available, the men were falling by thousands under the rapid stroke of cholera and dysentery, or the slow torture of frost bite—whilst morning after morning they returned from sitting knee-deep in mud of the trenches, to tents the floors of which were scarcely drier,—their only clothing consisting of the regimental suit, which, to borrow the words of Sir Richard Airey,—

They had had, “in the first voyage out to the Mediterranean, through the service in Bulgaria, through the sea-voyage to the Crimea; they had worked in these coats in the trenches, and fought all through with them; they were perfectly threadbare, and in many instances *did not exist*.”

Whilst this was the condition of the army, the knapsacks were on the Black Sea, the squad-bags at Scutari, thousands of pairs of trousers missing, thousands of coatees unused, and tens of thousands of great coats, blankets, and rugs, filling the Quartermaster-General's stores, or the harbour at Balaklava.

This occurred principally during the time when,

owing to the illness of Sir Richard Airey, the duties of Quartermaster-General had devolved upon Colonel Gordon. Could that officer and Colonel Wetherall have done less for themselves than cling to the mere assertions that the question was never raised as to giving each man a third blanket or second great coat,—that the Quartermasters of Regiments did not like the rugs in preference to blankets,—and that the coatees were not issued because fresh clothing was expected to arrive? This, too, when Colonel Gordon had an opportunity afforded him on the 1st August, after his return to England, of recording any further explanation he thought proper.

Without going into any discussion respecting the obligation devolving on the Quartermaster-General, in these matters, it may safely be presumed that it was at least his duty, or that of those acting for him, to have acknowledged receipt to the Home authorities of this large supply of stores, immediately on their arrival, and to have pointed out the difficulties that prevented or delayed their being applied to the purpose for which they were intended. Had he done so, perhaps some means of assisting his Department might have been devised; but it must be presumed that no such communication was made, at least till a late period, otherwise there would have been no necessity for including an inquiry as to what had become of these stores in the instructions to the Commissioners.

The Board Report next adverts to various details relative to the—

Distribution of Warm Clothing.

On this head Sir Richard Airey took exception to the statement by the Commissioners that "the arrangements relating to the issue of the supplies from the Quartermaster-General's store appear to have been of questionable expediency," and the Board, in the following remarks, apparently adopt his views on the subject.

"Sir Richard Airey thinks it is made to appear inferentially, that this supposed want of care in the working of the department may have been the occasion, not of mere inconvenience and trouble, but of some of those dreadful privations to which the soldier was subjected in the winter of 1854 and 1855, and that although there always was a supply of warm clothing in the harbour of Balaklava, official formality or mismanagement stood up as a barrier between the soldier and his supplies. See p. X. of Board's Report.

"Warm clothing being an extra issue very unusual in the service, the principle adopted by the Quartermaster-General as to the apportionment of it, appears to have been a very judicious one, viz., that of sending orders that the regiments should apply for it according to their strength, for which purpose Sir Richard Airey placed an officer (Lieutenant-Colonel McKenzie) at Balaklava, who appears to have performed his duties most efficiently; but the cause of these supplies not reaching the men for a considerable time after the orders were given, was owing to the deficiency of transport, a fact fully admitted by the Commissioners."

Any one perusing the last of these paragraphs would naturally come to the conclusion, that every regiment knew perfectly well what was in store, and what proportion of it they had to send for, whereas it was distinctly stated by Sir John Campbell, in his evidence before the Commissioners, that since he had been in command of the Division, he had never received any intimation of the articles of clothing that could be obtained for his men on application to the Quartermaster-Generals store; and Sir Richard England also stated that he knew nothing in regard to warm clothing being available, beyond the quantity directed by Head-Quarters to be drawn by the Division.

Page 141 of Evidence to Commissioners Report.

Page 148 of Evidence.

The Commissioners did not complain of any intricacy of forms, but that the General Officers of Division

were never made acquainted with the quantity and description of supplies in store or in harbour, which might be applicable to the covering and comfort of their men, so that they could not adopt even the simple expedient of accepting one description of store if another was deficient, as for instance, rugs or additional great-coats in lieu of blankets.

A very familiar example of the consequences resulting from the system, of which the Board express their approval, will be perhaps of more service than any argument.

Most persons interested in these matters will recollect how much the privations of the Cavalry were increased by the want of nose-bags, and the repeated applications which were made for them in vain; but they may not recollect the following evidence given by Lord Lucan before the Sebastopol Committee as to the real cause of this deficiency in equipment.

See second
Report, p. 316.

“ You state that your horses were frequently in want of nose-bags and other necessaries; were those nose-bags within reach at the time?”

“ They were on board the ‘ Jason.’ ”

“ Why were they not given out?”

“ The Quartermaster-General always said that they had not got them in the army, till the Captain of the ‘ Jason’ came to me to beg that I would assist him in relieving his ship of all those horse-stores.”

“ When was that?”

“ This was in the month of January.”

“ How long were those stores on board the ‘ Jason?’ ”

“ It must have been ever since July.”

So that while the horses were losing half their barley for want of nose-bags, and eating each other’s tails in lieu of more substantial nutriment, the nose-bags were lying just as useless on board the “ Jason ” as the squad-bags, containing the clothing of the men, were at Scutari, and with equally serious results.

A similar statement by the same authority, will be found on the same page, in regard to horse medicines, which, after being urgently required for five or six months, were at last discovered on board the “ Medway ” in the month of January.

With these statements of Lord Lucan on record, it is to be regretted that the Board, instead of expressing its satisfaction with the working of such arrangements, did not inform themselves as to their practical results, in which case they would have found that the alteration proposed by the Commissioners would at least have been valuable as affording to the Quartermaster-General's Department some security against its own omissions. A Department that could leave the army without a change of clothing during the greater part of the winter, though within a couple of days' sail of their squad-bags at Scutari, cannot certainly claim credit for inventive faculties of so high an order, that a few counter-checks of this description might not have been useful.

The result of the system of distribution, which has gained the approval of the Board, will, however, be better shown by referring to the several issues and seeing how it worked. But, before entering on these details, it may be useful to explain why Sir Richard Airey was never examined in any way as to the delays and omissions alleged to have taken place in issuing the clothing, a point on which he expresses some surprise.

Page 232 of
Proceedings.

When the Commissioners, on the 24th of May, went to Head Quarters for the purpose of commencing the investigations there, respecting the distribution of these supplies, they were referred by Sir Richard Airey to Colonel Gordon and Colonel Wetherall, for any information they required, because he had been obliged to leave this matter in their hands, in consequence of severe illness at the time the distribution was going on.

The proposition was reasonable, and could not well have been refused by the Commissioners, particularly as the total inability of this officer to attend to business at the period adverted to, had been confirmed by the evidence of Lord Hardinge, who, a few weeks before, when examined by the Sebastopol Com-

mittee, had pleaded a similar excuse for the General in the following terms :—

See Vol. 4,
p. 246, Qu.
20,871.

“ It is not very well known, but I know it, that he was, from the 16th November till the 18th or 20th December, a cripple in bed. He had not been able to move out from an attack of very severe rheumatism ; he was blind, and could not read ; he was obliged to have everything read to him and written for him ; and he was suffering from dysentery. Most people in his state would have come to England, but being a man of very considerable spirit and nerve, he determined to remain with Lord Raglan, and about the 18th or 20th of December he got up, and was able to crawl about on crutches.”

And his Lordship pointed out, in reply to a subsequent question, that during this illness Colonel Gordon, the next in succession, transacted the business of his chief.

Now, if reference be made to the dates of arrival of the clothing, it will be found that between the middle of November and the end of December was the period when most of the delay complained of occurred ; and if the Quartermaster-General was then only recovering from severe illness, he could scarcely be charged with any personal superintendence as regards these duties till after the end of that month.

Under these circumstances it would, of course, have been unjust and unreasonable in the Commissioners to have forced on Sir Richard Airey the responsibility of answering questions for which he could only obtain the information through the medium of subordinates. But what must be said of the want of candour on the part of that officer himself in never once mentioning, or even hinting at so important a reason for no questions being put to him on the subject of clothing ?—nay, what must be thought of his taunting the Commissioners with this alleged omission, in return for their anxiety not to hold him responsible for acts for which others were more properly accountable ?

Lord Lucan, it may be observed, knew perfectly the fact of General Airey's illness, and alludes to it

in his replies before the Sebastopol Committee, to the following queries :—

“ You stated, did you not, that, from the 29th September to a much later period, you made frequent applications and complaints upon various matters to the Quartermaster-General ?”

Vol. II., p.
322, Qu. 6701,
to 6703.

“ I made a great many complaints.

“ As you have stated that you received, generally, no answer, are you aware that the Quartermaster-General was, at that time, either ill or unable to attend to his business ?

“ He was ill, to the best of my recollection, for I had some interviews with him at the end of November, and, I should say, for the first fortnight or three weeks in December.

“ That was a period during which he could not be expected to attend to his business ?

“ No, I do not complain, I only mention the facts.”

General Peel, one of the Members of the Board, was present when these explanations were given by Lord Hardinge and Lord Lucan, as to General Airey's illness, so that four of the officers at Chelsea must have been aware of the circumstance ; yet neither General Airey, Lord Lucan, General Peel, nor Colonel Gordon, ever alluded to it, though its suppression was so detrimental to the Commissioners.

I shall now proceed to follow the remarks of the Board through the several items of which the undistributed stores chiefly consisted.

Rugs and Blankets.

Sir R. Airey complained to the Board of the Commissioners' Report, because—

“ It is there made to appear that the blankets fell short, and that the men were kept without warm clothing, because it occurred to no one to give the 8,000 rugs which were lying in store.”

Page XI. of
Board's Re-
port.

The precise words used by the Commissioners were—

Page 26 of
Commission-
ers' Report.

“ These rugs were nearly as well calculated as blankets to give protection from the cold, and were, perhaps, better suited to resist wet, yet when the supply of blankets fell short, it does not appear to have occurred to any one that the rugs were available as a substitute.

The Board appear to have considered it quite sufficient that Colonel Wetherall, one of the parties chiefly accountable for the non-issue of these rugs, should have given this statement a simple contradiction, asserting that the reason why they were never used was because they did not resist wet, though Colonel Gordon, who is likely to have known their quality as well, admitted, in his evidence to the Commissioners, that "it would have been an advantage for each man to have had a rug under him."

It would have been a better course for the Board to have tested the relative value of the rugs and blankets by sending to the Ordnance Department for a sample of each, and ascertaining their relative weight and materials, when they would have found that the former were half a pound heavier than the latter, and that though composed partly of cotton, the difference in the warmth of that texture, as compared with wool, was likely to have been more than compensated by the extra weight.

If, however, the rugs were really inferior to blankets, how does it happen that Colonel Wetherall himself, places them "always under the same category as blankets," and states that he was in the habit of altering requisitions for blankets by inserting the words "or rugs," or why should he have created an obstacle to their being used by offering one only as the equivalent for a blanket? Did it never occur to him, or to any other in the Department, that, by issuing two, more especially to the Cavalry and Infantry in and around Balaklava and Kadikoi, who were likely to have had least trouble in carrying them away, any such difficulty might at once have been got over, and several thousand blankets set free for distribution to the men in front.

The absence of all such expedients, at a time when the inventive faculties of every one required to have been on the stretch, necessarily caused the arrangements for the distribution of these Quartermaster-General's stores to appear to the Com-

missioners "of questionable expediency." They were charitable enough to suppose that these omissions arose, not from want of consideration or ability, but because, from the Quartermaster-General's Department having so much on hand, they had not leisure to give sufficient attention to such matters; and they thought it not improbable, that had the General Officers of Division known of such large supplies being in store at the time of their greatest need, arrangements might have occurred to them by which they could more readily have been made applicable to the wants of the troops. In short, the united intelligence of the Divisional Staff would thus have been brought to bear upon the difficulty, instead of that of the Head-Quarters only; and, judging from the result, the public service might have derived benefit from the change, and could certainly not have suffered more than under the existing arrangements.

Colonel Wetherall, before the Board of General Officers, however, originated the idea that these rugs were not intended for the use of the army generally, but were considered always to be "Hospital stores." He even goes so far as to allege that they, were "all handed over to the Purveyor," though how that could be the case when they remained in the Quartermaster-General's stores, to the number of 22,000 when the Purveyor never acknowledged having received them, and when Colonel Wetherall was, according to his own account, offering them to the troops instead of blankets, it would apparently baffle human ingenuity to explain.

In this statement Colonel Wetherall seems to have forgotten that rugs intended for hospitals are usually of a different size and quality from the barrack rugs sent out as Quartermaster-General's stores, being larger and heavier by upwards of a pound, and with a greater admixture of wool, so that there could be no possibility of mistaking the one for the other; besides, it has been ascertained, by refer-

Page 272 of
Board's Pro-
ceedings.

ence to the office from which they were sent out that they were actually Barrack rugs.

The hospitals, too, having already been supplied with about 10,000 of their own rugs, it is not likely that more, of an inferior description, would have been required; indeed, the best proof to the contrary is, that of the first 8,000 which arrived, none were issued to the hospitals at all; and it was not till after the middle of January, by which time the number had reached 22,000, and an abundance of other supplies of every description of warm clothing had arrived for the troops, that 302 were sent there. These, as well as some small subsequent issues, amounting in all to about 1,000, are understood to have been for the use of some of the men proceeding to Scutari, to whom it was not considered expedient to issue hospital rugs.

That 22,000 rugs should have been left unissued, at a time of unparalleled suffering from cold, merely because about 1,000 of them were used for hospital purposes, about two months after their arrival, was apparently too much, however, even for the belief of the Board. This defence was accordingly not alluded to in their Report; nor should I now have mentioned it, but from an apprehension lest the omission should be liable to misconstruction.

With respect to the blankets, it is necessary to premise that in this part of the Report of the General Officers, there occurs a matter so seriously affecting—not Sir Richard Airey or Colonel Wetherall—not the responsibility of the Quartermaster-General's Department, but the character of the Board itself, that I approach it with deep regret.

They conclude that part of the Report which refers to the supply of rugs and blankets in the following words:—

“ ‘ In the month of December alone, no less than 22,740 blankets were issued by the Department, though only 17,323 were carried away.’

“ This portion of Colonel Wetherall’s evidence was omitted by the Commissioners in their Report, but was laid before us by Sir R. Airey.”—(p. 259.)

This is a most serious charge, directly affecting the good faith of the Commissioners, and assuredly before making it the Board were bound, in justice to their own reputation, as well as out of consideration to the Commissioners, to have satisfied themselves of its accuracy. With what feelings, then, must this part of the Report be regarded, when it is known that Colonel Wetherall never gave any such evidence to the Commissioners in the Crimea, nor anything like it; that General Airey never stated to the Board that Colonel Wetherall had given such evidence, and that the whole reflection, severe as it would be, if true, is utterly destitute of foundation.

The Board refer, as their authority, to Colonel Wetherall’s evidence, pages 267-8, and to Sir Richard Airey’s evidence, p. 259, of their proceedings; but neither the passage referred to in the evidence of the former, nor the original Minutes of Evidence alluded to by that officer, and a copy of which is given by the Board at p. 471 of their proceedings, contain any such statement as that “ in the month of “ December alone, no less than 22,740 blankets were issued by the Department, though only 17,323 were carried away,” nor anything of the kind, so that an imputation has thus been cast on the Commissioners equally groundless and odious.

So far from there being any foundation for the assertion that this statement was made by Colonel Wetherall, on the occasion of his giving his evidence before the Commissioners in the Crimea, and suppressed by them, it occurs for the first time during the course of the proceedings in Sir Richard Airey’s address to the Board of General Officers, at Chelsea, on the 2nd of May, 1856. He there states, on his own authority, merely, and without reference to Colonel

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Proceedings of
Board.

Wetherall or any one else, that, "In the month of December alone, no less than 22,740 blankets were issued by the Department though only 17,323 were carried away;" a statement which may be in accordance with the fact, because a day or two would probably be required to go through the official routine of communicating to the Divisions, Brigades, and Regiments that the blankets were ready for delivery; after this, the duties would have to be so arranged as to admit of a portion of the men being sent down to Balaklava, which might occupy another day or two, and if the officers volunteered to lend their horses to assist, as they generally did, these might not always be ready. The blankets authorized to be issued in the latter part of December could not well, therefore, have been received till the early part of the following month; and had the Board only referred to the return of issues from the Quartermaster-General's store for January, they would have found that, before a week had elapsed, the whole of these blankets were in use.

So much for the accuracy of the Board's assertions regarding the issue of blankets in December. As to the additional supply which arrived in the end of that month, the Report of the Commissioners merely stated that—

Page 26 of
Commissioners' Report.

"When the intelligence of the loss of the 'Prince,' and of the increasing severity of the climate in the Crimea was received in England, additional supplies of blankets were sent out. On the 24th and 27th of December, two vessels arrived at Balaklava, bringing 25,000, a number which was more than sufficient to have given a third blanket to every man. This would have enabled him to have two dry blankets in his tent, besides the one which he generally brought in wet from the trenches; an arrangement which had been found very beneficial in the Naval Brigade."

Now, considering that the sufferings of the men from cold were at their height during the month of January, and that the number affected by frost-bite bore melancholy evidence of the necessity for additional covering at that time, it was, surely, not too much to expect that, if a communication had been

made to each regiment of this timely supply being in the harbour, and at their disposal, to the extent of one extra blanket per man, every officer's horse would, as on previous occasions, have been cheerfully lent for the purpose, if no other means presented itself of carrying up so necessary a supply. But how were such exertions likely to have been called forth, when it was not generally known either by officers or men that such a quantity was at hand? The troops in the vicinity of Kadakoi and Balaklava could at all events have gone on board and supplied themselves. Any course surely would have been better than to have kept most part of this abundant supply either in the store or on shipboard during the winter, and to have summed up all that had been done towards making so valuable a resource available, in the pithy observation of Colonel Gordon, that he was "not aware the question had ever been raised as to the expediency of issuing a third blanket."

I next come to the remarks of the Board in regard to the issue of

Great Coats.

On this head their Report states as follows:—

"It appears that Lord Raglan, in the due exercising of his dispensing powers, substituted for the complicated War Office Form of Requisition for great coats the following form:—

"Required for the Regiment,

_____ Signature

Quartermaster-General's Office,

"And a tabular statement laid before the Board, and hereto annexed, shows that orders had been issued, up to January 20, for 6577 great coats, of which only 3049 had been drawn; and it is stated by Colonel Wetherall, in his evidence, that every man had by that time been supplied with a sheepskin coat.

"The only reference made by Colonels of regiments in their

replies to the Commissioners respecting great coats, was that by Colonel Douglas, 79th Regiment, who states, that on making a requisition for 300 coats, it was promptly complied with."

With reference to these remarks, it only appears necessary to point out that no complaint of any complication in the form of the requisition was ever made by the Commissioners, and that their observations in regard to the great coats referred not to what was, or was not issued, at so late a date as the 20th January, by which time the arrival of sheepskin coats began to diminish the necessity for additional great coats, but to the question why no steps were taken for making those already in harbour and in store, as well as the thousands which had, for many months, been lying at Scutari available for the comfort of the troops in the end of November. To attempt evading the responsibility by referring to transactions of a later date, is too palpable an evasion to escape the notice even of the least discerning.

The statement of the Commissioners on the subject of the great coats in their report was as follows :

Page 27 of
Commission-
ers' Report,

"By the end of November, or beginning of December, about 12,000 great coats also had arrived at Balaklava. Of these, there remained in store, during the months of December and January, when they were most urgently required by the men, upwards of 9,000, besides nearly 2,000 watch cloaks. These would have furnished one to every two men, and, supposing one-half to be on duty, would have afforded to each man a dry great coat or cloak to put on when he returned to his tent from the trenches, instead of lying down, as he often did, in one that was wet and muddy.

"But it was not necessary to have waited even so late as the end of November to have commenced an extensive issue of additional great coats, for in order that there might be a proper reserve in store of so essential an article of equipment, 10,000 had been sent from England to Scutari so early as the month of July; of these 3,325 only were sent to Varna, and the remainder lay in store at Scutari till the middle of December. There seems to be no reason why these should not have been at Balaklava whenever the approach of cold weather required additional clothing; and with the 11,000 which arrived in the end of November, they would have afforded ample covering at a comparatively early period for all the men exposed on night duty; and on the arrival, in the end of December, of the gregoes, or hooded great coats, purchased by Major Wetherall at Constantinople, every man might have been supplied either with one of these or a great coat."

It is impossible to form any adequate estimate of the amount of suffering, disease, and death which might have been prevented had these been issued, and the soldier been thus enabled to have a change, instead of remaining all night in the same wet coat and blanket which he brought from the trenches.

At the early period, too, when these great coats arrived, or might have been brought over, there appeared no insuperable difficulties in regard to transport, nor were the men so exhausted that they could not have come down for such an object. Surely when the Commissioners found that with so ample a resource at hand, the issues had only amounted to 3000 up to the last week in December, it was their duty to record their opinion that this was not a distribution of the clothing in the sense referred to in their instructions, nor that which they had been led to expect.

The only circumstance which could have prevented such a conclusion on their part, was a satisfactory explanation of the non-issue; but all Colonel Wetherall stated on that subject was, that "so far as he was aware, it was never contemplated to give each soldier more than one regimental great coat, especially at a time when additional warm clothing was expected." Colonel Gordon expressed himself to the same effect, and almost in the same words, adding, that the sheepskin coats were considered sufficient, though he knew that these were not issued for six weeks after the period to which the Commissioners were referring. That officer also alluded to the probability of there not being a sufficient number of great coats to issue a second one to each man, as if that could be any reason why they should not have been made available so far as they would go. He also pointed out the restriction in the Queen's Warrant, and even went so far as to touch upon the possibility of being made personally responsible for any issues out of the usual course.

Not a word, however, was said of any difficulties

of transport by either of these officers, so far as regardst his supply; in fact, considering that a party of forty or fifty men from each regiment could have carried to the front in a single day their share of the great coats, even if none of the officers' horses could have been borrowed for that purpose, as was usually the case, it is inconceivable that any barrier of this description could have existed to so valuable a supply being made available. There appears no good reason for the delay even, of taking these supplies into store at all, for in so small and so crowded a harbour, all the division required might apparently have been made equally well on shipboard.

Instead of examining merely the parties who were responsible for the delay, the Board might, on so important a matter, have called before them a few of the many officers of regiments in this country, who could readily have answered the simple question, whether, if more blankets and more great coats had been at their disposal in November or December, they could have found the means of making them useful for the protection of their men, which was really the question at issue.

The fact of Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas having obtained 300 great coats, probably in return for as many which had been worn the regulated period, is no evidence that the distribution was as general as it ought to have been.

I have already pointed out the very serious error into which the Board of General Officers have fallen in their reference to what they supposed to have been the evidence given by Colonel Wetherall with regard to the issue of blankets.

A mistake, hardly less serious, occurs in their reference to the evidence of the same witness with regard to the issue of great coats.

The Board, referring to a tabular statement of this issue "up to January 20," adds, "it is stated by Colonel Wetherall, in his evidence, that *every man had at that time been supplied with a sheepskin coat.*"

If every man had really, by the 20th January, been supplied with a sheepskin coat, that might account for no more great coats being required after that date, but could certainly form no good reason for many thousands of great coats being left unissued in the months of November, December, and up to the 20th January, when the men most required them, and which was the period referred to by the Commissioners; but, unfortunately for the conclusions of the Board, no statement of the kind is to be found in Colonel Wetherall's evidence: nor was it likely that he should have made any such assertion, when the Returns furnished by his own Department, and which were before the Board of General Officers, showed that, up to that date, the issue of sheepskin coats amounted to no more than 6,464.

See Commissioners' Report, p. 101 of Appendix.

The dates of the issues of the sheepskin coats has so important a bearing, when assigned as a reason for not distributing the great coats, that it may be useful to quote them from the Return of Issues:—

January 4.....	38	Brought up....	1,751
„ 5.....	47	January 13.....	1,163
„ 6.....	5	„ 14.....	630
„ 7.....	17	„ 15.....	1,511
„ 8.....	14	„ 16.....	302
„ 9.....	45	„ 17.....	730
„ 10.....	35	„ 18.....	170
„ 11.....	350	„ 19.....	120
„ 12....	1,200	„ 20.....	87
Carried up..	1,751	Total....	6,464

About 11,500 were issued between the 20th and end of January, and 11,000 more were only given out of store in the course of February.

It may also be necessary, before leaving this branch of the subject, to call attention to the marked difference in the explanation regarding the non-issue of the great coats, given by Colonel Wetherall to the Commissioners in the Crimea, viz., “that so far as he was aware, it was never contemplated to give each soldier more than one;” and what the same officer

Page 165 of Evidence in Report of Commissioners.

Page 283 of
Board's Pro-
ceedings.

subsequently stated to the Board, "that it never entered into anybody's mind that the issue was limited to the replacing of the coats which had been worn any period whatever."

If no man was to have more than one regimental great coat, it is quite clear that the issue must have been limited to the replacing of great coats which had become unserviceable, yet Colonel Wetherall informed the Board that this never entered into anybody's mind, and they appear to have taken his statement for granted, though in direct opposition to what was previously given in evidence by him to the Commissioners on the same subject.

The next of the issues, referred to by the Board, are—

Watch Coats, Coatees, Trousers.

As to which they observe—

Page XII. of
Board's Re-
port.

"In regard to the apportionment of these articles, it appears to us, from the evidence of Colonel Wetherall, the officer who superintended their apportionment, that every means were taken to issue to the troops such of them as were actually in store or available for use. But all the coatees were found to be too small for the men, by reason of the great quantity of underclothing worn by them. The shoes were also much too small for all purposes of service in the field.

"This statement with respect to boots and shoes is borne out by the proceedings of a Board of Survey, on the unfitness of ammunition boots issued to the men, held in the 19th Regiment, on the 8th January, 1855.

Though the Board must, from this, be understood as expressing themselves satisfied with regard to the distribution of the watch coats, they do not state upon what grounds. Considering that these arrived in November,—that 2,050 were in store on 2nd December, and that they were much wanted for the protection of the sentries, it does not appear why

authority should not have been given for issuing the whole at once, instead of one-half being delayed till the 21st December. As the number was so limited, want of transport could have nothing to do with the expediency of the regiments being made acquainted with the fact that the watch coats were there, if they could only manage to bring them up from Balaklava.

With regard to the novel reason assigned for the non-distribution of the coatees, it is only necessary to observe that, as shown by the Quartermaster-General's Return, they arrived in the harbour on 28th November to the number of 5,934, at which time the men *had no under clothing at all*. Most of them were without any shirt, except what they had had on their backs ever since their arrival in the Crimea, and scarcely a single article of under clothing was issued to them until after that day; it was only during the month of December that they were completed with one suit, and it was January before they had a second. How, then, could the quantity of under clothing have been so great as to prevent the coatees being of any use? Surely a common Jersey and a shirt, even had they possessed them, could have offered no serious impediment, particularly considering the reduced condition of the men from a Crimean regimen and Crimean labours.

Such an excuse looks more like a jest upon the condition of the men, than one to be deliberately made, and as deliberately received. A Board of General Officers cannot require to be told that, even when the soldier had sufficient variety in his under clothing to admit of his wearing two or three shirts at a time, as alleged by Colonel Wetherall, he would gladly have divested himself of one of them for the additional warmth afforded by a coatee, or that these are usually sent out by the Ordnance of

different sizes, and that great, indeed, must have been the increased bulk of the soldier, before coatees intended for men of six feet could have been unfit for those of a medium or minimum size; yet not a single coatee appears to have been issued, the same number being in store on the 31st March, as arrived by the "Ottawa" on the 28th November.

Without wishing to throw any unnecessary discredit on the statement of Colonel Wetherall, I may, perhaps, be permitted to observe, that when extraordinary explanations of this kind are given, it is better that they should come from any other source than the party most interested in supporting them.

See p. 166
of Evidence.

Had the Board referred to the evidence on this subject, given by Colonel Wetherall before the Commissioners in the Crimea, they would have found "that they (the coatees) were not issued because the new clothing for each regiment was shortly expected," yet this regimental clothing, as will hereafter be shown, did not arrive till two months later; so that according to that officer's own showing, he, on an expectation which was not realized, postponed the issue for that long period, while the men were in great want and suffering. This is not however, the only reason assigned for the delay; he also states "that the coatees would probably have been issued about the same time as the trousers, (2nd December) but their being in store was not reported;" not a word is said about their being too small.

See p. 166 of
Evidence.

It may afford a valuable instance of the inconvenience attending a plurality of excuses, that if the last of these was correct, neither of the two former could be so, and that if the second exhibited the true state of matters, the reason assigned in the first was equally unnecessary and inadmissible.

But I have not yet exhausted this diversity of excuses respecting the coatees, for Colonel Wetherall, in his examination informs the Board, that they were not issued, "because at the time when they arrived, "the regimental clothing had also arrived for the

“army, and it was at Balaklava, and could not be “carried up to the men.” The excuse was no longer that it was expected, as the Commissioners had been told in the Crimea, but that it had actually arrived.

On the very same day, however, that Colonel Wetherall made this statement, Lieutenant-Colonel M’Kenzie, the Assistant Quartermaster-General at Balaklava, had the following question put to him by the Board on this subject:—

Page 297 of
Proceedings.

“So far as your knowledge extends, you believe that the regimental clothing did not reach the Crimea till January?”

“Certainly not. I am quite sure it did not reach the Crimea till January, and I think it was towards the end of January.”

Now the coatees arrived on the 28th November, the regimental clothing not till two months after, indeed, I believe, that three months was nearer the time in the case of many regiments, and yet Colonel Wetherall states, that the former was not issued, because the latter had arrived, and the Board admit the statement apparently without mark or comment; nay, more, actually enumerate these coatees among the instances showing the activity of Colonel Gordon, in authorizing supplies as soon as possible after they were received and landed, *though not a single one was ever issued, or authorized to be issued.*

Page XIX.
of Board’s Re-
port.

Further comment appears unnecessary.

With regard to the trousers, the conclusions of the Board are scarcely compatible with the fact, that during the month of December, when they would have been of the most vital importance to the troops, they could not be found; and so apprehensive was Colonel Gordon that they had been sent to sea, that he wrote, on the 28th December, a letter to Captain Christie for an explanation of the reason why the orders, as to every vessel clearing out her cargo before she sailed, had not been complied with. This ultimately led to the discovery that the trousers

See Appendix
to Commis-
sioners’ Report,
p. 93.

were in the harbour, and the issue appears to have commenced early in the following month, but was only carried to the extent of about 3,000 pairs out of 6,000.

With respect to this supply, however, it is essential to notice as a striking instance of the difficulty of placing any reliance even on the statements of the Quartermaster-General's Department, regarding what they really did issue, that in the Return which they furnished to the Commissioners in the Crimea of the clothing in their store, 3,100 pairs of trousers were entered as issued in the week ending 2nd December, and this statement is renewed in the Return ending 23rd December, though, on the 28th of that month, Colonel Gordon, as would appear from his letter above quoted, was still in search of them, and not a single pair had left, or could have left the store.

To show how necessary was the immediate issue of those supplies—particularly the coatees, trousers, and great coats—I need only refer to the following passage in evidence before the Board, illustrating the condition of the men in the early part of December, and which derives importance from the sanction it received from Sir Richard Airey.

In the examination of Colonel M'Kenzie before the Board, the Judge Advocate-General read the following statement from the evidence of Mr. Macdonald a witness examined before the Sebastopol Committee.

2nd Report, p.
285 of Sebastopol
Committee.

“The men often arrived” [*i. e.*, at Constantinople from the Crimea] “without their shoes; they were either like those which one sometimes sees on the feet of beggars in this country, or they were sometimes without shoes at all, and their shirts had either been cast away in utter disgust at their filthiness, or torn in shreds, or covered with dirt, and they were swarming with vermin; their trousers were all torn about the legs, and torn in every direction; their coats were ragged where they retained them, and sometimes they came down without coats at all, and sometimes without great coats. Some men who appeared in great coats, wore those of their comrades who had died on the way down.”

See Appendix
to Commis-
sioners' Report,
p. 89.

In reference to this passage, Sir Richard Airey said,—

“I am sorry to say that I think that which has been read is nearly accurate; *the army at that time was really without clothes.* We had landed in the Crimea, and it was not known till the 8th of November that we were going to remain there; and between that time and the period that Colonel M’Kenzie speaks of, the army was really without clothing; therefore the men that went down to Scutari—the sick and wounded—were obliged to go with what clothing they had. In many instances their coats were entirely worn out, as it is known they are issued in April, and they had had their coats in the first voyage out to the Mediterranean; they had gone through the summer in Bulgaria with them—through the sea-voyage to the Crimea; they had worked in those coats in the trenches, and fought all through with them, and they were perfectly threadbare, and in many instances did not exist. *That is quite true.*”

Page 294 of
Board’s Pro-
ceedings.

It was at this critical time that these supplies arrived, and yet they were not used though so much wanted. I leave to others to decide whether sufficient reason has been assigned, or whether this officer, who points out so distinctly the wants of the men, can be held blameless for not having taken care that the trousers in the soldiers knapsack, and the shell jacket, shirt, and socks, left in the squad-bags at Scutari, should have been made available to prevent such suffering.

With regard to a proper supply of boots and shoes, much of the misery of the soldiers arose no doubt, from the want of this, the most important of all military equipments on active service. The Commissioners, therefore, considered it their duty to inquire and report at some length upon the subject.

The Board of General Officers, however, pass this matter over with the statement, undoubtedly true and confirmatory as far as it goes of the Report of the Commissioners, that “the shoes were much too small for all purposes of service in the field,” and they add, “this statement with respect to boots and shoes, is borne out by the proceedings of a

‘Board of Survey, on the unfitness of ammunition boots issued to the men,’ held in the 19th Regiment, on the 8th January, 1855.”

It is somewhat remarkable and worth notice, principally as showing how little care has been exercised by the Board in the examination of evidence before them, that the Report of the “Board of Survey, &c.,” is wholly silent as to the smallness of the boots, and is confined to a statement of general unfitness for service, inasmuch as “it appears in many cases, that *two or three days wear on duty and fatigues, have rendered the boots useless, the heels and soles becoming detached from the uppers.*”

Page 196, of
Appendix to
Commissioners
Report.

Tents.

This is a subject into which it does not appear necessary to enter. Nothing was stated in the Report of the Commissioners, with regard to the tents, affecting either the Quartermaster-General’s or any other Department; the object of their remarks was merely to show that a much more ample supply than usual of tent equipage had been afforded to the army in the Crimea, and that if reliance could be placed on the Returns received from the Tower, they were all new, with the exception of a fractional part, which had previously been used at Chobham.

Paillasses.

Though the Board have expressed an opinion against the possibility of these being of service to the men, few I apprehend who are aware of the sufferings of the troops in the month of December will be disposed to concur with them. To absolve from responsibility at such a time, it would be necessary to show that every possible expedient had been

resorted to. If one paillasse case was too thin to be of any use under the soldier, when straw or wool could not be obtained to stuff it, what was to prevent three or four of them being issued for the purpose. At a time when even the sick considered themselves fortunate if they could get empty corn sacks to lie upon, surely these paillasse sacks were not to be altogether despised. If, when placed under the soldier, they were of little benefit, he might at least have had some of them to throw over him till a sufficiency of blankets could be procured. If it was not worth the trouble of the soldiers to come from the front for them, why not have divided them among the troops at Kadikoi and Balaklava? Perhaps the Cavalry might have found some means of filling them from the straw which was often left in heaps on the wharves, or they might perhaps, have been useful for carrying it away, in which there was often much difficulty; but if no one knew them to be in store, and at the disposal of regiments, no such expedients could be resorted to or thought of: at all events, any course would have been better than leaving them to cumber the store rooms, where the cost of the space they occupied must, in the course of the winter, have more than equalled their value.

Huts.--Road to Balaklava, &c.

It appears unnecessary to enter into the question of the huts, inasmuch as though the Commissioners went fully into the subject in their Report, they made no imputation whatever upon the Quartermaster-General's Department with regard to it. The question as to the shelter for the horses has been already discussed, and it is needless to recur to it.

With regard to the "Road to Balaklava," the Commissioners considered it their duty to report in

the following terms, that the want of this road added to the difficulties of carrying supplies to the army:—

Page 18 of
Commissioners'
Report.

“The want of a road from Balaklava to the front, passable for Commissariat carts, greatly increased the difficulty of supplying the army after the middle of November; but the officers commanding Divisions, who were examined upon the subject, are unanimous in their opinion that it would have been impossible to employ a sufficient number of men to make the road, and at the same time to carry on the military operations in which the army was engaged.”

The Board cite this passage, and say:—

Page XIV. of
Board's Re-
port.

“Sir Richard Airey has considered it sufficient *for his vindication* to quote the words of the Commissioners in their own Report, as satisfactorily explaining, so far at least as his own Department was concerned, the causes of the defects and the difficulty which existed in remedying them.”

It was an easy, and under the circumstances perhaps not an unpardonable course on the part of Sir Richard Airey to assume the air of an accused person when no accusation had been made—to speak of “*vindication*” from charges which had never been brought, and to seek to give to the simple statement of a fact by the Commissioners the appearance of an admission by a hostile party. But it is unfortunate, to say the least of it, that a Board of General Officers, clothed with a judicial character, and speaking under judicial responsibilities, should have permitted themselves to adopt such a perversion of the Report of the Commissioners, and even to have added the following insinuation:—

Page XIV. of
Board's Re-
port.

“To this passage may be added the *admission* of the Commissioners, that hired labour could not be obtained, and the demand for the services of the troops in the trenches, and for other military duties, was such that they could not be spared for other purposes.”

In concluding the preceding observations as to the non-issue of the extensive supplies of clothing and covering, sent out in the early part of the winter, and a considerable portion of which was still in the Quartermaster-General's Store, on the arrival of the

Commissioners in March, notwithstanding the dreadful sufferings of the men in the meantime, perhaps I may be permitted to refer to the Report of the Sebastopol Committee, in which the Board will find the following explanation, by Lord Lucan, of the cause of all these delays and omissions :—

Vol. II., p.
316, Qu. 6631

“ The custom of the service makes it the business of the Quartermaster-General to receive all the supplies for the army that are not ‘ *de bouche*,’ and a more absurd or a more mischievous system, or one that requires a more immediate change there cannot be, and there is nothing like it in any other army in the world ; for though the officers were thoroughly fit for their duties in the field, *yet from the class that the Quartermasters-General are taken, men more unfitted for such duties as those, could not possibly be fixed upon.*”

Fortunately, it is not necessary for me to offer any opinion as to the justice of this sweeping censure ; but I must express my surprise that General Airey should have been so sensitive as to the remarks of the Commissioners, that they conceived the arrangements in his Department for the distribution of the stores to have been of “ questionable expediency,” while he allowed to pass altogether unnoticed this denunciation by Lord Lucan of the total unfitness of himself and his subordinates for that important part of their duty.

The Commissioners did not make use of the strong language used by Lord Lucan, nor did they suggest the still more vigorous remedy which occurred to the Duke of Wellington, as fitting a case in which the necessities of the Troops sink into insignificance compared with their sufferings during the winter of 1854-5, in the Crimea. Writing to General Fane, from Pero Negro, on the 3rd of November, 1810, he says :—

“ I wish I had it in my power to give you well-clothed Troops, Despatches,
or to hang those who ought to have given them their clothing.— Vol. VI.

“ Believe me, &c.,

“ WELLINGTON.”

I next come to that part of the Report entitled

THE HON. COLONEL GORDON'S CASE.

This case is peculiar in its nature, inasmuch as the substance of it consists—not of any attempt to impugn the correctness of the Commissioners' Report, or to justify the conduct of the Department with which Colonel Gordon was connected; but of a charge against the Commissioners of bad faith in dealing with the evidence of himself and Colonel Wetherall.

Such a charge, too, is the more ungenerous, as it originated in the latitude allowed by the Commissioners to the Officers of a Department seriously affected by the non-distribution of the clothing supplies, in order that they might be able to state, up to the latest period, and in any terms they conceived best for their justification, such explanations as they had to offer.

This necessarily gave to the result of one or two days' examination on these matters the character rather of memoranda for subsequent revision and alteration, than of evidence completed and signed, as in the case of the other officers examined in the Crimea. It must never be lost sight of, therefore, in what follows on this subject, that it is only to these incomplete memoranda that the statements of Colonel Gordon and Colonel Wetherall relative to alleged omissions apply, and that even had the whole of them been published in the manner advocated by those officers before the Board, no change of any moment would have been necessary in the Report of the Commissioners' observations.

I shall now proceed to notice the conclusions of the Board on this subject.

The words of the Report are :—

“ Colonel Gordon called the attention of the Board in the first instance to the following statements which had been made by Colonel Tulloch during the course of the proceedings before the Board, and which statements he considered to be incorrect, as regarded himself, and prejudicial to him if left unchallenged.” Page XV.
and XVI. of
Board's Re-
port.

‘I. A statement to the effect that all the originals of the evidence given by the officers in the Crimea were sent to them for correction.’”

“ Colonel Gordon said that this was not done, in certain instances, with his evidence ; and that the evidence that was submitted to him, and which purported to be an original, was materially different from the actual original.”

“ II. A statement with regard to Colonel Wetherall's evidence, viz. :—

“ Those notes were never introduced into the body of the evidence, because the marked difference between what was received in the one case, and acknowledged in the other, showed that the inquiry would lead to no beneficial result, and I therefore struck out the whole of the latter part of the memorandum, and in that state it was subsequently sent to Colonel Gordon for Colonel Wetherall, along with his evidence, to save the trouble of re-copying it.

“ Colonel Gordon said that the memorandum there mentioned, never was sent to him, and that he never saw it till he saw it printed in this country.”

On this complaint the Board reports as follows :—

“ With respect to the subjects referred to in complaints I and II, after giving due consideration to the reasons set forth by Colonel Tulloch in his paper marked B in explanation thereof, we entirely acquit the Commissioners of being actuated by any improper motives in adopting the course complained of by Colonel Gordon, inasmuch as with respect to the evidence given to the Commissioners by Colonel Gordon, we think that the Commissioners were under the impression that that officer had sufficient opportunity of correcting it.” Page XVII.
of Board's Re-
port.

“ But as that impression does not appear to have been correct, we are of opinion that Colonel Gordon's complaint is not without foundation.”

This assertion by Colonel Gordon, that he never saw the Memorandum referred to, is directly opposed to the admission under his own hand, to the following effect :—

Page 168 of
Evidence in
Commissioners
Report.

“The Memorandum referred to, in the evidence of Major Wetherall, relative to the non-issue of a large proportion of the warm clothing and winter stores, and the explanations of that officer having been read over to him, (Colonel Gordon), he states, &c.”

The Memorandum, of course, could not have been read over to him, without his having seen it; besides, the proof-sheet is in my possession, with a correction in Colonel Gordon's hand, which could not well have been made without his seeing the original.

Both these documents were in the hands of the Judge-Advocate-General for the information of the Board, at the time when Colonel Gordon made this unfounded accusation; and if they read them, as it was their duty to do, I have good ground to complain that they should, without the slightest remark, have permitted that officer to fix such an imputation on the Commissioners, when they had the means of doing both parties justice by pointing out to Colonel Gordon the mistake under which he laboured.

But the inference which follows on the part of the Board, that Colonel Gordon had not sufficient opportunity of correcting his evidence, is still more directly opposed to the fact, as will be seen by the following statement.

The Commissioners, during their stay in the Crimea, examined about two hundred witnesses, including the commanding officer, surgeon, and, in many cases, the quartermaster of each regiment. Not having the services of a shorthand writer at their command,* the substance of the evidence of each witness was noted down by them at the time of examination; and after being copied out fair, was forwarded to him for correction and signature.

* This arose—not from any fault of the Commissioners, but in consequence of the remuneration they were authorized to give, having been limited to nine shillings a day, being about one-third of the minimum rate for which the services of a shorthand writer could be procured. It is impossible to describe the inconvenience and personal toil which devolved on the Commissioners in consequence of this unfortunate instance of economy.

The evidence thus obtained was printed *verbatim* in the appendix to the Report ; and, until the inquiry before the Board at Chelsea, the Commissioners believed that it had been signed by each witness. In the instance of Colonel Wetherall, however, this was not the case, though, as will hereafter be shown, attributable to no omission on their part.

The circumstances which occasioned this deviation from the usual course were as follows ; and it is for the reader to judge whether they afford any ground whatever for the very serious charge brought against the Commissioners by Colonel Gordon, and for the statement of the Board that Colonel Gordon's complaint that he had not sufficient opportunity of revising his evidence, "is not without foundation."

The issue is a serious one. A charge of bad faith, if unfounded, recoils on the head of the man who makes it ; and a tribunal, before which such a charge is made and not supported, ill discharges its judicial duty if it does not mark its reprobation of the accuser in terms equivalent, at least, to those which it would have considered befitting the accused, had the charge been established.

The examination of Colonel Gordon and Colonel Wetherall on the 28th of May 1855, before the Commissioners was, at first, taken conjointly. It was afterwards decided, with the full approbation of Colonel Gordon, that this evidence should be separated, so that each officer might answer for that part for which he was more especially responsible. This was accordingly done, and the fact of the division of one examination into two, of course rendered some slight changes necessary ; but each separate evidence was transcribed as nearly as possible in its original form, and *both* were, on 4th June, sent by me to Colonel Gordon, as the senior officer, with a letter, of which the following is a copy :—

Page 249 of
Proceedings.

"I enclose a copy of the evidence, which, when you have examined and altered as you think fit, you will please to sign at
See p. 250
of Board's Report.

the end of each day's work. It has been thought best to have the evidence of Major Wetherall put separately, as you will see."

The evidence, both of Colonel Gordon and Colonel Wetherall, was left in the possession of the former from the date of the Commissioners quitting the Crimea, until his return to London in the end of July, during which time *he re-wrote the whole of his own evidence with his own hand*, the alterations and additions being, as he explained, so numerous that it would not otherwise have been legible. He also made notes and corrections on Colonel Wetherall's. Shortly after his return, he transmitted these documents to me, and I sent them to the printer as received.

See request of Colonel Gordon, No. 8 of Appendix to this Vol.

If the revision of the proofs had afterwards devolved on me, I should, no doubt, have detected the absence of Colonel Wetherall's signature on the collation of the proof with the original; but Colonel Gordon having been permitted, at his own request, to undertake that duty, both were sent to him as received from the printer. That officer corrected the proof and again made alterations, both in his own evidence and Colonel Wetherall's; a second proof, or revise, was obtained by him, and it was not till the end of September, or even later, that the evidence left Colonel Gordon's hands, and was sent to the printer with his final corrections, in which form it was ultimately received by the Commissioners, as containing all that his Department had to state on the subject. From June to September, consequently, the evidence remained in the hands of Colonel Gordon, with a written authority from the Commissioners, to "ALTER it as he thought fit."

Page 345 of Proceedings.

Of this authority Colonel Gordon availed himself to the extent of making nearly *one hundred* alterations in the original evidence, and finally re-writing the whole of it. His own statement before the Board, fully confirms this; and he adds, as well he might, "Nothing was more liberal than the way in which the Commissioners behaved; they put in anything

“that we wanted, and they left out what we wished.”

The evidence of Colonel Gordon, written in his own hand, the manuscript copy of Colonel Wetherall's evidence, with Colonel Gordon's notes and markings thereon, showing that he must have carefully perused it in connection with his own, and the printer's proofs of these evidences, with Colonel Gordon's corrections *on both*, as well as upon the proof of the memorandum which he alleged he never saw, are all in my possession, and can be seen by any one taking an interest in the subject.

About the time when these charges were brought against the Commissioners, I was struck down by sickness; but the papers were placed in the hands of the Judge Advocate by my friend Dr. Balfour, and every fact I have stated was distinctly in evidence before the Board.

What foundation Colonel Gordon had for his charge, and what ground the Board had for the opinion that “Colonel Gordon's complaint was not without foundation,” and that he appeared not to have “had sufficient opportunity of correcting his evidence,” the public, now that they are in possession of the facts, must judge for themselves.

Never, surely, in the experience of any Court, has such an event occurred as that the evidence of an officer, not only deliberately given, but written by himself, and repeatedly corrected in proof by his own hand, should be subsequently objected to by himself, and that objection gravely sustained, with the generous exception of not imputing any improper motives to the Commissioners.

Where such a charge was even hinted at, due consideration to the parties affected imperatively required that any statement tending to elucidate it should be brought prominently and carefully before the public; and so strongly did I feel the necessity for this, that, even at the risk of a relapse, I had an explanation taken down in writing,

and forwarded to the Board for this purpose; but what was my surprise, when the Board's Report appeared, to find that all this care had been rendered useless, by an erroneous reference having been given, under which it was impossible for any one, interested in the justification of the Commissioners, to find the explanation in the proceedings of the Board.

Page 17 of
Board's Re-
port.

See p. 519 of
Board's Ap-
pendix.

This document is there referred to as the paper marked B; but it will, I have no doubt, create as much regret to the Board as surprise to the public, that the paper marked B relates to an entirely different subject, being a Memorandum for the Quartermaster-General's Department; and as no reference is given to any page, and as the document in question is not even placed among the papers delivered in by *mè*, but among those delivered in by Colonel Gordon, it has been, to all intents and purposes, of as little use for the justification of the Commissioners, as if it had never been written. This must, of course, be considered accidental; but I cannot the less regret that there should have been, even the possibility of accident, in a matter of so much importance to the Commissioners.

As that explanation, coupled with the preceding statement, establishes the fact that Colonel Gordon had the fullest opportunities of correcting and altering the originals and proofs, both of his own evidence and that of Colonel Wetherall, up to a very late period, I might have been content with thus throwing on him the whole responsibility of the very omissions of which he complains; but as an attempt has been made to attach to them a much greater degree of importance than they merit, and as they have been repeatedly referred to by the Quartermaster-General as "*suppressed evidence*," I shall proceed to show what they really were, and how it happened that they were left out, though Colonel Gordon had at all times the power of retaining them if he had thought otherwise.

Page 343 of
Proceedings.

In the reconstruction of the evidence of Colonel

Gordon and Colonel Wetherall, when separated, the former complains that the following statement with regard to paillasses was omitted.

“The reason why they were not issued, except for the use of the sick, was, that straw to stuff them could not be obtained, and that they were considered useless without straw.”

But that officer must have known that this explanation having been already given in the evidence of Colonel Wetherall on 28th May, taken in his presence, it was unnecessary again to repeat it, more especially as the latter had been specially named by Colonel Gordon, as being better qualified to give the required explanations on such matters than himself.

Not only was this done by Colonel Wetherall, but the Commissioners specially gave a similar explanation in their Report, by stating that “it was intended that they (the paillasses) should be stuffed with hay or straw, but at that time these were deficient in the camp.”

Page 27 of
Commissioners
Report.

Colonel Gordon also complains that no notice was taken of his statement that

Page 344 of
Proceedings.

“Many of the dates of the receipt of warm clothing by the Quartermasters of corps do not appear to correspond with the dates of his requisitions, from which he anticipates that considerable delay has occurred in bringing up these supplies after the authority had been given for drawing them; and on a few instances being given him of these delays, he will refer to his books, and ascertain by the date of the requisition whether it had been in any way attributable to delays in his Department, or to the Quartermaster being late in sending for these supplies.”

Now it was explained to Colonel Gordon at the time, and admitted by him, that this promising to make inquiry was no evidence, and these matters were in consequence referred to Colonel Wetherall, because that officer had direct knowledge on the subject. It does not appear of what use, therefore, a mere promissory statement of this kind could have been, even if retained, in the separation of the evidence; but if Colonel Gordon thought otherwise, he might have exercised his own discretion in the

matter, having unlimited power *to alter as he thought proper*

A still more frivolous ground of complaint is attempted on the part of Colonel Gordon, that the Commissioners did not send him the original notes, from which the separate evidence of himself and Colonel Wetherall had been copied. But Colonel Gordon appears to have forgotten that these notes were the only record of the examination which the Commissioners possessed, and imperfect and almost illegible as they were from alterations, made in the course of the examination, they could not be parted with, but at the risk of the Commissioners being left, just at the time they were quitting the Crimea, without any memorandum of the important statements received during the examination at headquarters. If, however, Colonel Gordon really thought them necessary, why did he not ask for them when he revised the proofs after his return to this country, and when it is usual to refer to such original data before publication? If he did not do so, he has surely no right to blame the Commissioners for his own neglect.

When Colonel Gordon makes it a subject of complaint, that every line of the original notes was not kept as it stood before the separation of his own evidence and that of Colonel Wetherall, even at the risk of making both a mass of nonsense, it might naturally have been supposed that he was equally chary of alterations on his own part, but, so great was the latitude he allowed himself, particularly in the very day's evidence of which he complains, that the alterations and interpolations extended to nearly double the length of the original.

Having now shown how little Colonel Gordon had really to complain of with respect to any omissions from his own evidence, let us see how the case stands with regard to Colonel Wetherall's.

After that officer had given his explanations regarding the non-issue of rugs, great coats, blankets,

paillasses, coatees, and trousers, to which the Commissioners had chiefly directed their inquiries, owing to the magnitude and importance of these supplies, his attention was called to some notes made by them at the end of the memorandum marked B, by which a few of the regiments appeared to have been more favoured in the distribution of blankets than others. Those notes, however, had been compiled from Returns by the Quartermasters of different regiments, which it was admitted could not be strictly relied on, as their books having in several instances been lost, the Returns had to be made up from memory; some of the Quartermasters, too, who originally made the issues, had died or left the country, and the Returns had to be completed by their successors, who knew but little on the subject. This source of information was, therefore, avowedly liable to exception; but still the Commissioners felt it their duty to ascertain whether the books of the Quartermaster-General could throw any light on the subject, before giving up that part of the inquiry.

Page 519 of
Proceedings.

The explanations of Colonel Wetherall were jotted down on the margin of these notes, which were distinct from any part of the continuous evidence given by him on the other matters, as illustrated in the following extract.—

Memorandum by Commissioners.

Replies of Colonel Wetherall,

“ If the returns supplied by the Quartermaster of each corps are correct, it would appear that larger and earlier issues were made to some than to others. This requires explanation. For instance, in the Light Division, only 200 blankets are said to have been issued to the 23rd Foot, while 1,960 were received by the 34th, of which 1,230 were so early as 8th December, the strength of the two corps being about equal.

“ 12th December, 425 had been ordered for the 23rd Regiment. The 34th landed with two blankets, each man from the ship, and these were charged to the Quartermaster-General's store; the men came without blankets.

“The 77th also received 1,511, and the 90th also 1,315; while the 88th, with nearly the same strength, received only 568.

“In the 4th Division, up to the 17th December, the 57th had received only 300, the 46th only 150, the 68th only 185, and the 1st Battalion Rifle Brigade only 150; while the 17th Regiment received 1,836 on that day, and the 18th Regiment, in the 3rd Division, received 1,630 so early as the 8th December.

“In the 47th Regiment only 100 blankets were issued up to the 24th of December; in the 49th, only 200 up to the 11th of January; and in the 83rd Regiment, about the same number.

“In the Grenadier Guards no blankets were issued till after Christmas, and not more than half that corps, and of the Scots Fusiliers, were completed with additional blankets till the middle of January; while in the 1st Dragoons no extra blankets, and in the 2nd Dragoons only 66, were issued, up to the 11th January.

“If it be alleged in the cases where these delays have occurred, that no blankets were available, there appears no reason why the men should not have had rugs for a substitute.”

As these explanations were taken from the books of the Quartermaster-General's Department, while there was no evidence on the other side which could be equally relied on, and as Colonel Gordon had manifested considerable annoyance on the subject, as will be seen by the concluding paragraph of his

“The 77th have only received, by the Quartermaster-General's books, 435; the rest must have been made up by recruits landing with two blankets each.

“The 17th and 18th both came out from England, and received two blankets per man on landing; while the 57th and 46th, the 68th, and 1st Battalion of the Rifle Brigade, all received, on 2nd of December, an order for 400 each; and they might have had them if they chose; the delay is presumed to have arisen from want of transport.

“Same answer applies to 47th, 49th, and 63rd Regiments.

“The same remark applies to the Guards.

“The 1st Dragoons received an order for 108 up to 2nd December, and on the 9th January 156.

“The 2nd Dragoons had 100 on 1st December, and 187 on 10th January.

“It was entirely their own fault or want of transport which created the delay.”

second day's evidence, the Commissioners expressed themselves satisfied, abandoned that part of the inquiry, and ultimately inserted a statement in their Report to the following effect :—

“ With the view of procuring further information in regard to these issues, we have obtained from officers commanding corps a Return, showing the dates on which the different articles of warm and extra clothing were received at each corps. From these it must be inferred, that in many cases the supplies did not reach the men for a considerable time after they appear, from the Quartermaster-General's Returns, to have been issued. But, there is no reason to believe that the delay is in any degree attributable to that Department. Page 31 of
Commissioners
Report.

“ Owing to the deficiency of transport these supplies may have remained in Balaklava for a considerable time before they could be conveyed to the front, or in any other way be made available for the use of the men.

“ There is a similar discrepancy between the Regimental and the Quartermaster-General's Returns, in regard to the quantity issued to each corps, and to which we were at first disposed to attach considerable importance; but we found that the Quartermaster-General's storekeeper entered as issued, everything that had been apportioned to the troops, and for which an authorized Requisition had been produced; whereas, many of the Quartermasters of Corps, owing to the reduction in the numbers of their men by death, sickness and absence, after the supplies had been apportioned, did not find it necessary to draw all that the Requisitions authorized. A series of errors has thus arisen, which it is impossible to rectify.

“ The Quartermaster-General's Returns, however, upon which we have founded our conclusions, show the amounts and dates of the authorized Requisitions, and therefore, the largest quantity that could have been issued to the troops, and the earliest date at which the supplies could have gone out of the store.”

Having made this concession, it did not appear what object could possibly be served by including Colonel Wetherall's notes in the evidence, already overburdened as it was with other details; and, accordingly, the Commissioners made a cross through that part of the page, intimating that, in their opinion, it might be kept out; but had either Colonel Gordon or Colonel Wetherall thought otherwise, they were quite at liberty to have retained it. There was *no erasure, no omission, no obliteration*, nor anything which concealed the original; the whole was just as legible as any other part of the evidence, with

merely a couple of lines drawn diagonally across the page, and whether left in or taken out, it could not have altered, in the very slightest degree, the conclusions of the Commissioners.

The same observation applies to the omitted statement respecting the watchcoats, which formed the last paragraph of Colonel Wetherall's evidence, but was not printed in the evidence of that officer, in the Commissioners' Report;* it was to the following effect:—

“With reference to the watch coats, 1,200 were issued early in December, and on the 21st of December 1,200 more, and on the 4th January 1,100. That on the 2nd December about 2,000 watch coats were in store, of which 1,200 were issued as above.”

This explanation was, however, liable to exception, in so far as the returns furnished to the Commissioners by Mr. Archer, of the issues from the Quartermaster-General's stores, showed that only 458 watch coats had been given out in the whole month of December; whereas, 1200 were stated by Colonel Wetherall to have been issued early in December, and 1200 more on the 21st December.

Even the possibility that Colonel Wetherall might have meant “numbers authorized to be issued,” instead of numbers actually received by the men, would not have explained this discrepancy, because the return furnished by the Quartermaster-General himself, and noted on the margin, showed that the troops had actually received in the month of December 1061, being more than double what Mr. Archer had stated to have left the store.

There was, obviously, a most serious error somewhere, which the Commissioners did not discover till Colonel Wetherall was gone, and which they could

* Though I have here admitted the possibility of this part having been originally crossed out by the Commissioners, I have no recollection of its being so; and it seems just as likely to have been done by Colonel Gordon in consequence of the objections to which it was obviously liable in its original form.

Page 514 of
Board's Ap-
pendix.

Page 100 of
Commission-
ers' Appendix.

Appendix to
Proceedings of
Board, p. 472.

not have allowed to pass without comment, had that part of the evidence been inserted.

Besides, Colonel Wetherall's statement, was, in other respects, no answer to the Commissioners Memorandum regarding these stores, which was to the following effect.

"It seems also that about 2,350 watch coats arrived in the end of November, and were ready for issue early in the following month; yet no more than the half of these were distributed so late as the end of December, though they are described as having been most useful as a protection to the men on duty."

Page 166 of
Commission-
ers' Evidence.

Colonel Wetherall's reply admitted, that one-half of these was neither issued nor authorized to be issued till 21st December; in marking that passage to be left out therefore, in consequence of the discrepancy above referred to, no injustice was done to that officer, but the Commissioners virtually deprived themselves of a direct corroboration of what had been stated in their Memorandum. There was no obligation, however, either on Colonel Gordon or Colonel Wetherall, to have sanctioned any such omission if they thought it should be retained, the writing was left sufficiently legible and all that was required on the part of Colonel Gordon in the revision was to have put the word "stet" opposite the part crossed. In that case, however, the Commissioners would have felt it their duty, to have annexed a note pointing out the numerical contradiction, which Colonel Wetherall's statement and the Returns of the Quartermaster-General's store, involved.

The inference drawn by the Board, that if this paragraph had remained, it would have made any difference in the Report of the Commissioners, is quite erroneous, for the only part in which they allude to the watch-coats or cloaks, is in the following paragraph.

"By the end of November or beginning of December, about 12,000 great coats also had arrived at Balaklava; of these, there remained in store during the months of December and January, when they were most urgently required by the men, upwards of 9,000, besides nearly 2,000 watch cloaks."

Page 27 of
Report of
Commission-
ers.

Now, the Returns show, that 2,350 watch coats or cloaks, arrived by the "Jura," on 21st November, and 225 by the "Ottawa," on the 28th November, making a total of 2,575, of which, according to the Returns given by General Airey himself, no more than 1,061 were received by regiments in December; consequently the minimum quantity available, must, in that month, have been 1,510. On the 6th of the following month, 900 more were received by the "Robert Low," and 1,050 were issued up to the 16th January, making the minimum quantity on hand during that period, 1,350. If these were the minimum quantities, it is quite clear that the average must have been, as the Commissioners stated, nearly 2,000. In such masses of numbers, and speaking in general terms, an approximation only can be expected, and this could not certainly be complained of as being very wide of the truth.

Such then, are the facts regarding the alleged omitted or suppressed evidence, of which the Quartermaster-General's Department has endeavoured to make so much, although a very few questions on the part of the Board would have shown that if the evidence was in any respect imperfect, the whole blame rested on Colonel Gordon, who was entrusted with the correction and revision of it, and who should not have been permitted first to assent to omissions and then cast the blame of them on the Commissioners, accompanied with all the odious inferences and comments to which they have given rise.

In regard to the absence of Colonel Wetherall's signature, the Board must have entirely misunderstood the facts of the case, otherwise they would not have arrived at the following conclusions on this head.

See Board's
Report, p.
xviii.

"The Commissioners refer to the fact of Colonel Wetherall's absence from the Crimea in explanation of the circumstance of his evidence not having been signed by that officer. They forwarded it to Colonel Gordon on the 4th of June, 1855, apparently with the intention of procuring its signature and revision by Colonel Wetherall, overlooking however, the circumstance of Colonel

Wetherall being at that time at Constantinople; for it appears that after Colonel Wetherall's examination was finished, viz. on the 28th of May, he applied to the Commissioners to know whether he might leave the Crimea, and the Commissioners having consulted together, stated they had nothing further to ask from him; that they had ascertained all they wished as to the clothing, and he was perfectly at liberty to go to Constantinople. He accordingly left Balaklava either on the 31st of May or the 1st June. (p. 281, question 1,288.)

“ His evidence was returned to the Commissioners by Colonel Gordon without alteration.

“ The Commissioners state that they were led to believe, in consequence, that its correctness was admitted even though Colonel Wetherall's signature was not appended.

“ The value, however, of the evidence given by the officer who was charged with the apportionment of the articles in store, and the importance of that portion of Colonel Wetherall's evidence which was omitted when the other portion was forwarded to Colonel Gordon for correction, both bearing upon the delays and omissions supposed to have occurred in supplying the troops with comforts that were available, induce us to express our regret that Colonel Wetherall's attention had not been particularly called by the Commissioners to these points, and to the absence of his own signature; especially as, with reference to the non-issue of various articles of clothing, the Commissioners appear to have formed conclusions which subsequent explanations and a comparison of Returns do not warrant.”

The reference here made by the Board to that portion of Colonel Wetherall's evidence which was omitted when the other portion was forwarded to Colonel Gordon for correction I am at a loss to comprehend. If it be the Memorandum annexed to Colonel Wetherall's evidence, which Colonel Gordon alleges he never saw, a reference to page 74, where this matter has already been discussed, will at once show that no grounds whatever exist for such an assertion; and it is to be regretted that the Board did not satisfy themselves on this head, by a careful examination of Colonel Gordon's notes and markings on the proofs and original manuscript, instead of adopting the bare assertion of that officer in a matter which implicated him so deeply.

The Commissioners did not, as the Board assume in the preceding paragraph, overlook the circumstance of Colonel Wetherall being at Constantinople,

but they conceived they had a right to expect that Colonel Gordon would first satisfy himself that his own part of the evidence was correct, and then send the other part to Colonel Wetherall for approval and signature; or if he thought this too much trouble, though in a matter connected with his own Department, that he would at least have returned the evidence to the Commissioners, in order that they might communicate with, and obtain the signature of that officer.

Colonel Gordon, however, did neither; he retained the papers for months in his possession, undertook, by his own special request, the duty of revising the first proof with the originals, thus preventing the Commissioners from making themselves aware of the absence of Colonel Wetherall's signature;* and then after the whole had come before the public, he took advantage of his own omissions, to cast a doubt on the evidence of that officer, as printed under his (Colonel Gordon's) own directions. Whoever undertakes the revision of the proof with the manuscript is the person responsible for all the accessories being correct, and it would have formed a much more serious charge against the Commissioners than that which Colonel Gordon has thought proper to make, if, after being revised by him, they had altered a single word.

The Board had it in their power, instead of casting blame on the Commissioners in this matter, to have cleared up the whole transaction by putting the following plain questions to Colonel Gordon:—

1st. Why, if he considered the original notes, rough as they were, of the first and second day's examination at all necessary for reference, he did not ask for them before the revision of the proofs?

2ndly. Why, if he had these doubts which, after

* Throughout the Commissioners' Report, it will be observed that the evidence being in the third person, none of the signatures are printed; they were merely taken by the Commissioners for security, a precaution which, as circumstances have eventually showed, was not unnecessary.

the matter came into Court, he appeared to entertain, respecting the omitted paragraphs, he took no notice of them whatever in his various corrections, both in manuscript and proof, when he had full liberty to insert whatever he thought proper?

3rdly. How, when he failed in both these instances, he could blame the Commissioners for an omission which was solely attributable to himself?

4thly. Whether he had ever called the attention of the Commissioners to the circumstance of Colonel Wetherall's evidence being unsigned, and that it had never been submitted to him for approbation after being separated from his own? and if not, why he omitted to do so during the long period it was in his possession?

It is unfortuate that from the absence of a few such questions on the part of the Board, the *bonâ fides* of Colonel Gordon in this transaction, should have been left open to suspicions of a still more serious character than that which he has endeavoured to cast on the proceedings of the Commissioners.

The next part of the Board's Report relates to the explanation, given by Colonel Gordon, of the reasons why he did not issue the rugs, great coats, and blankets, to the extent which his stores admitted.

The inquiry on these points will be found in the 1st, 3rd, and 4th paragraphs of the Memorandum for the Quartermaster-General's Department, to which the reply made by Colonel Gordon was as follows:—

“The memorandum referred to in the evidence of Major Wetherall, relative to the non-issue of a large proportion of the warm clothing and winter stores, and the explanations of that officer having been read over to him (Colonel Gordon), he states that he is of opinion, that it would have been an advantage to each man to have had a rug under him, but he is not aware that the question was ever raised as to the expediency of issuing a third blanket, nor does he think it was ever contemplated to issue a second great coat to each man, in addition to the one in wear, which was renewed when worn out, as the sheep-skin coats were considered sufficient. It certainly was not suggested in any instruction from home; and he does not believe there were a suffi-

See p. 166
of Evidence in
Commissioners'
Report.

Page 168 and
169 of Evi-
dence in Com-
missioners'
Report.

cient number of blankets, great coats, or rugs in store, during the greater part of the winter, to admit of such an issue. Thinks that when the men had received two blankets, a sheep-skin coat, a fur cap, a waterproof coat, a pair of leggings, a waterproof hood, one-third of a buffalo robe, two Guernsey frocks, two pair of drawers, two pair of socks, a pair of winter boots, a comforter, and two pair of gloves, as well as an extra suit of uniform, consisting of a coat, a pair of trousers, and a pair of ammunition boots, which was renewed when required, they were not so badly off when packed fifteen in a tent."

Page 26 of
Commissioners
Report.

On this reply of Colonel Gordon, the Commissioners founded the following observation, which forms the subject of the present complaint:—

"It will be observed that Colonel Gordon, in his evidence, assigns as a reason for the non-issue of many of these supplies, that he conceived the men had enough, and he enumerates a long list of articles supplied to them, but he overlooks the fact that the greater number of these were not issued till about the end of January, or beginning of February, whereas the period during which the men principally suffered, was in the months of December and January, when it appears that there were supplies enough on hand to have averted much of that suffering."

I leave it to any one acquainted with the simplest elements of the English language, or who is accustomed to the consideration of evidence, to say, whether the statement given by Colonel Gordon, as above, does not fully warrant all that was deduced from it by the Commissioners. They did not assert that this was the *only* reason, but that it was a reason. The other, that there was not a sufficient quantity in store, involved the absurdity that, because every soldier could not have one, therefore no portion of the immense stores of rugs, blankets, and great coats, should be issued, and this the Commissioners did not consider worthy of a remark.

Out of kindness, however, to Colonel Gordon, and in order to prevent the possibility of any answer given hastily or without consideration, operating to his prejudice when the Report was made public, the Commissioners, in a second examination, by written interrogatories, so late as the month of August, 1855,

afforded that officer an opportunity of modifying or explaining any of his statements regarding the clothing, which they thought it possible they might have misunderstood; but the petulant, not to say disrespectful, tone, in which his replies were couched, and the withholding of any further information as to what he really did mean, left the Commissioners no alternative but to retain the opinion they originally adopted on the subject. If that has tended to the prejudice of Colonel Gordon, it is entirely his own fault, more especially as the proofs were open to him for two or three months afterwards, during which he was at liberty to make alterations, wherever, from the tenor of the supplementary queries, he conceived the Commissioners to be at fault with regard to the real meaning of his explanations.

See p. 199
of Evidence in
Commissioners
Report.

With this latitude afforded in every way, it is difficult to conceive how a Board of General Officers could arrive at the unanimous conclusion that Colonel Gordon's complaint on this subject is borne out; but what follows will afford a sufficient illustration of the dependence to be placed on their conclusions and assumptions.

They state "that the supplies of the articles enumerated in the following list are shown to have been authorized as soon as possible after they were landed and received into store.

	First arrivals.
Sheepskin coat	28th December
Fur cap	20th January.
Pair of leggings	9th February.
Waterproof hood	9th February.
Buffalo robe	25th December.
Guernsey frock	21st November.
Drawers	Ditto.
Socks	Ditto.
Winter coats	30th January.
Comforter	24th December.
Gloves	6th January.
Coattee	28th November.
Trousers	Ditto.

This is rather an unfortunate illustration on

Page 284 of
Proceedings.

the part of the Board, particularly the two last items, in regard to which the General Officers have apparently forgotten, that Colonel Wetherall had previously told them, that the coatees *had never been issued to the troops at all*, and the Returns of the Quartermaster-General's Department show, beyond a doubt, that they were all lying in store six months after their arrival. The trousers, too, which they refer to as having been promptly issued, *are actually those which were lost for upwards of a month*, and which Colonel Gordon was making efforts to recover with a view to distribution, even so late as the 28th December, and of which no more than one-half were ever issued, though they had been in the harbour all that time, while the nether extremities of the men were almost in a state of nudity for want of them.

The explanations of the Board in regard to some of the other supplies, are equally unfortunate. For instance, they state,—

Page 19 of
Board's Report

“That the first of these supplies consisting of the articles most wanted, viz., Guernsey frocks, drawers, and socks, commenced before the end of November, they having arrived on the 21st of that month, *and the assertion that the greater number of these were not issued till about the end of January or beginning of February, appears to be disproved by the Returns above referred to.*

Where is there any such assertion regarding this underclothing, as that alleged to be disproved? Certainly not in any part of the Commissioners' Report, which expressly states, so far as regards the first supply

Page 25 of
Commission-
ers' Report.

“That with the exception of some articles given out to two or three regiments in the end of November, the issue of the under clothing consisting of woollen frocks, flannel drawers, and stockings or socks,” “commenced from the Quartermaster-General's store, in the first week of December.”

The Board assert, that these supplies commenced before the end of November, so that both statements are almost identical on this point. With regard to the second distribution, the Commissioners stated, that on the arrival of fresh supplies in the beginning

of January, each man was completed with two suits of under clothing and socks, but as to that issue the Board give no information.

I have looked in vain through every part of the evidence and Report, to find any such assertion as that which the Board alleges "to be disproved;" the only place where I can find any thing like it, though obviously referring to other supplies, is in the remarks of the Commissioners on the following statement of Colonel Gordon, before quoted.

"Thinks that when the men had received two blankets, a sheep-skin coat, a fur cap, a waterproof coat, a pair of leggings, a waterproof hood, one-third of a Buffalo robe, two Guernsey frocks, two pairs of drawers, two pairs of socks, a pair of winter boots, a comforter, and two pairs of gloves, as well as an extra suit of uniform, consisting of a coat, a pair of trousers, and a pair of ammunition boots, which was renewed when required; they were not so badly off when packed fifteen in a tent."

Page 168—9
of evidence in
Commissioners' Report.

This reference to the supplies received during a whole winter, as an excuse for the non-issue of what was in store at the commencement of the winter, could not of course deceive the Commissioners, who, in stating their views on the subject, pointed out that Colonel Gordon overlooks the fact—

"That the greater number of these were not issued till about the end of January or beginning of February, whereas the period during which the men principally suffered was in the months of December and January, when it appears that there were supplies enough on hand to have arrested much of that suffering."

Now, what have the Board apparently done in order to disprove what never was alleged? They have applied this statement, which clearly referred to the waterproof hoods and leggings, fur caps, winter boots, regimental clothing and ammunition boots, which could not have been distributed sooner than the end of January or beginning of February, because they had not arrived till then, to the under-clothing which the Commissioners had pointed out in the preceding page of their Report as having

been received and distributed in the beginning of December and beginning of January.

See p. xix.
of Board Re-
port.

If a correct reference even had been given to the alleged assertion of the Commissioners, any one could then have seen that the statement could not apply to the Guernsey frocks, drawers, and socks; but the reference given by the Board, is to page 117 of Appendix of Commissioners' Report, which has no connection with the subject, being merely a summary of the Returns from the Quartermaster of the Second Division.

Whence arises all this? False reasoning might be excused, but erroneous statements and incorrect references, of which so many remarkable instances have been noted in these pages, ought, of all things, to have been avoided. With every disposition to consider such mistakes accidental, I must be permitted to express my surprise that, contrary to all the ordinary calculation of chances, they should be so uniformly to the prejudice of my colleague and myself.

The observations of the Board upon Complaints IV and V, only appear to call for the remark, that, if all difficulty in regard to the distribution of great coats had been removed by Lord Raglan's dispensing with the operation of the Queen's Warrant, there was the less excuse for the Quartermaster-General's Department leaving about ten thousand of them in store in the middle of December, when they might have been so useful. This appears an omission which nothing can justify, more especially as there were nearly seven thousand more lying at Scutari, which might have been brought over a month or two earlier, had it been thought necessary.

The next subject of complaint by Colonel Gordon, and of comment by the Board, relates to the non-

recovery of the knapsacks, as to which the Commissioners reported as follows :—

“It will be seen from the evidence of Colonel Gordon, then Assistant Quartermaster-General, that he attributes the non-recovery of the knapsacks at an early period to the General Officers of Divisions, with the exception of the Duke of Cambridge, preferring not to receive them. On referring, however, to two of the officers who commanded Divisions on that occasion, one of them states positively, that no such offer was made to him ; another, that he has no recollection of it, though it may have been so ; the third being absent, we have had no opportunity of communicating with him on the subject.” Page 24 of Commissioners Report.

On this, Colonel Gordon founds the following complaint :— Page xvii. of Board's Report.

“A point upon which I think I have some reason to complain, is the fact that after having obtained from Major Wetherall and myself, and from numerous other officers, the materials from which these portions of their Report to which I have been adverting were drawn up, the Commissioners should not have put to Sir Richard Airey, the Quartermaster-General, in justice to himself as well as to his subordinate officers, a single question upon the subject either of the knapsacks or the issue of clothing, which had unquestionably formed in their minds, from an early period, so important a feature of the inquiry.”

And on this, the Board come to a conclusion in unison with Colonel Gordon's complaint,

“That he might reasonably infer, from the circumstances above detailed, that the evidence of himself and Colonel Wetherall had been deemed satisfactory by the Commissioners.”

So far as regards General Airey being questioned respecting the issue of clothing, Colonel Gordon must have been well aware that, from the circumstance of his illness, already explained, that officer could know little, if anything, personally, on the subject ; that while all the delays or omissions were taking place in issuing the rugs, great coats, paillasses, blankets, coatees, and trousers, during the months of November and December, he was, as shown by the evidence of Lord Hardinge, before quoted, a cripple in bed, unable to read or write. How, then, could

Colonel Gordon imagine that the Commissioners, if dissatisfied with the statement of Colonel Wetherall and himself, who knew all the details, should have put questions on the subject to the Quartermaster-General, who, avowedly, knew nothing, and had, expressly on that plea, referred the Commissioners to Colonel Gordon for all the required information.

No blame is attributable to the Board for coming to erroneous conclusions on this head, because they seem to have been kept in ignorance of Sir Richard Airey's illness, though materially affecting the whole question of clothing; but those who peruse the proceedings will, doubtless, form their own opinion as to the conduct of Colonel Gordon, in never once alluding to the inability of that officer for duty, of which it was so necessary the Board should have been informed.

No questions were put to Sir Richard Airey by the Commissioners, regarding the knapsacks, because nothing occurred, while in the Crimea, to raise any doubt of the accuracy of the statements made by Colonel Gordon on this head; but hearing rumours to the contrary, some time after my return to this country, and feeling, in common with my colleague, the responsibility of putting forth a public statement, which so materially affected four of the Generals of Division, I, in the course of conversation, inquired of Sir De Lacy Evans, who had commanded one of the Divisions, whether we should be liable to contradiction by making public the statement given by Colonel Gordon, regarding the refusal of the knapsacks, when he so distinctly repudiated the allegation, that the Commissioners were led to apprehend some mistake. Finding that a communication with General England did not remove but rather increased this supposition, they, after receiving written statements on the subject from these two Generals of Division, which will be found in the Appendix to this volume, conceived themselves justified in recording, that the statement

of Colonel Gordon must be received subject to this exception.

There appeared no other course, except by re-examining Colonel Gordon, but those who will refer to the tenor of his replies when that opportunity was offered him, regarding the clothing, after his return to this country, will, perhaps, excuse the Commissioners for not having troubled him again for any further elucidation of his evidence.

Colonel Gordon could have no difficulty regarding the names of the General Officers referred to, for as His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge was excluded in his statement, Sir G. Cathcart was no more, and General Brown was abroad, no others could be meant than Generals Evans and England, though the Commissioners saw no reason for bringing their names unnecessarily before the public.

The correspondence with these officers on the subject, was tendered to the Board; but they declined receiving it, on the plea that there was no complaint on that subject before them.

I next come to the concluding Section of the Boards' Report, entitled

COMMISSARY-GENERAL FILDER'S CASE,

of which the first statement brought under notice is that which refers to

Quantities in Store.

The Report of the Commissioners under this head, and to which Mr. Filder has raised objections, was as follows :—

Page 4 of Commissioner's Report.

First as to Biscuit.

“ The ration of biscuit having, on the 15th of October, 1854, been increased by General Order to $1\frac{1}{3}$ lb., in consideration of the severe labour to which the troops were subjected, it was reduced, on the 7th November, to 1 lb., on the express ground of the supply of biscuit being insufficient to furnish the increased ration lately authorized.”

Page 21 of Board's Report.

On this Mr. Filder remarks :—

“ The established ration for all troops in the field was not reduced, but the *extra* allowance was discontinued. It was a matter of notoriety, that $1\frac{1}{3}$ lb. of biscuit was more than the men could eat, and that they sold, or gave away, a part of what they received, to the French troops who frequented our lines. This was before the storm, or any deficiencies had occurred. My motive for recommending the discontinuance, *under such circumstances*, of the extra allowance, was, that its issue impeded the progress of the depôt which I was then forming in the front.

“ Had the extra quantity of biscuit issued to the troops in camp been allowed to accumulate in depôt there, the animals which, during the winter, were occupied in transporting that article, might have been employed in carrying up other supplies, which were then so much needed; the extra quantity issued very

greatly exceeded all the deficiencies of biscuit which occurred throughout the winter."

The Board on this observe :—

" In this view of the case, we consider that Mr. Filder was justified in recommending the discontinuance of the extra allowance."

The question originally raised by the Commissioners under this head in their Report was—not, whether the issue of one-third of a pound of biscuit, in addition to the ordinary allowance of one pound per day, was judicious or otherwise, but whether the allegation of the Commissary-General and his subordinates, of there having been at all times a sufficiency of supplies in store was in accordance with the fact. That it could not have been so, appears clear from the terms of Lord Raglan's General Order, dated 7th November, 1854, viz. :—

" The supply of biscuit *being insufficient to furnish the increased ration* lately authorized, the Commander of the Forces is under the necessity of ordering that the daily ration shall be 1 lb., as formerly."

Appendix to
Commissioners
Report, p. 10.

Mr. Filder does not even assert that he had the means of continuing to supply the troops with this extra allowance, which had been ordered in consideration of the severe and continuous fatigue the men were undergoing ; and the General Order so completely bears out the Commissioners' statement, that I might consider this question as disposed of. The remarks of Mr. Filder, however, coming from an officer of experience, and supported by the conclusion of the Board, that he was justified in recommending the discontinuance of the extra allowance, are calculated to lead to such serious errors in the supply of an army, that, although the question is a totally different one from that originally stated by the Commissioners, I have no objection to meet the opposing parties on their own ground, and to show that the circumstances afford no reason whatever for the change advocated by him.

Mr. Filder, in his letter to Mr. Peel, commenting on the statement of the Commissioners, asserts, "that the established ration for all troops in the field was not reduced." If by this, he means one pound of biscuit and one pound of meat, these certainly underwent no reduction; but such a ration, does not, according to every trustworthy scientific authority, contain an amount of nutriment sufficient to support any man in health; and even with rice, sugar, and coffee, it would be inadequate to maintain, for any considerable time, the strength and health of soldiers undergoing severe labour, with much watching and exposure, as was the case with the army in the Crimea. Vegetables, too, which usually form an important addition to the messing, could not then be obtained, and the soldier was placed in circumstances under which, whatever might be his wants, he could purchase nothing for himself.

Such was the condition of the troops on the 7th of November, when, with scurvy in the camp, Mr. Filder recommended that the issue of one third of a pound of biscuit per man should be discontinued, not because there was any scarcity in the supply, but, as he alleges, because it was notorious that the men could not consume $1\frac{1}{3}$ lb. of biscuit.

It is admitted to have been notorious—not that the biscuit was more than the men could eat—but that it was frequently exchanged for fresh bread, because that necessary of life could not be obtained from the British Commissariat, even for the sick; but this traffic, far from being stopped by the reduction in the ration of biscuit, appears rather to have increased as the season advanced, and the diet of salt meat and biscuit, became, day after day, more and more intolerable. The practice was adopted, not by the men only, but by the officers; and considering that hard biscuit is described by several of the Regimental Surgeons as being not only distasteful, but injurious to men who were suffering from

bowel affections, the exchange was rather to be commended than found fault with.

Even had the reduction in the ration of the biscuit been the only change, there appear no circumstances to justify it, but on the 15th November the issue of rice was also ordered to cease, so that within one week the troops were, in most cases, deprived of nearly half a pound of the vegetable and farinaceous food so much required to counteract a salt meat diet, and this, too, when scurvy had made its appearance, and the destruction of the fresh vegetables on board the "Harbinger" showed that no check was likely to be put to its ravages by the aid of that specific.

Had the Board of General Officers referred to the extent of the soldier's labours at this time, and how little he had to support life under them, they would probably have hesitated to countenance the assertion either on the part of Mr. Filder or others, that biscuit was parted with for any purpose but that of exchange for some other description of nutriment. Fortunately, such statements can be tested by better opinions than those either of Commissioners or General Officers. Science has now analyzed all the different articles of nutriment in use for the support of man, and has assigned its precise value to each, so that by comparing what the soldier was then receiving in the Crimea, with the scale which is considered necessary in other armies, or in the navy, even when the men are exposed to no extra labours, we shall be able to arrive at accurate conclusions as to whether any misapplication of the rations was not likely to have been prevented by the most powerful of all motives, hunger.

In the Appendix to the Commissioners' Report will be found tables by Professor Christison, showing the weight and nutritive value of each article issued to the British sailor and to the Hessian soldier as a daily ration, to be as follows :—

Pages 191 and
192.

	Ounces of Nutritive Principle	Whereof there is	
		Carboni- ferous	Nitrogenous
British Sailor, daily nutri- ment, exclusive of beer ..	28·5	20·90	7·54
Hessian Soldier, daily nutri- ment	32·96	26·59	6·37
British Soldier in the Crimea receiving daily—			
1 lb. salt meat	23·52	16·6	6·92
1 lb. biscuit.....			
2 oz. sugar			
Coffee, not used; rice un- certain; beer, none.			

Now, it is in evidence, in various parts of the Commissioners' Report, that the soldier in the Crimea did not consume his salt meat, and that, in many instances, he lived entirely on his biscuit and rum, while the salt meat was thrown away daily in large quantities; but supposing it had been otherwise, and that the whole had been consumed by him, as well as his sugar, he would still, according to the above scales have had less nutriment than the Hessian soldier by nearly ten ounces, and less than the British sailor by about five ounces per day, though Dr. Christison's calculation assumes, what he admits is not likely to be the case, that salt meat contains the same amount of nutriment as fresh.

Even had the soldier in the Crimea continued to receive the allowance of rice, and been able to use his coffee, these, including the extra biscuit, would have afforded less nutriment than the rations of either of the other two classes, notwithstanding the demand for food which constant labour, want of rest, and exposure, must necessarily have created. Had the dietary in prisons even, been taken as a guide, the Board would have found that the soldier's ration in the Crimea, according to Mr. Filder's regimen, was below that scale. Compare it, for instance, with the

weekly scale in the general prison at Perth, as given by Dr. Christison.

	Ounces of Nutritive Principle	Whereof there is	
		Carboniferous	Nitrogenous
Bread	7·14	6·18	1·26
Oatmeal	11·47	9·2	2·27
Barley	2·33	1·9	0·43
Pease $4\frac{1}{2}$ oz. per week	0·50	0·35	0·15
Vegetables	0·17	0·14	0·03
Meat	0·25	0·11	0·14
Fish 12 oz. once a week ..	0·36		0·36
Skimmed milk	2·64	1·19	1·45
Total	25·16	19·07	6·09

As the dietary of the north is not usually considered too extravagant, it may safely be inferred that this quantity of nutriment is necessary to maintain health even in confinement. It is difficult, therefore, to imagine on what principle the discontinuance of one-third of a pound of biscuit could be advocated unless Mr. Filder had been prepared to substitute some other article in its place.

Perhaps if the Board of General Officers had referred to such facts as these, they would have been less disposed to second Mr. Filder's theory, that $1\frac{1}{3}$ lb. of biscuit was more than the men could eat; but from the want of local experience, it is possible they may have been influenced by a recollection of the usual accessories to a soldier's ration in other localities, and under happier circumstances; but which the experience of a Crimean General would speedily have dispelled.

In reply to the observations of the Commissioners, calling attention to the shortness of the supply of salt meat on hand in the month of January, Mr. Filder remarks—

“That, although some apprehension on the subject of a short

supply existed in his mind, no positive deficiency ever occurred in the Commissariat stores; that the lowest number of days for which he had salt meat on hand was eight or nine, and that the circumstance of his having had even so short a supply as that, arose partly from the loan he had made of that article to the Navy, and partly from the detention of the vessels by contrary winds."

Also that

Page 22 of
Board's Re-
port.

"The Commissioners have omitted to state what is shown by the evidence annexed to their Report, that the salt meat received from the Navy only replaced the quantity which had been supplied from the Commissariat stores for the seamen and marines serving on shore. This supply from the Navy was not, therefore, a loan, but a restitution of a loan."

On this part of Mr. Filder's observations, the Board makes no comment; it was, apparently, too serious a matter for seven General Officers to express their concurrence in an experiment under which an army was left with only eight days' salt provisions, at a season when the communications by sea were liable to interruption. The real point of importance respecting Mr. Filder's application to the Navy for a supply of salt meat, was—not whether the Navy had borrowed from the Army, or the Army from the Navy, but whether the safety of the British Forces in the Crimea had been hazarded by allowing the quantity in store to fall so low. In dealing with a question of such fearful magnitude, the circumstances of the balance of the loans being in favour of, or against, either branch of the service, appears quite unworthy of consideration; more especially as the Commissioners merely stated the fact of the insufficiency of the supply, and drew no conclusions therefrom adverse to Mr. Filder. Their observations were as follows:—

Page 4 of Com-
missioner's
Report.

"From the Returns handed to us by the Commissary-General, and from his statements, it appears that though the Commissaries had at that time in store sufficient for several days' consumption, there was still (in consequence of some mistake, it is stated, on the part of the Commissariat officers at Constantinople), cause for considerable anxiety lest the whole army should be left without salt meat, at a time when no other articles of food were available

except biscuit, rum, and the ordinary groceries. The arrival of a vessel with a supply of salt meat, before that which had been obtained from the navy was issued, relieved the Commissary-General from the anxiety which he had previously felt upon that subject."

Mr. Filder must be sensitive indeed on the subject of his management in the Crimea, if he conceives it possible for the Commissioners to have alluded to an event of such importance in terms less indicative of blame; and to have left the subject untouched would have deprived the Army of a most useful warning against similar shortcomings in future. It had the effect of inducing Lord Raglan to call for periodical returns of all the supplies in the Commissariat store, and may prove a valuable lesson to future Generals as to the risks they are likely to run if they neglect so important a precaution.

Short Rations.

The erroneous conclusions into which the Board of General Officers have repeatedly been drawn by the want of local knowledge, are nowhere better illustrated than in the following results at which they arrived, with regard to the issues of vegetables and rice. The Board states on this head,—

Page 22 of
Report of
Board.

"The Returns quoted on margin show that there were issued to the Troops, in the month of

" November	..	..	340,818 lbs. of vegetables.
December	..	..	22,797 "
January	..	..	77,250 "
February	..	..	558,925 "

Also in the month of—

" November	..	..	79,059 lbs. of rice.
December	..	..	63,014 "
January	..	..	155,241 "
February	..	..	118,400 "

"It appears, therefore, that the statements of the Commissioners are by no means borne out."

The statement of the Commissioners thus referred to was as follows:—

Page 5 of
Commissioners' Report.

“ In the Crimea, during the greater part of November and December, and also in a great measure during January, and part of February, the soldier was confined exclusively to biscuit, in addition to his salt meat.”

Page 251 to
257 of evidence.

It is to be regretted that, before asserting that this statement was not borne out, the Board did not refer to the recorded answers by the Commanding Officers of corps to the following question by the Commissioners:—

“ Has the corps been sufficiently supplied with vegetables since it landed? If not, state the dates at which the supplies of vegetables were insufficient.”

In the replies to this query, not above five or six Regiments admit that there were any issues of vegetables in November at all. Still fewer acknowledge any in December. About the 20th or 24th of January is fixed by some as the period from which vegetables began to be received regularly; but others, for instance the Grenadier and Coldstream Guards, 62nd, 4th, 7th and 90th Foot refer to the supply as irregular up to the middle of February, and five regiments represent it as insufficient even up to March or April, thus fully corroborating all that the Commissioners advanced in their general statement on this subject.

But, how comes it then, that in the month of November the Returns of the Assistant Commissary-General should bear that 340,818 lbs. of vegetables were received and issued to the troops?

Had the Board the same experience in the mode of making up the Commissariat accounts as the Commissioners, they would have known, that the mere circumstance of an Assistant Commissary-General having entered that quantity as received and issued, was no positive evidence of the troops having got it, and that the greater portion of this entry, without the accompanying explanation which would have been

found on the face of the accounts had the Board examined them, was altogether a fiction.

To those acquainted with what was passing at that time in the Crimea, it was but too well known that the efforts of the Commissary-General to procure vegetables for the troops proved at first, very unfortunate—that, as will be seen by a letter of Mr. Smith, the Deputy Commissary-General, dated 4th November, the 150 tons, or 336,000 lbs. of vegetables shipped by the “Harbinger,” left the Bosphorus in a very bad state. That vessel reached Balaklava on the 9th, and lay there till the 24th of that month, because the Captain could get no one to take away the cargo. In the meantime the vegetables rotted, and were either thrown overboard, or scrambled for on the deck by the Zouaves and such of the soldiers belonging to the Division at Balaklava as happened to be present.

Page 7 of Com-
missioners’
Appendix.

Had the Board referred to Mr. Drake’s accounts, they would have found that of the 340,818 lbs. referred to, 263,842 lbs. were admitted to have been destroyed, and 76,976 lbs. only, were entered as issued; few or none of these vegetables, however, reached the troops in front; they were given out to such of the Division about Balaklava as chose to carry them away, or were scrambled for in the manner so graphically described before the Sebastopol Committee by Mr. Layard, M.P., whose evidence, as well as that of Mr. Vaux, the Medical Officer, and Mr. Villacott, the Chief Officer of the “Harbinger,” the Board apparently never perused.

Vol. 2, p. 135.

Ib. pages 110
and 174.

In regard to the supply of vegetables for December, very little requires to be said, as, according to the Commissariat Returns, it could not have amounted in the course of that month to more than three-quarters of a pound, or *about two potatoes and one onion* per man in the course of *thirty-one days*, provided the sick in hospital did not exhaust the supply.

In January, the issue would have afforded about

half-a-pound a week to each individual, subject to the same exception with regard to the sick; in the latter part of that month too, preserved potatoes began to be issued, but at first chiefly to the Hospitals.

The issue in the whole of February of the quantity of vegetables stated by Mr. Filder, is quite consistent with the alleged deficiency in some corps during the early part of that month, therefore, no further comments appear to be required on that head.

The cause of the delay in obtaining vegetables in December and January, which proved so fatal to the troops, remains yet to be explained; the misfortune which attended the first supply was no reason for discontinuing further efforts, but ought rather to have given rise to renewed exertions to make good the deficiency.

So early as the 24th of October, Mr. Filder had been informed by the Quartermaster-General, that scurvy having broken out in the army, it was necessary to act with promptitude in procuring supplies of vegetables. On the 30th and 31st October, he was directed to purchase them from on board ships in the harbour, and on 1st November he "was written to "to know what quantity of vegetables he had purchased." In reply to these repeated applications, Mr. Filder addressed a remonstrance to the Quartermaster-General, with a request that it might be communicated to the Commander of the Forces, against these duties being required to be performed by him, stating that—

Page 7, Appendix to Commissioner's Report.

Appendix p. 75 "It is not the duty of the Commissariat to supply vegetables, &c., to the troops; this, according to the usage of the service, is done by regimental arrangement."

He afterwards made various objections to purchasing for the army potatoes which were for sale in the harbour on board the ship "Victoria." It was not, therefore, because he had been left in ignorance that vegetables were urgently required to preserve the health of the army that a proper supply was

not provided,—a measure in which apparently there need have been little difficulty, as the market of one of the largest capitals in Europe, where vegetable diet forms a considerable portion of the food of 650,000 inhabitants, was at his command.

I now come to the issues of rice, during the same period, viz., from November to February inclusive, in regard to which Mr. Filder has endeavoured, and apparently with success, to impress upon the Board, that though this was declared by General Order to be no longer a part of the daily ration, the troops actually received within a mere fractional part of the quantity to which the ration would have amounted.

It might have occurred to a Board of General Officers that, at a time when the army was suffering under the direst form of scurvy, and when, during nearly three months, vegetables could only be obtained in the infinitesimal quantities just detailed, it was by no means likely that Lord Raglan would wilfully have incurred the odium of making it appear by General Orders, that his army was deprived of such an essential as rice, when it was not really the case.

The issue of such quantities of rice, though it did not at the time form part of the daily ration, is, however, easily accounted for; and the explanation affords another illustration how necessary it is, before a body of officers express their opinion in a judicial capacity on such matters, that they should have more detailed information than appears to have fallen to the lot of the Board in this matter.

The return of Mr. Drake, no doubt, states that rice was issued from his stores to the extent of—

See p. 13 of
Commissioners
Appendix.

In November	..	..	..	79,059 lbs.
„ December	..	..	..	63,014 „
„ January	..	..	..	155,241 „
„ February	..	..	..	118,400 „

But the Board omitted the important inquiry, *to whom had the issue been made.* If they had examined the Returns, instead of quoting them merely,

they would have found that in the first of these months about 20,000 lbs. were issued to the Turkish troops at Balaklava alone, and about 4,000 lbs. to the Royal Marines, besides what may have been issued in other parts of the camp; while in December there were issued 25,142 lbs. to Turkish troops, and 4,836 lbs. to the General Hospital at Balaklava, thus confirming what had often been stated in evidence to the Commissioners, that rice could not be issued to the British soldiers because it was wanted for the Turkish troops.

What became of the remainder of the rice, after these deductions, is easily explained without supposing that it was actually consumed, as part of the rations, by the men in health.

The camp at this time contained a very large proportion of sick, chiefly labouring under scorbutic dysentery and diarrhœa; indeed they were so numerous that great numbers had to be treated in their tents. The evidence of the Medical Officers shows the impossibility of obtaining even a tithe of the hospital comforts necessary to feed these men; and to have used the ordinary diet of salt meat and biscuit would, in many instances, have proved fatal. The sick necessarily, therefore, had a preference over the men in health, and there being little else to give them, the consumption of rice by many thousand patients absorbed nearly, if not all, the quantity sent up to the front. This, however, Mr. Filder reckons as if it had been part of the daily rations of the troops, though it is established, both by Lord Raglan's General Order, and an amount of concurrent testimony such as can rarely be brought to prove any statement, that little, or none, was received for upwards of six or seven weeks which could be applied to general use.

Had Mr. Filder and the Board adverted to the simple fact that, in the very Return which they quote, the quantities in the months of January and February, after the issue of rice was again authorized, were

double those of the previous two months, they would have seen that this marked difference, of itself contradicted the assertion, that the troops had been receiving nearly their full ration, more especially as the issues to the Turkish troops had by that time been discontinued.

In the general statement by the Commissioners, that “during the greater part of November and December, and also in a great measure during January and part of February, the soldier was confined exclusively to biscuit, in addition to his salt meat,” I admit that the month of February should have been excepted, so far as the rice was concerned, for though not general in all the divisions in the early part of January, it became so in the course of that month, and was continued throughout February.

In consequence of a statement given in evidence to the Commissioners, that the continuance of the issue of rice from the 30th September to the 15th November was owing to the prevalence of bowel complaint, they had been induced to give Mr. Filder credit for having been moved to that judicious step by the sufferings of the troops; but as he, in his letter to Mr. Peel, repudiates the idea of being influenced by any such considerations, I must acknowledge them to have been in error in attributing to him motives of so humane and praiseworthy a character.

See Appendix
to Board's
Report, p 566.

Had Mr. Filder referred to Peninsular experience to guide these arrangements, he would have found, that when the Duke of Wellington's army was suffering from bowel complaint, the issue of two ounces of rice per man was authorized, as a remedial measure, by General Orders, dated 1st August, 1812; and when the Duke was obliged to put his army on two days' salt provisions per week, he, by General Order, dated 26th October, 1810, directed a similar allowance of rice, to counteract the injurious effect of that diet. The Crimean arrangements, however, show the converse of this, as the very period when the army was subsisting almost entirely on salt meat, was that

selected for depriving it of rice, though then doubly valuable for the health of the men.

Page 23 of
Board's Re-
port.

The Board conclude their observations, under the head of rice and vegetables, with the following remark :—

“ We may here add, with respect to the remarks of the Commissioners on the subject of vegetable food, that we entirely concur in the view of the Commissary-General, that his Department is not responsible for the particular articles of diet which constitute the ration of the men; his duty is only to furnish it according to the order of the General Commanding.”

I am not aware that the Commissioners ever expressed any contrary opinion. It can hardly be doubted, however, that it was the duty of the Commissary General to keep the General Commanding informed of the supplies, of every description, in his possession which could be rendered available for the use of the army, and to call his attention to the expediency, from time to time, of making such changes as they admitted. Had he done so, it might probably have brought out the fact that, while thousands were suffering from scurvy and scorbutic diarrhœa in their worst forms, 20,000 lbs. weight of lime-juice were lying in his custody unused for nearly a couple of months,—and that while Lord Raglan was authorizing the stoppage of rice and biscuit, in the belief that there was not a sufficient quantity of either in store, Mr. Filder had, according to his own statement, abundance of both.

The Board state that it was only Mr. Filder's duty to furnish the ration according to the order of the General Commanding; but did he do so? In October Lord Raglan urged him in the strongest terms to procure vegetables in sufficient quantities to preserve the health of the men; the issues in November, December, and January, just referred to, will show to what extent that Order was obeyed. Lord Raglan was incessant in impressing on that officer the necessity for extensive issues of fresh meat. The succeeding pages will show in what manner these instructions

were complied with, by considering the issues under the combined items of—

Fresh Meat.—Abundance of Cattle.—Importance of Fresh Meat.

On which the Board express their opinion as follows :— Page 23 of Report.

“ It appears to the Board that the insufficient supply of fresh meat arose from various causes, but primarily from the want of sea transport, which want Commissary-General Filder appears to have used every exertion to remedy.”

“ The number of transports at the disposal of the Commissariat was diminished during the month of December by the circumstance of two of the most efficient cattle vessels being then under repair and useless.

“ The supply of fresh meat during the same month was rendered less than it otherwise would have been, owing to the Commissariat office at Eupatoria having sent back empty, two transports dispatched to that place for a supply of cattle, he having given over the cattle he had in charge there, to the French and Turks, who had arrived without any supplies of Fresh Meat, or the means of providing any.”

In adopting the difficulty of sea transport, as one of the chief causes why fresh meat was not more liberally supplied to the troops, the Board appear to have left entirely out of view the evidence of Colonel Gordon.

“ That a large number of horse sailing transports were placed at the disposal of the Commissariat on the 28th October, and from a list produced, showing the distribution of these transports on the 19th November, it appears *that sixteen of them were then empty and available for Commissariat purposes.* Page 168 of evidence in Commissioners Report.

These vessels lay idle during the winter, while the troops were perishing for want of fresh meat; it must be presumed, therefore, that unless the fact of there being abundance of sailing vessels escaped the notice of the Board, they concurred in the following argument of Mr. Filder as a sufficient reason for not employing such vessels. Page 572 of Board's Appendix.

“ I was at all times fully alive to the importance of providing fresh meat for the use of the troops, and employed to the utmost

all the suitable vessels I could obtain ; but I consider sailing vessels to be unsuitable for the service in winter, particularly in the Black Sea. Of all the cattle which were forwarded in sailing transports from Varna at the end of October, and beginning of November, more than one third were lost. Even on board steamers, which were not fitted up as cattle-vessels, the casualties were very great. To have continued the use, therefore, of sailing-vessels, would have been to destroy the supplies of the Army, and must have led to a deficiency ; for in winter it would have been impracticable to obtain large supplies of cattle from the interior of Turkey to replace such losses. * * * * Constantinople, *where I had plenty of cattle*, is, at that season, nearer the Crimea in point of time than Samsoun.

“ I know of no large army that has, at any former time, been dependent upon supplies brought by sea in sailing vessels.”

It must have been within the recollection of most of the members of the Board that there did exist a period in our history, and that not a very remote one, when there were no other means of sea transport but sailing vessels ; yet, that presented no serious difficulty to the conveyance of cattle, whenever the purposes of commerce required a supply. Several of the members, too, had shared in the honours and dangers of the Peninsular Campaign, and might have had personal knowledge of the fact, even if they had never learnt it from the despatches of their great Commander, that when the army lay within the lines of Torres Vedras, it was in a great measure supported by cattle brought from the north of Spain in sailing vessels,—a much more tedious, difficult, and dangerous voyage than any between the shores of Turkey and Balaklava.

The letters of the Duke of Wellington on this subject are so characteristic of that great General, and shows so clearly the importance which he attached to an adequate supply of fresh meat for his army that I quote them at length. Writing to Vice-Admiral Berkeley, he states,—

Pero Negro, 26th Oct., 1810.

See Vol. vi. of
Despatches, p.
540.

“ The Commissary-General having deemed it advisable to endeavour to procure cattle at Oporto for the service of the army, I shall be much obliged to you if you will order 3,000 tons of

horse transport to proceed there in order to transport to the Tagus the cattle which Mr. McKenzie may purchase there."

"Pero Negro, 29th Oct., 1810.

"I shall be very much obliged if you will send the coppered *horse transports* to Oporto in the first instance for the cattle, and let them be followed by others to the amount of 3,000 tons. I hope that you are right about the quantity of cattle in the neighbourhood of Lisbon, but if I am not misinformed you are mistaken, and I have already begun to give the British army salt provisions two days in the week." See Vol. vi. of Despatches, p. 561.

"I have directed the Commissary-General to make inquiries respecting the facility of purchasing cattle at Vigo, and we can send there hereafter. In the meantime I do not believe that there will be any difficulty in getting vessels into and out of the Douro.

"I am, &c."

Mr. Filder will here find that the very vessels designated by the Duke to be employed for this service, were the *horse transports*, to the use of which the former raised so many objections. It is not improbable that, in giving them up for this purpose, Lord Raglan might have had in his recollection the advantage which the Duke formerly derived, under similar circumstances, from that class of vessels. It is only to be regretted that he was not equally imperative in insisting upon their being used.

Instead of being deterred by the advance of winter, and the tempestuous weather usual on that coast, the Duke will be found, by the following letter, to have been increasing his supply of cattle, notwithstanding the heavy casualties which, no doubt, occurred at that season, and this without the slightest apprehension of exhausting the supply, an event much more likely to occur in that country than in the Turkish provinces.

Cartaxo, 16th January, 1810.

"I have had some more conversation with Mr. Kennedy respecting the expediency of sending more transports to Oporto to bring down cattle. Mr. Kennedy considers it advisable that as many as thirty sail should be employed on this service, and we shall always have them within reach. I shall be much obliged to you if you will give directions that fifteen sail may go to Oporto every week for the purpose." Vol. vii, p. 147.

I am, &c.

Even during the worst part of the winter, instead of contracting the range from which he drew his supplies by means of sailing vessels, the Duke extended it to Vigo, and even to Corunna, regardless of all risks of casualties, as will be seen from the following letter to Vice-Admiral Berkeley.

“10th February, 1811.

Vol. vii. p.
250.

“SIR—I enclose two letters which I have received from Mr. Kennedy, in which he requests that six transports may be sent to Oporto, ten to Vigo, and eight to Corunna every week, taking cattle for the use of the army; and I shall be very much obliged to you if you will make arrangements and give directions accordingly.

“I have, &c.,

“WELLINGTON.”

If any one applies a pair of compasses to a common map of Europe, he will find that the circuit from which the Duke drew his supply of cattle, and conveyed them *in sailing vessels*, comprises an extent equal to the whole shore of the Black Sea eastward of Trebizond. The navigation was also more difficult and dangerous, the time of the year the same, and the sources of supply far less ample than those at the disposal of Mr. Filder.

After this, what is to be thought of the assertion in Mr. Filder's letter to Mr. Peel, “that he knew of no army that had at any former time been dependent upon supplies brought by sea in sailing vessels;” or what reliance is to be placed on that Peninsular experience to which he so often refers, when he immediately thereafter quotes what took place within the lines of Torres Vedras as an illustration, though on that occasion the Duke adopted the very course for the supply of his army which Mr. Filder disclaims.

Did it never occur to the General Officers composing the Board, how little chance there would ever have been of earning the honours by which some of them are distinguished, had the Duke adopted the same course which they apparently approve in Mr. Filder, and allowed his horse transports to lie idle while his best troops were swept away by scurvy from

the constant use of salt provisions? Remote, indeed, would have been the probability, under such management, that their deeds should be recorded in the most brilliant pages of England's history, while the first winter's campaign in the Crimea will be chiefly memorable for the sufferings of our Army, and for the heroism with which those sufferings were endured.

So far as regards the assertions of the Board, with respect to the supply of fresh meat, there appears no necessity for any further comment; but as Mr. Filder has, in a letter to Mr. Peel, made some further statements, which the General Officers include in their Report, though they do not positively adopt them, they cannot be passed unnoticed,

Page 565 of
Board's Ap-
pendix.

Mr. Filder, for instance, there maintains the average quantity of fresh meat issued from November to March, to have been 10lbs per month to each man. I must, however, object to any conclusion which mixes up the issues to the sick and healthy and brings the increased quantity in March to raise the average of the previous months when the men suffered most from the continued use of salt meat. What can be more deceptive than such a statement when it is found, by the Return of sheep and cattle consumed, that the quantity in March was more than double that average, or what influence could the liberal issues in that month have in averting the evils already incurred by short issues in December?

See p. 539 of
Board's Ap-
pendix.

Mr. Filder is obliged to add, in explanation,

"That the healthy did not receive the ration which these figures would indicate, was unfortunately owing to the large numbers of sick, who, in some divisions, received full rations of meat daily, in others five days a week, thus curtailing the rations of the rest of the troops." Board's Report, p. 24.

The rations of the troops were thus, no doubt, greatly curtailed; but it must not be inferred that even the sick really got the quantities alleged by Mr. Filder; that, like most of his other statements, must be taken under considerable exception. For instance, the

See p. 21 of
evidence in
Commissioners
Report.

Surgeon of the 4th Dragoon Guards says, in his evidence to the Commissioners, that—

“ During part of November the sick received fresh meat *occasionally*, but in December they had *nothing but salt meat till the 25th*. In January the sick had fresh meat twenty days—in February twelve days ; on some of the days on which fresh meat was issued the quantity *was not sufficient for the requirements of the Hospital.*”

ib. p. 107.

The Surgeon of the 49th Regiment also states

“ In the month of December *there were fourteen days during which no fresh meat could be got for the sick*, either from the Commissariat or the Purveyor.”

Page 566 of
Board's Ap-
pendix.

It must also be inferred from Mr. Filder's letter to Mr. Peel, that the British soldier received, during the three months referred to, more fresh meat than the French soldier, but this inference is also incorrect. Mr. Filder compares the whole quantity issued to the British army, *including* the sick (who, as he admits, got much the larger share of what was supplied), with the quantity issued to the French troops, *exclusive* of what was required for the sick. Ten ounces every three days, or $6\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. per month, was the quantity issued to the healthy French soldier as his ration of fresh meat ; the corresponding quantity received by the healthy British soldier of the five Divisions of Infantry, during the months of December, January, and February was, on the average, only about 4 lbs. per month, as stated in the Commissioners' Report. But Mr. Filder has not extended his quotation from the Report, to that statement ; had he done so it would have precluded the erroneous inference to which his “Remarks” naturally lead.

Page 572 of
Board's Ap-
pendix.

The practicability of using the horse transports, for the purpose of bringing over cattle, having already been discussed, the only other part of Mr. Filder's Letter to Mr. Peel which appears to require notice, is his apprehension of exhausting the resources of

Turkey in the supply of cattle, by the anticipated loss of about one-third of all that he embarked for the use of the army in sailing vessels.

Little indeed could Mr. Filder have known of the resources of Turkey, if he really allowed such a consideration to weigh with him for a moment; and it seems almost a waste of time to enter upon such an argument, when we know by experience that nearly three times the force employed during the first winter in the Crimea has since been supported there chiefly on fresh provisions. But that he may not complain of any assertion, however extraordinary, being left unnoticed, it may be useful to remind him, of his having stated in evidence before the Commissioners that "there were available in depôt in the "beginning of the winter of 1854 about 8,000 head of cattle." Of these there were only brought over in the following months:—

Page 63 of
Evidence.

November, 1854	..	..	..	..	1,007
December, "	..	..	..	..	754
January, "	..	..	..	..	1,894
					<hr/>
					3,655

Leaving apparently a reserve of 4,345; but on the 5th and 14th December he had rejected one tender for 1,500, another for 300, and he had entered into a contract with Mr. Whittall on 13th of January, for 2,000 more, by which date he might thus have increased his reserve to 8,145, even after the consumption of the greater part of the winter was over. In February also he rejected tenders for the following quantities:—

See page 122 of
Pamphlet.

		Cattle.
Feb. 8, Henry Powell and Son		4,000 to 6,000
" 12, J. Zohrab	.. ..	1,000
" 19, Vincent Rosa	.. ..	500
		<hr/>
		7,500

And one of his reasons for refusing the last two was, that Mr. Whittall had offered to extend the contract

of 13th January to any amount which might be required, so that they were not wanted

On the 2nd April, when first examined by the Commissioners, he stated the supply on hand to be—

3,000, besides
1,500 per month from Mr. Whittall,
1,000 at Sizopoli,
1,000 at Sinope,
1,000 at Samscon,

7,500 total,

or very nearly the same quantity he had at the beginning of winter.

In short, instead of Mr. Filder being in any danger of exhausting the resources of Turkey, he had, apparently, more offers for cattle than he knew what to do with; and the loss of an extra thousand, by bringing over in sailing vessels twice the number imported in November, December, and January, would never have been felt. The bullocks, it is presumed, were bought for the purpose of being used, and whether they were consumed by the troops, or thrown overboard on the voyage, could assuredly have made no difference, so far as the resources of Turkey were concerned.

And why were the above offers rejected, when a more liberal supply of fresh meat would have saved the lives of thousands? Mr. Filder states on this subject, in his letter to Mr. Peel, that:—

“In the circumstances in which the army was placed the question of *expencc was never taken into consideration*. What was deemed best for the troops was purchased *without regard to cost*. This is stated in the written answers sent in to the Commissioners by the Quartermaster-General, who consulted me on this point.”

It is most unfortunate that, in the consideration of this letter, to which the Board refer whenever it presents a feature unfavourable to the Commissioners, they should never have thought of examining the official reasons for refusing such tenders as quoted

in the Appendix to their Report, where they would have found the fact undeniably placed on record, under Mr. Filder's signature, that the chief, and, in some instances, the only reason was the consideration of price, though considerably below that of salt meat.

So important a fact must not rest on my own assertion, and as those who peruse this statement may not be in possession of the Appendix, I submit for their inspection the following extracts:—

Date.	Contractors' Name.	Address.	Conditions of Tender.	Reasons assigned by Mr. Filder for rejection.
1854 December 5.	Isaac Russo.	Dardanelles.	<i>Tender</i> for 1,000 to 1,500 head of cattle, at an average weight of 80 okes of clean meat, deliverable on the beach at Lampsacus, Chardak, and Gallipoli; at the rate of £4 sterling for each head, to be paid in cash on delivery.	Too far off, and the price 25 per cent higher than our purchases.
December 14.	Hanson & Co.	Constantinople.	<i>Tender</i> for 300 live oxen, in good marketable condition, at £4 sterling per ox, to weigh 100 okes of issuable meat after being slaughtered. If the oxen shall exceed or be deficient of the stipulated weight of 100 okes. the price to be paid shall be increased or diminished in proportion. Deliverable at Samsoun.	An officer of the Commissariat stationed at Sinope was purchasing cattle drawn from the neighbourhood of Samsoun on much lower terms.
1855 February 8.	Henry Powell & Sons.	London.	<i>Tender</i> for 4,000 to 6,000 (at contractors' option) oxen of Bosnia, to weigh 740 lbs. each on an average, at £15 per head, to be delivered free on board a vessel at Trieste or Fiume; also to ship the required quantity of forage, including water and casks, until	Price exceedingly high, the distance too great, and conditions inadmissible.

Date.	Contractors' Name.	Address.	Conditions of Tender.	Reasons assigned by Mr. Filder for rejection.
February 12.	J. Zohrab.	Constantinople.	<p>arrival at port of discharge, for £4 per head. Together £19, including cost of forage, &c. Contractor will not guarantee safe delivery, or hold himself liable, in the event of disease breaking out among the cattle for the due fulfilment of this contract.</p> <p><i>Tender</i> for 1,000 oxen, averaging 100 okes of issuable meat, at £4 10s. per head, deliverable at Gimlik at the rate of 200 head per week; and 5,000 sheep averaging 15 okes each, at the rate of 16s. per head, deliverable at Gimlik 1,000 head per week, Payment in Treasury Bills at par. Also mutton in such quantities as required, at 6 piastres per oke, paper currency.</p>	Rejected. An offer having been received from Whittall & Co. to extend the number of cattle to be delivered under their tender of 13th Jan., to any amount which might be required, <i>on more favourable terms.</i>
February 19.	Vincent Rosa.	Constantinople.	<p><i>Tender</i> for 500 head of cattle weighing 160 okes the pair, at 950 piastres deliverable at the Sweet Waters in 51 days after signing the contract.</p>	Ditto.
March 15.	C. & E. Grace.	Constantinople.	<p><i>Tender</i> for 6,000 head of cattle, 4,000 to be delivered at Sizopolis, and 2,000 at Sinope or Samsoon. Weight not to be less than 140 okes, gross weight; the price to be £5 sterling per head. First delivery to be made in May.</p>	Commissariat officers purchasing <i>at same places on lower terms.</i>

Then follow ten tenders in April, for upwards of 60,000 sheep, the refusal of which was stated to be on similar grounds; but as, at that time, cattle could be had in abundance, and they were more easily trans-

ported than sheep, it is unnecessary to go into the particulars.

After this specimen, no comments of mine are required to show the degree of reliance to be placed on Mr. Filder's statement, that the price was no object—even when that statement is supported, as he affirms, by Sir Richard Airey. I must leave the Board to explain why, with this Return of the rejected tenders in their possession, they should have given their countenance to assertions so erroneous, and so contradictory of the Report of the Commissioners, which was, at least, entitled to fair consideration at their hands.

It must not be forgotten, in connection with this subject, that one of the chief difficulties in the Crimea, as admitted by the Board, was the deficiency of land transport; but if a sufficient supply of live cattle had been provided, they would have transported themselves from Balaklava to the front; and the mules and horses required to carry up the salt meat would then have been available for the conveyance of other supplies, and the men would have been saved those frequent journeys to Balaklava, which bore so hard upon them during a part of the winter.

The whole question regarding the supply of fresh meat lies in a very narrow compass, and may be summed up briefly as follows:—

Mr. Filder admits that he had, during the winter, "plenty of cattle at Constantinople," and the tenders just referred to show that he might have had many more had he wished.

Whilst this was the case, the soldiers were perishing by thousands from disease produced by the use of salt meat.

During December, January, and February, there was almost a total absence of fresh meat, and even the sick were, for many days, nay, even for weeks, fed exclusively on salt meat, which, in their state, was poison.

Why, then, this reckless waste of life? Who is

answerable for this stain on the administration of our Army—for what, indeed, might almost be termed an outrage on humanity, considering that the alleged difficulty of carrying cattle in sailing vessels has now been dispersed by the best of all tests, that of experience?

I have now only to notice the following observation of Mr. Filder, adopted by the Board in their Report.

Commissioners' Report, p. 12.

On the suggestion of the Commissioners, that "slaughtered meat might, at that season of the year, "have been carried without much loss," he states that:—

Page 23 of Board's Report.

"Slaughtered meat was sent by the cattle vessels during the winter, in addition to their cargoes of live cattle, notwithstanding that the plan in a climaté where the variations of temperature are so extreme was attended with much loss. It was possible for the Commissioners to have inquired into the manner in which this important service had been conducted by the Commissariat, and they would have discovered that their suggestion had been anticipated by our practice."

"The Commissioners cannot, it is presumed, mean that slaughtered meat should have been forwarded in sailing transports, as vessels of that class were often, in winter, nearly a month in performing the voyage from the main land."

See p. 12 of Appendix to Commissioners' Report.

The Commissioners were well aware that killed meat had been imported, and if Mr. Filder or the Board had read the Appendix to the Report, which they profess to criticize, they would have there found a Return by one of the Commissariat officers, showing that 11,886 lbs. of beef and 72,384 lbs. of mutton, or about three days' rations for the whole Army, had thus been imported into the Crimea in the course of about as many months. The Commissioners were led to the suggestion by observing that no such importation had taken place either in December or up to the 10th of January, though during that time the necessity for it was greater than at any subsequent period.

It does not appear likely that any serious loss could have arisen from attempting that experiment on a more extended scale; especially had it occurred to

the parties employed to use a sprinkling of salt, sufficient to preserve the meat for so short a voyage without depriving it of its nutritious qualities; but no medium seems to have been recognized between what was absolutely necessary to ensure meat keeping for several years, and what might be useful to prevent it from spoiling in as many days. If the arrangement failed at times owing to the want of so simple a precaution, it cannot surely militate against the opinion of the Commissioners, that it might have been more generally adopted with advantage.

I now come to the remarks of the Board on the subject of

Lime Juice,

as to which the Commissioners stated in their Report:— Page 8.

“That from the 10th of December the lime juice brought by the ‘Esk’ was lying in the Commissariat stores at Balaklava, and none of it was issued till the first week in February, an interval during which the sufferings of the army from scurvy were probably at their height.”

On which the Board made the following remarks:—

“It appears from the evidence before us that there is some contradiction in the date of the arrival of the ‘Esk.’ Page 24 of Report.

“The Commissary General stated that that vessel did not arrive until the 19th December, in which he is confirmed by Mr. Archer. However this may be, it appears clear that the casks of lime juice in the ‘Esk’ were landed and delivered into the Commissariat stores on the 20th December; that information of their arrival was given to the Purveyor of Hospitals, who appears to have actually removed some of it away from the beach while it was being taken out of the vessel.

“The Medical Department were therefore duly apprised of this supply, and Lord Raglan *also appears to have been duly informed that there was lime juice in store*, but the issue of it as a regular ration to the troops generally was not authorized until the General Order of 31st January, 1855.

“Steps were promptly taken to procure supplies from Malta and Sicily, and as soon as they were procured the issues were regularly maintained, *therefore in this matter no blame seems to attach to the Commissary-General.*”

This is a painful subject—painful no less from a recollection of the frightful accession which the

delay caused to the sufferings of the troops, than from the apparently light consideration given to so important a matter by the Board.

See Return, p.
347, vol. 4, of
Sebastopol
Report.

The statement of the Commissioners, that the "Esk" arrived in Balaklava harbour on the 10th of December, rests upon the authority noted on margin, which appears sufficient for their exoneration. It is quite possible, however, that even if it arrived on that day in the harbour, the lime juice might not have been received into the Commissariat stores till the 19th; but whether the 10th or the 19th is of no great moment compared with what follows regarding the period of issue.

It has devolved on me to comment, in nearly every page of the Board's Report, on the false conclusions deduced from the evidence before them. Of this my colleague and myself have hitherto been the chief victims; but I have now to adduce an instance in which, perhaps unintentionally, they throw upon Lord Raglan, without even the shadow of a reason, the burden of an omission which forms undoubtedly one of the greatest blots in the history of the war.

Page 24 of
Report.

The words of the Board are—

"The Medical Department was therefore duly apprised of this supply, and Lord Raglan also appears to have been informed that there was lime juice in store, but the issue of it, as a regular ration to the troops generally, was not authorized until the General Order of 31st January, 1855."

If Lord Raglan really knew that 20,000lbs. of lime juice were lying in the store unused, at a time when its issue was essential to the health of his men, his memory would assuredly little deserve that high consideration which it has hitherto justly received from his profession; but how stands the fact?

The Board refer, in support of this weighty charge, to page 374 of their Proceedings, where Mr. Filder's examination on this subject will be found at length; but the very first question distinctly negatives the conclusion of the Board.

“Was the General Commanding-in-chief informed of the arrival of this lime juice?”

“No. Stores belonging to another Department we informed the proper officer of.

“Then you informed the Medical Department?”

“Yes. I have a certificate here that I will read.”

But, instead of a certificate establishing the fact that any communication had been made on the subject to Dr. Hall, Mr. Filder quotes a letter from one of his own subordinate officers, alleging that verbal intimation was given to Purveyor Jenner, who took some of the lime juice away from the beach; but as the latter was constantly receiving supplies from the Navy for the use of the hospitals, he would naturally suppose, unless it was otherwise explained to him, that this was a similar supply, instead of being a part of the large quantity expected from England for general issue to the troops.

The only way in which Mr. Filder connects Lord Raglan with the subject is in the following statement on the same query.

“After the 22nd January we used to furnish Lord Raglan with a statement of all the stores in our possession of every kind, and it was not till the 29th January that he gave me an Order to begin the issue.”

Had Mr. Filder stated the 24th, instead of the 22nd, it would have been more correct, as it was on that day the Return was made up, which first communicated to Lord Raglan the fact, that the lime juice, from the want of which his army was daily melting away, had been lying for five or six weeks in the Commissariat stores. Only two days after this came to his knowledge, his Adjutant-General will be found in communication with Dr. Hall, as to the proper mode of using it, and on the 29th the General Order appeared, under which it began to be issued as part of the daily ration. In fact, instead of Lord Raglan having been cognizant of the delay, it is more than probable that, but for his calling for the Returns in question, the lime juice would have

remained in store till he no longer had an army to use it.

See p. 567 of Board's Proceedings.

Mr. Filder, in a foot-note in his letter to Mr. Peel mentions the possibility of Lord Raglan's knowing there was lime juice in store, from Dr. Hall's monthly Memorandum to the Adjutant-General on the health of the troops. No doubt Lord Raglan always knew that there was lime juice in store, because it was constantly being borrowed from the Navy for the *use of the sick*; but that he could have learned nothing through Dr. Hall of the supply which had arrived from England for general issue, is clear from the circumstance that Dr. Hall did not know it himself. Writing to his Lordship on the 25th December, a week after the lime juice had been received into store, he states—

Page 163 of Commission-ers' Appendix.

“ I have heard from Dr. Smith, Director-General of the Army Medical Department, that a very large supply of lime juice had *been shipped* at his recommendation, when it was reported to him by me that symptoms of scurvy had made their appearance in some few cases. A supply of lime juice was obtained from the Navy at the time, and has been in use ever since.

Had Dr. Hall been aware that the supply had arrived he would have informed his Lordship—not that it had been shipped merely, but that it was actually in store, awaiting his authority for general distribution.

See p. 167 of Commission-ers' Appendix.

The lime juice referred to in Dr. Hall's Medical Memorandum of 2nd January, and in his December Report was obviously that which had been obtained from the Navy for the use of the hospitals, for he expressly states in the former that:—

“ In a short time the supply of lime juice expected from England will admit of a ration of one ounce per diem being served out to the whole army as a prophylactic measure.”

an expression that he could not, by any possibility, have used had he known of its arrival. The first notice of the lime juice from England which occurs

in any communication with the Adjutant-General, is in the January Report, which was not made up till the first week in February, by which time it was in general issue, and Dr. Hall there states it to be so.

The Commissioners did not, in their Report, enter into the question whether Dr. Hall was in error for not inquiring what had become of the lime juice, which, from the letters of Dr. Smith, he had reason to believe should have arrived in December, or whether the Commissary-General, when he knew the sufferings of the troops from scurvy, was not equally in error in not reporting the arrival of a larger supply of the acknowledged specific for that disease, they merely stated that:—

Commissioners' Report,
p.8.

“ Had the General Commanding been informed of the arrival of that supply it cannot be doubted that it would have been issued to that part of the army which most required it nearly two months earlier.”

And the Board, it is to be hoped, with no worse object than that of contradicting the Commissioners, came to the conclusion that Lord Raglan appeared to have been duly informed that there was lime juice in store, but that he did not sanction the issue of it till the 31st of January, thus throwing on him the odium of withholding from his army a remedy which every one knew was essential to its preservation, and this, not only without evidence, but in direct opposition to the only evidence examined on the subject.

Before closing these observations, I cannot avoid referring to an hypothesis of Mr. Filder's, in his letter to Mr. Peel, that though Dr. Hall knew of the quantity of lime juice in store, and the further supply expected from England, he did not think proper to recommend, with only ten days' supply in the custody of the Commissariat, a general issue to the army, until more was in hand.

Page 567 of
Proceedings of
Board.

It is well that this comes from Mr. Filder merely as a supposition, instead of Dr. Hall himself assigning such a motive for his conduct. A proposition

so monstrous as that a whole army should be left to suffer from scurvy because 20,000 lbs. weight of lime juice would not have kept up a constant supply to the effective men for more than ten (or rather it should be fifteen) days, while the easy alternative presented itself of using that supply in preserving either the whole or a portion of the Divisions in front which had been suffering most, leaving the others to enjoy the advantage of the remedy when fresh quantities arrived, is an idea which, it is to be hoped, could never enter the mind of any other individual. It is somewhat remarkable that Mr. Filder should have been accessory to the sufferings of the army from scorbutic affections in no less than three different ways:—

- 1st. By the absence of a proper supply of fresh meat.
- 2nd. By the absence of vegetables.
- 3rd. By not duly reporting to Dr. Hall himself, or to Lord Raglan, the arrival of the lime-juice from England.

If, however, such principles of action, as he here suggests in the case of Dr. Hall, regulated his own conduct in the distribution of supplies, the catastrophe which marked his Commissariat administration in the Crimea will no longer excite surprise.

Fresh Bread.

Page 24 & 25
of Board's Re-
port.

The remarks of the Board under this head are as follows:—

“Mr. Filder complains that the Commissioners have charged him with an indisposition to make the attempt of baking fresh bread.

Letter to Mr. Peel, p. 568 of Board's Appendix. “He replies to this, and in our opinion satisfactorily, by bringing forward his purchase of three months' supply of flour for the purpose of baking bread, but contends that as bread requires 50

per cent more of transport for its conveyance than biscuit, it would have been impossible in the then state of the roads and the transport to have found means of carrying it up to the camp.

“ A floating mill and bakery which he had applied for did not arrive from England till the 12th of May.

“ In proportion as the state of sea transport improved, bread was brought from Constantinople sufficient for an issue twice a week.

“ When on the arrival of the floating bakery its capabilities were found insufficient, and the construction of ovens was commenced, the means existed of baking, so as to allow of an issue to the troops on three days in the week.”

“ The different organization of the French army is sufficient to explain the circumstance of their being more regularly supplied with fresh bread than was the case with the English.”

“ The Quartermaster-General's letter of March 21st, 1855, to the Commissioners, points out the difficulties which at present exist in the British service with regard to employing soldiers as bakers.”

Appendix to
Commissioners
Report, p. 21.

According to the reasoning of the Board, the mere circumstance of having, in the beginning of winter, purchased three months' supply of flour, is considered sufficient to acquit Mr. Filder of any indisposition to convert that flour into bread, as well as to relieve him from all blame for having left the army, during more than half a year, without that important article of food. The usual process of reasoning on such matters would produce conclusions the very reverse. What, for instance, would be said, if the Ordnance Department considered it sufficient to allege that it had shown a disposition to provide for the protection of the troops in winter, by ordering cloth for great coats, or wool for blankets, though no efforts were made to convert these materials into a form in which they could be useful to the army?

When Sir John McNeill and I arrived at Bala-klava, on the 12th March, and found that no means had been taken to enable the Commissariat to issue fresh bread to the troops, or even to the sick, I immediately set about the erection of ovens, under the circumstances stated in the Memorandum, p. 20 of Appendix to Commissioners' Report. To obtain bread, however, it was not necessary that it should have been baked at Balaklava; subsequent experience

showed that, during all the winter, it might have been brought from Constantinople and issued in good condition; but it was only when the hot weather was setting in, that this expedient was resorted to, which limited the quantity obtained from that source to a few weeks' supply in April and May.

In regard to the floating mill and bakery—the distant prospect of which seems to have obscured Mr. Filder's perception of the sufferings of the troops in the meanwhile—it will be seen that, when they did arrive, in the month of May, they were found quite insufficient to furnish an adequate supply of bread. Several ovens, in addition to those erected under my superintendence, had, in consequence, to be constructed, and this, for a considerable time longer, retarded the issue in sufficient quantities to the troops. Had these ovens been made at an early period, as the Commissioners urged, not only would they have insured a partial supply of bread in the meantime, but they would have prevented that disappointment which ensued when the vessel did arrive, and was found inadequate to provide the quantity expected from it.

Mr. Filder, in his evidence, comments on the circumstance of the bread produced from the two ten-bushel ovens erected by me, having only amounted on an average to 3,617 lbs. per day. On this point I need only refer to the calculations by Sir John Bisset, Commissary General, as given at page 47 of his Memoranda and Observations, published under authority of the Treasury, viz.,—

“The size of oven most preferred is what is called a ten-bushel one, in which 184 loaves of four pounds each are baked each batch. Two men and one boy can work four batches a day; the same number of hands additional could work seven batches in twenty-four hours; and that number of persons, viz., four men and two boys could keep two ovens (if built close together) at work night and day, and could produce twelve batches from the two in twenty-four hours. The ovens should be heated with wood.

“Ten-bushel ovens are built 10 feet deep, 8 wide, 22 inches extreme height and centre of crown, 14 inches ditto sides.”

These were precisely the dimensions of each of the two ovens erected by me, and they were built close to each other, the quantity they should have produced, therefore, was $184 \times 4 \times 12$, or 8,832 lbs. of bread daily; it remains for Mr. Filder to show why, after they were given over to him, they only produced between one-third and one-half of that quantity, and for the General Officers to reconcile that circumstance with Mr. Filder's alleged disposition to make bread.

These calculations show, in a striking light, too, the difficulties as to bread might have been overcome; two more ovens of the same size, properly worked, would have admitted of bread being issued for the whole army every second day during the winter, merely by the employment of twelve men acquainted with baking—a number which there is little doubt might have been found among the Scotch regiments at Balaklava alone.

The hardship of the want of bread during the winter fell with the greatest severity upon the sick, particularly those suffering from scurvy, whose gums were in such a state that they could not use biscuit, and whose longing for fresh bread is described as being incessant. If there was really a difficulty in transport, as is alleged, even for so limited a quantity, surely as many animals might have been devoted to that purpose as were found necessary for an equal weight of biscuit, which few of the sick could use.

But it places the question apart from all considerations of transport, that even the sick in the hospitals at Balaklava received no bread, though, during the greater part of the winter, it was baked in abundance, within a few hundred yards of them, for all who were rich enough to pay for it at the rate of a shilling per pound. So far as regards these men, at least, it was clearly a question of money, not of transport.

Colonel Hardinge states, that when he was appointed Commandant at Balaklava on 17th January, he found one bakery kept by a Frenchman,

and that subsequently, under his direction, two more were established yielding 2,900 loaves per day. These were not new ovens constructed for the purpose, but old ones belonging to the Russians, which merely required being cleared out, and this might have been done for the exclusive benefit of the sick almost as soon as the town was taken possession of; yet, up to the 9th day of April, not a morsel of bread was issued to the sick, though Mr. Filder, in his evidence before the Board, admits that it was repeatedly applied for.

Were any evidence wanting of the indisposition to make bread, it might be found in the Correspondence and Memorandum by me on that subject, where it will be seen that, though, in order to remove all difficulties with regard to ovens, I offered on the 15th March to superintend the building of two, so many difficulties were thrown in the way of my obtaining the requisite materials and assistance, that, after a fortnight's delay, I was actually obliged to obtain an order, under Lord Raglan's own hand, for the fire-bricks required.

Page 21 of Appendix to Commissioners' Report.

On the 31st of that month, Sir John McNeill intimated to Mr. Filder the necessity for bringing over bakers to work these ovens, as objections had been urged by the military authorities to men being employed from the army; but, even after this, it was not till the 18th of April that bakers were sent for; nearly another month elapsed before they arrived from Constantinople, and the ovens were only brought into use on the 19th May, and then not till the Scotch Regiments at Kadekoi, seeing them remain so long idle, were making preparations to use them for baking bread on their own account.

On the 21st of March, the Quartermaster-General in writing to Sir John McNeill relative to the difficulties which he apprehended in employing bakers from the ranks, states "that measures were in progress for carrying out a system of baking for the troops on a

“large scale.” It will now be seen how far these measures had advanced two months afterwards.

With respect to the want of an establishment of bakers, such as in the French army, to which both the Board and Mr. Filder refer, that want could have been supplied just as easily in the month of November, by the importation of bakers from Malta or Scutari, as in the month of May; the building of ovens was not a work involving either much time, ingenuity, or labour; and if there existed any doubt of obtaining workmen from the Sappers and Miners for such a purpose, there was nothing to have prevented a few masons being imported; but building more ovens would have been of little advantage while those already existing in the town were not in use, even for the benefit of the sick.

Indeed, it was not till the Commissioners had satisfied themselves as to the capabilities of the ovens then existing, to supply bread enough for the hospitals, and not till they had pointed out, both to Lord Raglan and the Commissary-General, that a gentleman, charged with the administration of the “Times Fund,” contemplated supplying the deficiency in some of the principal hospitals, that the discredit of having this effected from a private source, while the Commissariat failed to perform it, apparently brought about the desired improvement.

If all this did not warrant the assertion of an indisposition to make fresh bread, it is difficult to say what would. In giving such ample credit to Mr. Filder’s intentions, in opposition to his deeds, the Board have apparently forgotten that a certain road is said to be paved with good intentions, for which, it is to be feared, the same credit will not be given, as is so charitably assigned by them to Mr. Filder.

Green Coffee.

This part of the ration has been so often the subject of complaint by the soldier, and of comment

by civilians, that the Board may, perhaps, be excused for not offering any very novel remarks in expressing their views on the subject, which are as follows :—

“ Mr. Filder was in no degree responsible for the coffee not being roasted ; it was sent out in a green state by the Treasury, and it was no part of Mr. Filder's duty, nor was he ordered to cause it to be roasted previously to its being delivered to the troops.”

“ No complaint was made on the subject till the month of November.”

“ Mr. Filder stated, that a Military Board decided on issuing coffee as a ration to the troops, and that the Board knew that it was sold to the men in a green state.”

“ He added,

“ Subsequently a small quantity of roasted coffee was sent out from England, as an experiment, upon which I was desired to report ; but although ordered in July, it did not reach the army till towards the end of September, when we were on the march from Kalamita Bay to Sebastopol : and as soon as I learnt that it was approved of, I recommended that coffee should be sent out roasted, but none arrived till about the 24th of January, from which date green coffee ceased to be issued to the troops.”

On this I beg to remark that Mr. Filder was a highly-paid official, holding one of the most responsible appointments with the army. He was highly paid—not to do merely what he was ordered, but in the expectation that, when difficulties arose, he would show himself equal to the emergency, by departing from the usual course, and exercising that discretion and intelligence which the public has a right to expect from a person holding so distinguished a position.

But were the decision of the Board a correct one, and were the Commissary-General allowed to plead that he could not exercise his own judgment and foresight, even in so trifling a matter as the roasting and grinding of coffee, *because it was not ordered*, he would be degraded below the position of the officer commanding a company, of which the following illustration may suffice :—

Certain regulations are made in every regiment, when in garrison, for the breakfast and evening meal

of the soldier, and it is specified in Regimental orders of what these meals are to consist—generally coffee and bread.

Under ordinary circumstances, the officer commanding a company has no right to make any deviation; but suppose him suddenly detached to a station where neither of these supplies can be had, but abundance of tea and corn-meal cakes, what should we say of him if he suffered his men to be deprived of these meals, because he had not received orders to change the materials of which they are usually composed? Yet, this is precisely the doctrine laid down by the Board, only with this difference, that when Mr. Filder found the men in a difficulty about making use of their coffee, he could relieve himself from all responsibility by requesting Lord Raglan's authority for having it ground at Constantinople or Balaklava, or for procuring and issuing tea instead; but he did neither, and, according to his own showing, allowed the men to suffer under this privation, from the beginning of November till the end of January.

So far from the Board's assertion being correct, that Mr. Filder was in no way responsible for the coffee not being roasted, they will find, by referring to the evidence taken before the Sebastopol Committee, that it was sent out raw, *at his special request*, and this, though the difficulty attending such an arrangement was distinctly pointed out to him. It is much to be regretted that the Board never referred to the following statement of Mr. Grant, the Comptroller of Victualling in this country, when questioned on the subject:—

Vol. 4, p. 10.

“ Q. Can you state why the coffee was sent out green ?

“ A. The first requisition that was made to us to send out coffee was for coffee in an unroasted state. It certainly did appear to me strange at the first moment that we should send out raw coffee.

“ Q. Had you any correspondence with Mr. Filder on the subject ?

“ A. Yes, and before I gave orders for the purchase of unroasted coffee I thought it desirable to address a letter to Commissary-

Q. 17752.

General Filder to know whether he was quite correct in asking, or requiring that *unroasted* coffee should be sent out.

“ Q. Will you just read that letter ?

“ A. I have not got a copy of my own note, but I have Commissary-General Filder’s note in answer to mine, which is dated the 28th February, 1854. He says, I am unable to answer your note of yesterday till I have consulted some military officers on the subject to which it relates. The soldiers will no doubt find some means of overcoming any difficulty that may arise from the want of mills and coffee roasters.” *The coffee should consequently be unburnt, as before proposed.*”

Q. 17758.

Q. 17761 & 4.

Mr. Grant, on being subsequently questioned as to whether he made any proposition to Mr. Filder to supply mills for grinding the coffee, replied in the affirmative ; but that only six small ones were directed to be sent out.

Here then we have established, beyond a doubt, that the origin of the whole difficulty was Mr. Filder himself ; and that he adhered to the plan, though advised to the contrary by those who were, at least, as competent as himself to decide on such matters.

In calling attention to the circumstance that no complaint of the coffee was made till November, Mr. Filder and the Board afford a striking proof that the troops were not unreasonable in their demands ; and that it was only when the want of fuel to roast the coffee threw an almost insurmountable obstacle in the way of its being prepared as an article of food, that they began to murmur at an issue which was quite useless to them ; but long before the end of January, there was abundance of time to have provided a suitable substitute.

In adducing as a further justification, that the Military Board held at Varna had decided on issuing coffee as a ration to the troops, and that the officers composing it, knew the coffee was to be sold to the men in a green state, Mr. Filder and the Chelsea Board have altogether kept out of sight the important distinction that this took place during summer, in a country where, wood being abundant, and the soldiers having plenty of leisure, the roasting of coffee presented little difficulty. Very

different, indeed, was the condition of the troops during winter in the Crimea; there they could only procure fuel by digging roots from ground covered with snow and ice, which their previous duties in the trenches scarcely left them strength to accomplish.

The Board conclude their observations relative to the green coffee by stating :—

Boards' Re-
port, p. 25.

“With respect to the suggestion of the Commissioners that tea should have been issued to the troops instead of coffee, on account of the difficulties attending the roasting of the latter owing to the scarcity of fuel, it is obvious that fuel would have been equally required for making the tea, and as much tea appears to have been issued during the months of January and February as was consistent with maintaining a supply necessary for the use of the sick.”

In framing such a conclusion, could these General Officers have supposed that any person perusing their Report was likely to be ignorant of the fact, that coffee requires fuel, and a considerable quantity, too, to roast it, while tea needs no similar preparation; that the roasting of coffee also requires time and a degree of care, which could scarcely be expected from men returning wet and weary from the trenches; and that, while for tea it is necessary only to have some vessel in which water can be boiled, coffee requires the means of being roasted and ground, in which most of the troops were deficient.

The Board must have been well aware of these distinctions. If so, why put forward a comparison which they knew to be unfair? If not, what must be said of their arriving unanimously at a conclusion, the logic of which must necessarily subject them to the criticism even of the least observant?

I shall next advert to the conclusions of the Board relative to the supply of

Fuel.

Under this head I have but little to observe, as the conclusions of the Board form no contradiction,

either direct or implied, to the statement of the Commissioners.

After a brief allusion to the quantities provided by the Commissariat and Lord Raglan, the Board come to the conclusion that—

Page 26 of Re-
port of Board. “Mr. Filder having thus actually formed a depot of fuel at Scutari, under the impression that the army might winter there in barracks; having also sought instructions relative to the formation of a smaller depôt at Varna, supposing the army might winter in the Principalities, and having moreover taken prompt measures to supply the troops in the Crimea when the local resources were on the point of exhaustion, cannot in our opinion be justly charged with any want of foresight or exertion in this respect.”

Page 11 of
Commissioners'
Report. It is necessary, in order to prevent misunderstanding, that I should now quote the precise words of the Commissioners on this head. After alluding to the fact of Lord Raglan having on the 11th of November instructed the Commissary-General to provide a sufficient supply of fuel for the ensuing winter, and having promulgated an order on the 4th December for this issue to the troops, they stated—

“In consequence of the representations of the Commissary-General, however, the Order of 4th December appears to have been modified, and it was not till the 29th December that the troops in and near Balaklava received rations of fuel.

“This *apparent want of alacrity*, on the part of the Commissariat to provide fuel for the army in the field, could not have arisen from any difficulty in procuring firewood.”

And the Commissioners then went on to point out the facility of obtaining supplies of firewood from the shores of the Black Sea.

It is the *apparent want of alacrity*, therefore, in making this issue, that I have to establish, and not the want of foresight and exertion; an accusation, apparently, brought forward by the Board with no other object than to refute it.

To establish the statement of the Commissioners it is only necessary to observe that, the very day after Lord Raglan's order of 4th December, directing the issue of fuel, Mr. Filder expressed his fear that

the supply at Balaklava was not so great as it was supposed or stated to be, and adds,

See p. 77 of
Appendix to
Commissioners
Report.

“I would recommend, therefore, that it should be used sparingly till a supply arrives from Scutari.”

On the 7th December, Colonel Gordon, writing to the Commissary-General by Lord Raglan's directions, states,—

“I must also express my surprise that you should not be ready to commence the issue of fuel and light according to the regulated allowance, for the question of supplies of this nature for the army has been the subject of occasional correspondence and conversation between us since the 24th October.”

Ibid.

On the 9th December, five days after the date of the General Order for the issue of fuel and light, the Commissary-General submitted to the Commander of the Forces a Memorandum in which he says—

Appendix, to
Report of
Commissioners
p. 79.

“Throughout the Peninsular war, during a period of six years, neither fuel nor light was ever issued to the army, although in the campaign of 1813, a portion of it was in tents on the mountains up to a late period of the year.

“With that army, the troops could no doubt provide themselves with fuel, but it would appear to have been as necessary that light should be issued to it as to this.”

Even after the question had been decided, therefore, and the General Order issued, Mr. Filder could not abstain from appealing to precedent, or from remonstrating with Lord Raglan on his departing from the practice of the Peninsula.

In a Memorandum by Colonel Gordon, dated 10th December, which was transmitted to the Commissary-General by Lord Raglan on the 11th, great surprise is expressed that the Commissary-General should not be able to commence the issue of fuel. The Commissioners had, therefore, sufficient authority for stating that there was an apparent want of alacrity in that respect.

Ibid. p. 80.

The issue of charcoal commenced on the 8th December, but only to the troops in front, those which were at, or near Balaklava, being excluded.

Appendix to
Report of
Commissioners
p. 79.

Mr. Filder appears to deny, in express terms, that these troops were, as alleged in the Report, excluded in consequence of his representations. But in a letter of the 9th December, which Colonel Gordon was directed to address to the Commissary-General, Mr. Filder is reminded that, he had represented the insufficiency of the supply,

“Upon which representation the Commander of the Forces found himself compelled, much against his inclination, to restrict the issue of fuel to the troops in the upper camp before Sebastopol until you were prepared with a proper supply.”

It must be admitted by the Board that this correspondence evinces anything but alacrity in commencing the issue of fuel, the want of which, for a period of twenty-five days, in the month of December, could not but be felt as a severe privation by that portion of the army exposed to it; and this the Commissioners were obliged to notice, as being connected with the supplies, into the non-issue of which they were specially directed to inquire.

Under these circumstances, it appears a fair ground of complaint against the Board that, after finding all that the Commissioners had advanced fully established, they should, instead of admitting it to be so, and giving them credit for the moderation and justice of their statements, have commented on charges which were never made, and exculpated Mr. Filder from them, as if they had originated with the Commissioners.

The statement that, “that officer” cannot be justly charged “with want of foresight or exertion” in this respect, necessarily implies that some one made such charges; and as the Warrant of the Board did not authorize their inquiring into any other alleged animadversions than those of the Commissioners, the majority of readers would certainly infer that they must have made the accusations which the Board have taken so much trouble, unnecessarily, to refute.

I now come to the observations of the Board under the head of

Land Transport and Hay.

The lengthened statements and calculations by Mr. Filder and the Board, implying neglect on the part of the Treasury with respect to the supply of hay, I must leave to be answered by that Department where the requisite documents are, I presume, available for this purpose.

With regard to the forage of the baggage animals, however, it scarcely appears necessary to comment on the singular idea started by Mr. Filder and adopted by the Board as the climax of their conclusions, that it was necessary to bring hay from England for animals which had previously, as is the custom all over the East, been fed on barley and chopped straw. So far as they were concerned, Mr. Filder might just as well have included English oats in his demands.

The whole of this part of the question rests upon whether sufficient chopped straw could have been procured, and whether there were the means of bringing it to Balaklava. Of the first there can be no question, as Mr. Filder admits that abundance could be procured every where along the shores of the Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmora; but that officer rests his defence on the circumstance that because in an unpressed state a vessel could only carry a quantity equal to about one-tenth of her tonnage, it was inexpedient or impossible to make the attempt to provide this species of forage, and he must needs wait, therefore, till supplies of pressed hay could be obtained from England.

Had it so happened that no sailing transports were lying idle at the time, this argument might hold good; but in addition to other disposable sailing vessels, the names of which are given in the Sebastopol Report, the sixteen horse transports placed at

Mr. Filder's disposal, in October, were still unemployed, and if he thought them unfit to carry cattle, from the apprehension of loss, some might at least have been used for bringing chopped straw which was not likely to suffer any damage.

At this time, too, it must be borne in mind that Mr. Filder had upwards of 2,000 baggage animals in depôt at Constantinople or Varna, which had been left behind when the army went to the Crimea, and for the support of which the public were paying at the rate of about eightpence a-day each, besides the cost of superintendence, with little or no chance of their ever being of any use, except by transfer to the Crimea. Matters in fact were in that state, that any loss which might have been incurred on the voyage or afterwards would have been a gain to the public, as their keep had already, by the end of November, cost more than their value.

Under these circumstances it might have been supposed that Mr. Filder would gladly have embraced the opportunity of turning the idle transports and the idle horses to good account, but nothing of that kind was attempted.

Mr. Filder has the credit of being an economist, and we have already seen in the case of the tenders for cattle how carefully he avoided any fractional excess of expenditure, even at the risk of leaving the troops to be subsisted entirely on salt meat; but not only did he neglect this opportunity of increasing his transport without cost, but he is found contending for pressed hay being sent out from England at an enormous expence, while chopped straw in abundance could be brought from the opposite coast by sailing-vessels.

Before condemning these arrangements of Mr. Filder, however, of which the Board unhesitatingly approve, the matter must be reduced to calculation. It will scarcely be denied that an addition even of 500 baggage animals beyond what were brought over would, by doubling the available transport in the begin-

See page 6 of
Appendix to
Commissioners
Report

ning of the winter of 1854, have prevented the most serious of the evils from which the troops subsequently suffered. For that number, a couple of sailing transports only would have been required, and they could have brought with them as much barley and straw as would at least have sufficed for the voyage, and left a considerable surplus of the former for future use.

To keep up the necessary supply after landing, two other sailing transports would have sufficed. I shall suppose these devoted to the carriage of the chopped and unpressed straw, about which Mr. Filder makes such difficulties. Even according to his widest calculations, that a vessel of 600 tons will only carry 50 tons of that description of forage, two such vessels would have brought double that quantity, or 224,000 lbs., besides barley, about the carriage of which there never was any difficulty; and if this straw had been issued at the rate even of twelve pounds daily to each animal, it would have lasted for thirty-five days, by which time the same vessels could have gone back and brought over a fresh supply.

See p. 368 of Board's proceedings.

Thus the whole difficulty in regard to the baggage animals, so far at least as the possibility of feeding them was concerned, would at once have been provided for, had Mr. Filder thought proper to employ regularly two of the horse transports for that purpose, out of the sixteen placed at his disposal, and which were doing nothing all the winter.

These results, too, are founded on the supposition that each of the animals must, necessarily, have had 12 lbs. of chopped straw in addition to barley, whereas a much less quantity might have sufficed had the barley been increased; indeed, according to the experience of many, several weeks of very good work might be got out of them, though fed upon barley alone, and it will be seen that the contract allowance for their maintenance at Varna after the army left was only 6 lbs. of straw and 6 lbs. of barley daily.

See p. 5 of Commissioners Appendix.

I shall now look a little at the economy of

See p. 35 of
Appendix to
Commissioners
Report.

the measure. Pressed hay, sent out from England, is understood to have cost about £18 a ton, or within a fraction of 2*d.* per lb. Straw, from the shores of the Bosphorus, as will be seen by the accepted tenders, cost about 2*s.* 6*d.* per cwt., or little more than one farthing per lb.; the sea transport cost nothing, for the freight had to be paid whether the sailing vessels were employed or not; it would consequently appear that passing over a source of supply which was within 200 or 300 miles of him, and which would, at one-seventh of the price, have answered every purpose, so far at least, as the baggage animals were concerned, Mr. Filder lays all the misfortunes of the army on the shoulders of the Treasury, because they did not enable him to feed baggage animals in the Crimea with pressed hay brought from a distance of nearly one-fifth of the Globe, and subject to all the delay and uncertainty which that distance necessarily involved.

The public will now be able to judge of the correctness of Mr. Filder's statement in his letter to Mr. Peel, as to "the impracticability of conveying across the "Black Sea chopped straw or loose hay, in sufficient "quantities for the wants of the baggage animals." As to the difficulty of landing either of these supplies, owing to the inconveniently small size of the harbour, to which Mr. Filder in another part also alludes, it is a sufficient evidence of the futility of any such objection that the harbour was just as limited in extent at the end of the following year, when nearly thrice the number of troops and ten times as many baggage animals were abundantly supplied through that channel.

Yet the Board of General Officers support Mr. Filder in the following terms:—

"The insufficiency of land transport appears to have been the principal cause of most of the sufferings experienced by the army, and this insufficiency appears to have been occasioned by the want of means of supporting more animals."

“As relates to Mr. Filder, therefore, in his position of Commissary-General, the question is, in our opinion, correctly stated by him to be,

“Whether he is to blame for the deficiency of forage, to which, step by step, all other deficiencies were mainly attributable, as limiting the number of transport animals that could be maintained in the Crimea; and whether he availed himself of all the sea transport which he could obtain for the conveyance of forage and live cattle.”

“Mr. Filder stated at the outset of his case, and we think correctly, that ‘if it was expected that he should provide transport for the conveyance of an indefinite quantity of huts, timber, buffalo robes, warm clothing, &c., it must be obvious that it would have been wholly impracticable, even had there been no difficulty with respect to forage. The additional transport power could only have been procured by long previous preparation, the time for which was never allowed him.’

“He showed that even for the most ordinary Commissariat purposes no more sea transport was available than that which he actually used, and he, in our opinion, satisfactorily accounted for the circumstance adverted to by the Commissioners, that the Land Transport was for a few days reduced to an effective number of 333 pack horses and mules, and 12 camels.”

On these conclusions I have only further to observe, that the Board appear to have been labouring under some misapprehension in regard to additional transport power being only procurable by long previous preparation; they probably omitted to notice, that, according to Mr. Filder's own admission, 2,000 baggage animals were in depôt at Constantinople and Varna, and only required to be brought over; none had to be purchased for the purpose, nor were any measures required which involved loss of time when the conveyance was ready.

In expressing their concurrence in Mr. Filder's assertion, that no more sea transport was available than that which he actually used, the Board must also have forgotten that all the horse transports remained unemployed, neither used for conveying cattle, bringing over baggage animals, nor carrying the forage by which these baggage animals might have been supported. It must apparently have been steam transport that the General Officers referred to,

which, though very useful, was by no means essential to the transit of supplies, particularly in so open a sea as that between Balaklava and the Bosphorus.

The Board go on to state in conclusion :—

“ On this trying state of things, the Commissioners remark with direct allusion to Mr. Filder’s management, that a man of comprehensive views might probably have risen superior to these disadvantages, and created an organization suited to the circumstances.”

“ It is difficult, however, to believe that any man, even of the highest inventive resources and administrative capacity, could have effectually provided beforehand for daily and ever increasing demands, many of which extending as they did infinitely beyond the limits of all previous Commissariat administration, were not, and from their very nature could not, be foreseen.”

If Mr. Filder had but provided for the wants which could be foreseen, he might have been excused for omissions in regard to those which the Board describe as being “ beyond the limits of all previous “ Commissariat administration ;” it is, however, rather singular that the most important of the omissions to which the disasters of the first winter in the Crimea are attributable, were entirely of that class which could have been foreseen and guarded against.

For instance, Mr. Filder must have known that the troops could not long be supported in health without fresh meat ; he had thousands of cattle on the opposite coast, yet he failed to bring them over, though precisely the same means were placed at his disposal as had been employed successfully in the Peninsular War.

He knew, so early as October, that the army must winter in the Crimea ; that to enable them to do so, large quantities of warm clothing and the means of shelter and covering must be carried up to the front, yet with 2,000 baggage animals on the opposite coast and sailing vessels in abundance at his disposal, he did not bring over sufficient for the emergency.

Mr. Filder knew that green coffee could be of no use to men who, for want of fuel, had not the means of preparing it ; yet for nearly three months he

neither had it roasted nor obtained tea instead, though both alternatives were practicable.

Mr. Filder knew that there were ovens at Bala-klava in which fresh bread was baked during the greater part of the winter, and which was purchased daily by himself and other officers for their own use, yet for several months he took no steps to secure a supply for the sick, and, beyond the purchase of flour, made no preparations to extend the issue to the healthy.

Mr. Filder knew that vegetables and lime juice were the best of all known specifics to arrest the progress of the scurvy prevalent in camp, yet he failed to provide any adequate supply of the former in December and January, and prevented any use being made of the latter by omitting to intimate its arrival to those who had the charge of distributing it.

All these arrangements required—not the “highest inventive resources and administrative capacity,” but the ordinary exercise of common reason; and the most important of them, such as those relating to fresh meat and land transport, were absolutely forced on Mr. Filder’s consideration by the General Commanding in such a manner, that, probably, no other officer in the British army but himself would have ventured upon opposition, and no other General but Lord Raglan would have borne it. None of these measures, except, perhaps, the supply of vegetables, could be characterised as infinitely “beyond the ordinary limits of Commissariat administration,” nor were there at that time “any daily and ever increasing demands” to complicate the arrangements, by the unexpected arrival of fresh troops.

If anything were wanting to show the fallacy of the conclusions of the Board in Mr. Filder’s case, it would be found in the fact that with the same resources within reach, so far at least as regarded external supplies, it was ultimately found practicable to bring to the Crimea all that was required for the

subsistence of our own, as well as the Sardinian army, though nearly trebling in numbers the force which suffered, and was almost annihilated, during the eventful period referred to in the Report of the Commissioners.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION COLLECTED BY SIR JOHN McNEILL AND COLONEL TULLOCH RELATIVE TO THE SICKNESS, MORTALITY, AND PREVAILING DISEASES, AMONG THE TROOPS SERVING IN THE CRIMEA, AND NOT INCLUDED IN THEIR REPORT.

THE sickness and mortality among the troops serving in the Crimea having frequently been referred to as excessive in the evidence taken by the Commissioners, it appears desirable to determine its actual extent, and how far it can be fairly presumed to have arisen from the absence or deficiency of supplies.

See page 169.

The annexed abstract of a General Return, prepared by Dr. Hall, shows the admission into hospital, and the diseases and deaths, for a period of six months, from the 1st October, 1854, to 31st March, 1855, exclusive of those which took place on ship-board or at Scutari; and, being arranged on the same principle as the Statistical Reports periodically submitted to Parliament, it will enable those who may be so disposed, to compare the prevalence and fatal character of the diseases in that Army with what usually takes place among British troops in other countries. We shall refer only to the following summary:—

	Total in the Crimean Army in 6 months.	Deduct caused by wounds and injuries.	Remain from sickness alone	Ratio per 1,000 of mean, Strength for 6 months.		
				In the Crimea, Oct. to April.	Great Britain on average of 10 years.	Canada, one half of year 1838.
Mean strength of the whole Army, 28,623						
Admissions into Hospital	52,548	3,806	48,742	1,697	493	474
Deaths	5,359	373	4,986	174	9	7½

The cases of disease have thus been nearly four times, and the deaths about twenty times, as numerous as the average in either of these two countries.

Many men who were sick, but who, for want of sufficient accommodation, could not be received into hospital, were treated in the barrack-tents, and do not appear among the admissions. The amount of sickness, therefore, must have exceeded what is shown by these Returns, though to what extent it is impossible to ascertain with any approach to accuracy.

With this exception, the above summary affords a tolerably fair criterion of the sufferings of the army from disease; but it is otherwise as regards the mortality, because the returns on which it is founded refer only to deaths in the Crimea, whereas the majority of the sick were transferred to Scutari as fast as conveyance could be found for them; and such was the intractable character of the diseases, or so impaired were the constitutions of the patients, that the deaths which occurred there, and on the passage, very nearly equalled those which took place in the Crimea.

Indeed, it is one of the most serious considerations connected with the history of this period, that the loss by disease was at first much underrated. For several months, no accurate or complete returns appear to have been received from Scutari, to show what had become of the invalids sent there; the mortality was estimated only at the amount that took place on the spot, and without reference to the fact that of all who embarked as invalids more than one-third died on the passage, or after their arrival at Scutari, thus raising the real mortality to more than double what at first appeared by the Regimental Returns. It was only by degrees that the small proportion who returned, of those who had left the Crimea sick, awakened a suspicion of the fatal character of the diseases, and the extent to which the constitution of the troops had suffered by the hardships and privations they had undergone. Had it

even been surmised by the principal medical and military authorities, that the loss in that army averaged, during a great part of the winter, about a battalion every week by disease alone, we cannot doubt that energetic measures would have been more promptly adopted to check it.

Similar losses, though not so severe, have occasionally been sustained by British troops, particularly within the tropics, when exposed to the influence of climates decidedly hostile to the European constitution; but it will be observed, that none of the medical officers examined, attribute the loss to any such influence, and that more than one expressed the opinion that, but for the nature of the service, and the peculiar circumstances under which it was carried on, the men would have suffered as little, in point of health, as if they had been in our North American colonies.*

Any great mortality resulting from the influence of climate alone would have shown itself in nearly a corresponding degree in all classes and descriptions of the troops; but the loss among the officers in the Crimea was comparatively slight, and the different corps and arms of the service were affected in very different degrees, according to the nature of their duties, and their relative sufferings from fatigue, exposure, and privation.

As it was important that these facts should be carefully examined, Returns were obtained, showing the sickness and mortality among officers and men respectively, as well as the principal classes of diseases in every corps serving in the Crimea. But in order to make the comparison correct, it was necessary to include the loss which took place among the invalids at Scutari, or on the passage. Returns containing similar information were, therefore, also obtained from that quarter, and from the subordinate hospitals on the Bosphorus, of which the particulars will be

* This has been proved by the health of the Army during the winter 1855-6.

See page 171

found in the Abstract annexed. The following are some of the most important results, so far as regards the Infantry :—

	Mean Strength of Infantry.	Total Ad- missions.	Total Deaths.		General Total of Deaths.
			in Crimea.	at Scutari.	
October	19,430	4,847	194	144	338
November	22,360	6,498	620	228	848
December	25,003	9,077	1,030	423	1,453
January	26,073	9,908	1,269	1,193	2,462
February	25,780	6,351	885	1,261	2,146
March	24,414	5,241	652	587	1,239
April	23,333	3,515	313	216	529
	23,775	45,437	4,963	4,052	9,015
Deduct for wounds and injuries	....	3,455	311	297	608
		41,982	4,652	3,755	8,407
Add 10 per cent for deaths un- reported	....	....	....	....	841
General Total	23,775	41,982			9,248

In this table all deaths from wounds and injuries have been excluded, the loss is from sickness alone, and it extends to one month beyond the period included in the previous return of Dr. Hall.

The statement of deaths in the hospital at Balaklava is incomplete, and there is reason to believe, that such as took place in the harbour, where vessels were often detained for several days, have been excluded from the Returns, as well as many which occurred at sea between the Crimea and Scutari; an addition of 10 per cent. has therefore been made to the ascertained deaths to cover these. We shall hereafter have occasion to show, by reference to the Adjutant-General's Returns, that this estimate is not too high.

After making this allowance, it would appear that the aggregate loss of the Infantry, by sickness alone, has been 9,248 men, or about 39 per cent within seven months. We are not aware of any other British army having sustained so heavy a loss in so short a time. During the Peninsular War, though the troops occasionally suffered much from sickness, the loss from that cause did not average above 12 per cent. for a whole year. Even on the ill-fated expedition to Walcheren, the deaths only amounted to 4,212, out of an average force of 40,589, in six months (between 28th July, 1809, and 1st February, 1810), being about $10\frac{1}{3}$ per cent for the half year.

The estimated mortality of 39 per cent. in the army of the East during so short a period, leaves entirely out of view the loss sustained among several thousand invalids sent from Scutari to England, of whom, judging from the state in which many of them arrived from the Crimea a large proportion must have died either during the voyage home or after reaching this country. It also takes no account of many lingering cases remaining in the Scutari hospitals at the end of April, whose diseases, though contracted in the course of the seven months referred to, did not terminate in death for some time afterwards.

On the other hand, it must be kept in view, that while the deaths at Scutari form part of the general loss, the large proportion of invalids there, are not included in the strength, and that this omission would tend to lower the rate of mortality, to at least as great an extent as the circumstances above referred to probably increased it.

The average strength at Scutari, and the other hospitals on the Bosphorus during this period, could not have been less than about 3,500, as may be inferred from the following summary :—

Remaining in Hospital in each of the following months :	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Total.	Average.
		1894	2750	3476	3975	5115	4102	21312	3552

About two-thirds of which number, at least, were not included in the strength given in the preceding table, as ought to have been the case.

In inquiries of this magnitude, extending over such large bodies of troops quartered at different stations, it is impossible to do more than give a tolerably correct approximation to the rates of mortality, and they must always be received under this exception.

Several of the corps included in the above table, however, having arrived in the Crimea later than others, escaped much of the privation, fatigue, and sickness, which took place at the commencement of the winter. The 14th, 39th, 18th, and 71st, for instance, having arrived on the dates undermentioned, were in the Crimea for only four months out of the seven over which these observations extend, during which their losses were as under:—

	Average strength during four months.	Reduced strength corresponding to seven months.	Admissions into hospital.	Deaths in the Crimea and Scutari.	
14th Regiment	740	423	878	10	Arrived 19th January.
18th Regiment	832	475	636	47	„ 1st January.
39th Regiment	701	401	623	39	„ 31st December.
71st Regiment	578	330	348	17	One-half arrived 20th Dec. the other early in Feb. Jan. is taken as the medium.
		1,629	2,485	113	
Deduct for wounds and injuries	....	....	118	6	
Remained	....	1,629	2,367	107	

If 10 per cent be added, as before, to the deaths, for the proportion likely to have been unreported, the total loss will be 118, and the ratio of deaths, calculated upon seven months, only 7 per cent, being not one-fifth of what took place among the rest of the

Infantry during the same period. It is necessary, however, to remark, as one of the causes of this low rate of mortality, that although the 14th and 39th arrived on the above dates, the former remained on shipboard in the harbour of Balaklava for three weeks, and the latter for nearly the same period, exempt, it may be presumed, from most of the deteriorating influences which affected the health of those on shore, and when they did land, they continued at Balaklava for nearly a month, exposed only to the less severe duty and less important privations incident to the force there. Even the 18th Regiment remained either on shipboard or at Balaklava for a fortnight after its arrival, before joining the Headquarters' camp, and the 71st Regiment did not leave Balaklava till about the expiry of the period over which these observations extend.

These corps, too, not only had the advantage of arriving with the usual stock of necessaries in their knapsacks, but they received ample supplies of warm clothing on landing; indeed one of the corps had a double supply. With the exception of the 18th, they had the advantage also of being hutted immediately on their arrival, and of continuing so during the whole time included in these Returns; the comparatively small extent of their loss, therefore, may be considered as a measure of the limit to which the mortality of the whole force was likely to have been restricted had it been serving under circumstances equally favourable.

As the four regiments noted below arrived about a month earlier than the preceding, and were thereby exposed to much of the cold, wet, and privation of December, besides an epidemic of cholera, which destroyed 114 in a few weeks after their arrival, the loss beyond that of the four corps above-mentioned may serve to show the baneful influence of that month on the troops; and it has, therefore, been stated separately, as follows:—

	Average strength during five months.	Reduced strength corresponding to seven months.	Admissions into hospital.	Deaths in the Crimea and Scutari.	Date of arrival.
17th Regiment	785	561	846	82	17th Dec.
34th Regiment	706	504	652	84	9th Dec.
39th Regiment	606	433	993	170	19th Dec.
90th Regiment	587	419	642	156	4th Dec.
Deduct for wounds and injuries		1,917	3,133	492	
		....	151	19	
Remain ...		....	....	473	
Add 10 per cent. for deaths unreported ....		....	....	47	
General Total ....	....	1,917	2,982	520	

According to this table, the loss in these four corps if extended over seven months, must have been at the rate of 27 per cent., or nearly four times that of the corps previously referred to.

We shall next separate from the general mortality that which took place in the Highland Brigade, because, as they were stationed at Balaklava during the whole period, it may serve to show whether there was any material difference in the healthiness of the troops at that station compared with those upon the heights in front.

	Average strength of 7 months	Admissions into hospital.	Deaths in Crimea and Scutari.
42nd Regiment	704	775	123
79th ,,	714	932	221
93rd ,,	727	797	140
Deduct for wounds and injuries		2,504	484
		60	11
Add 10 per cent. for deaths unreported ....		....	473
		....	47
General Total	2,145	2,444	520

being in the ratio of 24 per cent. of the strength.

These corps had considerable advantage over those in front, in being much nearer their supplies, in having less trench duty, and in most of them being hutted at an early period. They were exposed, however, to a considerable amount of fatigue, particularly in forming extensive lines at Balaklava, and carrying shot, shell, and biscuit to the front; but their labour was not so excessive as that of the rest of the Infantry, and their lower rate of mortality is, probably, attributable to this circumstance, rather than to any superior salubrity of the locality. The sickness and mortality in the 79th, which exceeded that in the other corps of the brigade, was, in a great measure, owing to the insalubrity of a part of the ground occupied by that regiment. That occupied by the 93rd was also in some respects unfavourable to health.

By deducting the loss in these eleven regiments, we have the following results for the rest of the Infantry employed in the siege, viz. :—

Corps.	Average strength.	Admissions into hospital.	Total deaths.
14th, 18th, 39th, 71st	1,629	2,367	107
17th, 34th, 89th, 90th	1,917	2,982	520
42nd, 79th, 93rd	2,145	2,444	520
Total in these 11 corps	5,691	7,793	1,147
Total in whole force of Infantry	23,775	41,982	9,248
Remains loss in front	18,084	34,189	8,101

This raises the deaths by sickness among the rest of the Infantry employed in front to about 45 per cent.

Whenever the mortality runs so high, however, the changes in the strength are so frequent, that, to insure accuracy, it should be taken on a daily, or at least weekly, average; but that information could seldom be obtained oftener than once a month, any

correction on this account would, however, be just as likely to raise the mortality as to reduce it: and the results here submitted may, therefore, probably be considered a fair medium.

Great as was this loss of 45 per cent in seven months among the corps in front, it was much below what some of the corps suffered, especially the following, in which the mortality greatly exceeded the average:—

Corps.	Average strength of seven months.	Deaths within that period in the Crimea and Scutari.	Whereof from wounds and injuries deducted.	Remains mortality from disease alone.	Add 10 per cent. for deaths not reported.	Total mortality in each corps.
46th Regiment	378	405	7	398	40	438
95th "	417	354	32	322	32	354
63rd "	448	353	15	338	34	372
33rd "	424	324	32	292	29	321
23rd "	579	359	21	338	34	372
44th "	598	316	11	305	30	335
28th "	522	276	10	266	27	293
50th "	520	327	19	308	31	339
	3,886	2,714	147	2,567	257	2,824

According to this calculation, the loss in these eight corps averaged 73 per cent during these seven months.

In the 46th Regiment it was so heavy that the results present the striking anomaly of the deaths being greater than the average strength of the corps; but this is owing to that strength being much reduced by the numbers sent to Scutari, as above-mentioned. The corps arrived in November about 900 strong; of these 79 died of cholera alone, in the course of that month. In December the strength was reduced to 512, in consequence of 72 more deaths, and 252 having been sent to Scutari. In January it was further reduced to 404, by deaths and invaliding; in February it fell as low as 285, from the same causes, and though increased in March and April, by drafts and men rejoining, it never rose

above 323, and the average of the whole seven months is only 378, as stated in the preceding summary.

As a striking contrast, we shall now submit the loss in the Cavalry during the same period. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to detail this by months or regiments; but the total for the seven months has been as follows:—

	Average strength.	Admissions into hospital.	Deaths in the Crimea and at Scutari.
Total, as in Abstract annexed	1,915	3,659	280
Whereof deduct for wounds and injuries .... }	....	291	14
Remain .... }	....	3,368	266
Add ten per cent. for deaths not reported .... }	....	....	26
General total	1,915	3,368	292

According to this summary, the loss has been in the proportion of about 15 per cent of the force employed during these seven months, or less than two-fifths of what took place among the Infantry generally. So marked a difference may be traced to the circumstance, that this arm of the service was entirely exempt from the labours of the siege; that they had but little night duty; and that, being in the vicinity of Balaklava, they had greater facilities for getting supplies. Though employed for several weeks in carrying up provisions, and bringing down sick, as detailed in the Commissioners' Report, their duties thereafter were chiefly confined to their own camp, and the conveyance of their forage and other supplies.

It will be observed, that while there is so remarkable a difference between these various corps and descriptions of troops, as regards the mortality, that difference does not extend to the admissions into

hospital, which, excepting in the Highland Brigade, are very much alike, as will appear from the following comparison :—

	Average strength.	Admission into hospital, excluding wounds and injuries.	Ratio per cent. of admission.	Ratio per cent. of deaths.
Infantry generally	23,775	41,982	177	39
14th, 18th, 39th, and 71st Regiments }	1,629	2,367	146	7
17th, 34th, 89th, & 90th do. }	1,917	2,982	155	27
42nd, 79th, and 93rd do.	2,145	2,444	114	24
Other corps in front	18,084	34,189	190	45
Cavalry generally	1,215	3,368	176	15

Thus, while the mortality has ranged from 7 to 45 per cent, the admissions into hospital have only ranged from 114 to 190 per cent.

It seems to have been principally in the diminished intensity of the diseases or the greater strength of constitution to resist their effects, that the distinction was manifested in favour of particular parts of the force; the diseases made their appearance in all in a greater or less degree, but were less fatal wherever the strength of the patients had not been materially impaired previous to the attack, or a moderate degree of rest, comfort, and improved diet, could be obtained.

We shall next submit a summary of the sickness and loss in the Artillery and Sappers and Miners, among whom the same peculiarity in regard to the proportion of admissions to deaths will be observed.

	Average strength.	Admissions into hospital.	Deaths in the Crimea and at Scutari.
* Total, as in Abstract annexed	3,249	4,817	568
Deduct for wounds and injuries	....	339	27
Remain	....	4,478	541
Add 10 per cent. for deaths not reported....	....	....	54
	3,249	4,478	595

So that, while the admissions are equal to about 138 per cent, the deaths amount to only 18 per cent in these seven months, the latter being rather more than among the Cavalry, but less than one-half of what took place among the mass of the Infantry.

This may apparently be traced to the advantages which these men enjoyed in many respects over the Infantry. The Assistant Adjutant-General of Artillery, who was examined on that head, stated that two troops and one battery being constantly at Balaklava, were exempt in a great measure from trench duties; that the men of the field batteries in front did not remain all night in the trenches, though they were occasionally on fatigue duty there, for a great part of it; that the siege train companies remained in the trenches, but in a smaller proportion than the men of the line, and that the batteries having their waggons, were provided regularly with rations and other supplies, and were thus spared the fatigues they would otherwise have undergone for that purpose.

The Captains of the Batteries of the Light and 4th Divisions also stated, that their men had little night work in the trenches during bad weather, and were from three to four nights in bed to one on duty. They also add the important fact, that each man of

* The returns of the strength and deaths in this force are not quite complete, but the omissions would not make any important difference in the results.

the Artillery had an oil-cloth to lie upon, and was thus protected from the damp ground.

Major Chapman of the Royal Engineers stated, that his men, the Sappers and Miners, had two nights in bed for one on duty, and that in case the weather proved so bad as to prevent the performance of the duties for which they had been told off, they were sent back to their tents. The working parties were relieved at daylight, and afterwards rested till mid-day.

It likewise appears that these men had an officer at Balaklava, who purchased all kinds of groceries, flour, and other food for them, from the shipping, whenever they could be obtained, and had them conveyed to the front on fifteen mules belonging to the corps, which were maintained effective throughout the winter; their higher rate of pay also afforded the men considerable advantages in making such purchases.

A striking instance of the extent to which the loss might be reduced under favourable circumstances, is afforded by a detachment of the 68th Regiment, stationed at Lord Raglan's head-quarters during the winter, and exempted in a great measure from the various heavy duties, exposure, and privations which affected the other part of the regiment. These men lost only three out of 154, or about 2 per cent, while the rest of the corps employed in front lost 152 out of 503, or 30 per cent.

Another favourable illustration is afforded by the Naval Brigade, the strength of which is stated, in two Returns furnished by Captain Lushington, R. N., Commanding, to have averaged 1,188 during the seven months, while the deaths from sickness were only 39, besides one man not expected to survive, which would make the mortality about $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. This appeared so very low, as compared with the other forces employed in front, that we considered it necessary to trace the loss as far as possible beyond the camp, because sailors when sick, are frequently passed to their ships. This we have been able to do by means of four

returns from the Medical Officer, from which it appears that there died at the camp—

	Of Fevers.	Of Lung Disease.	Of Apoplexy.	Of Diarrhoea.	Of Cholera.	Of Rheumatism.	Total.
Between 12th and 30th November	2	...	...	...	5	...	7
1st December to 31st March	1	...	1	1	5	1	9*
1st to 30th April	2	..	...	...	...	...	2
And, of 96 men sent on board the "Diamond," between 1st December and 30th April, there died also ....	...	2	...	10	1	...	13
Total	5	2	1	11	11	1	31*

122 sick were also sent on shipboard between the 10th and 12th November, among whom we have not been able to trace the casualties; but assuming these to have been in much the same proportion as on board the "Diamond," there is every reason to suppose that the total loss could not have materially exceeded what has been stated by Captain Lushington. It must, however, be borne in mind, that part of this force was changed occasionally, which was not the case with the troops. Five ships-of-the-line left the Crimea during the winter taking their men with them, who were replaced by drafts from the other ships, and this may have removed many who were beginning to suffer in constitution. Supposing even, however, that the mortality would otherwise have been even doubled, the difference in favour of that force is very remarkable.

On referring to the evidence of Captain Lushington, it will be found that these men had from three to

* One died of wounds not included.

four nights in bed to one on duty ; that their cooking was well arranged, and that hot meals were always ready for them when they came from the trenches ; that they were well provided with boots, stockings, and clothing ; that, in addition to their rations, they made good soup of ox-heads which they bought of the Commissariat butchers for that purpose. Every man had also in his tent a couple of dry blankets, in which he lay while his wet clothes were being dried in a hut, where a stove was arranged for that purpose. Great care was also taken to enforce personal cleanliness, and promote cheerfulness and merriment among the men ; and in the month of December, which was so trying to the troops, in respect of diet, the Naval Brigade had 11,041 lbs. of fresh meat, and 18,800 lbs. of vegetables for 1,356 men ; oranges were also sent on several occasions by the Admiral to the extent of about 35 per man. It must also be noted, that, although the Brigade remained all winter under canvas, the ground on which they were encamped was particularly favourable.

The only remaining force we have to notice is the Royal Marines, of which the strength averaged about 1,000 men during the period referred to.

Owing, however, to their sick having been usually sent on shipboard for treatment when the cases appeared serious or lingering, it is impossible to trace the total loss in that force ; but it appears, by a letter and Return from Dr. Walsh, that 57 deaths took place on shore—that 166 invalids were sent to Therapia, and 462 on shipboard, among whom there may have been a considerable loss, though not sufficient under any circumstances to have brought the mortality on a par with what occurred among the Infantry employed either at Balaklava or in front.

Having thus referred separately to the different classes of troops employed, we shall next consider the loss among the officers. On this head, our information

unfortunately is not complete, as the Returns from the Artillery and one of the Infantry Divisions as well as one of the Brigades, are wanting. In the remainder of the force, it appears from the Returns furnished to us, that only 31 deaths took place in the Crimea, among 709 officers, during the seven months referred to; but of these 13 were caused by wounds, leaving as the loss from disease only 18, or about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, whereof there were:—

From fevers	..	..	..	2
Diseases of lungs	..	..	..	2
Diseases of stomach and bowels	..	..	..	2
Spasmodic cholera	..	..	..	1
Frostbite	..	..	..	1
All other diseases	..	..	..	2
				—
Total	..	..	..	18

Dr. Hall, however, who had an opportunity of obtaining more complete Returns, states the loss by disease among 1,133 officers to have been 42, or in the ratio of $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, but this includes the period between 17th September and 1st October, during which it is understood there was a much greater loss among the officers by disease than in the last week of March, which it does not include.

Assuming, however, his estimate to be a fair average, the loss of officers in the Crimea would have been only between one-fifth and one-sixth of the proportion which occurred among the men, of whom, according to Dr. Hall's Return, 5,359 died there, between the 1st October and the 31st March, out of an average force of 28,623.

But, to make the comparison complete, it is necessary to trace the number of officers who died at Scutari, or on the voyage after being invalided from the Crimea; and here the necessary information is wanting in the Returns received from that Hospital. Fortunately, however, we can, to a certain extent, supply that deficiency, from an Abstract of the Weekly states of sick and wounded, between 1st October and 31

January, in the "Report on the State of the Hospitals of the Army in the East," in which the deaths of the officers at Scutari are stated to be as follows:—

October	..	..	..	..	3
November	..	..	..	..	4
December	..	..	..	..	3
January	..	..	..	..	3
Total	..	..	..	..	<u>13</u>

Assuming that the deaths in February and March continued at the same average as in January, though they are not likely to have been so great, the total up to the end of March would have been nineteen, which, with six reported to have died on the passage, would increase the ratio of mortality to about 6 per cent, or above one-sixth of the aggregate loss among the men in the Crimea and at Scutari;* this, too, includes the deaths among wounded officers, which there are no means of separating after they left the Crimea.

Considering the excessive mortality indicated by the Medical Returns, particularly among the Infantry, it may, perhaps, be desirable to corroborate the results by the Returns of the military authorities, who have better opportunities of ascertaining the actual loss, including casualties in action; and, for this purpose, we refer to a letter and Return from the Assistant Adjutant-General to the army, in which it is thus stated for the Infantry alone:—

See p. 170.

Died in the Crimea	..	..	..	5,914
Died in Scutari	..	..	..	4,117
Died on board ship, or elsewhere	..	..	..	<u>715</u>
Total, including killed in action	..	..	..	10,746

* It would be easy in the present advanced stage of such inquiries to give this information in a more decided form, but the object I have in view is merely to submit the facts on which the Report of the Commissioners was originally founded

The loss in the Infantry, according to the medical abstracts, including those who died of wounds, but exclusive of killed in action, was—

In the Crimea	4,963	
At Scutari	4,052	
Add 10 per cent for deaths unreported	841	
	9,856	
Excess of deaths in Military Returns	890	

But, as the Medical Returns do not include the killed in action, it is necessary to deduct the following, in order to complete the comparison, viz. :—

Killed at Inkerman	570	
Killed in trenches, sorties, and attacks, between October 1 and April 30, as ascertained from the Gazettes	185	
	755	

Understated in Medical Returns	135
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This shows that the 10 per cent allowed for deaths unreported in the Medical Returns is not more than must actually have occurred, and that there can be no material error; the same test might be applied to the Cavalry and Artillery Returns; but as the loss they sustained is not so remarkable, it is, perhaps, unnecessary to carry the comparison further.

It is beyond our province to enter into any prolonged details as to the diseases by which this heavy loss has been occasioned, but the following summary will show generally their character :—

	Fevers.	Diseases of Lungs.	Diseases of Stomach and Bowels.	Spasmodic Cholera.	Scoury.	Frost-bite.	All other Diseases.	Total, excluding Wounds and Injuries.
Infantry, strength 23,775—								
Admissions into hospital... ..	8,959	2,997	18,838	1,879	1,834	1,844	5,631	41,982
Deaths in Crimea and Scutari ...	1,930	313	4,071	1,123	192	399	379	8,407
Cavalry, strength 1,915—								
Admissions into hospital... ..	579	237	1,567	45	141	33	766	3,368
Deaths in Crimea and Scutari ...	48	25	130	38	...	8	17	266
Artillery and Sappers, strength 3,249—								
Admissions into hospital... ..	855	204	2,477	83	92	70	697	4,478
Deaths in Crimea and Scutari ...	93	27	286	67	3	21	44	541
Officers, strength 709—								
Treated for disease	231	67	598	15	3	8	220	1,142
Deaths in Crimea and Scutari ...	2	2	2	9	...	1	2	18

It may be necessary to explain with reference to the above classification, that the cases recorded under the head of Scurvy afford but a very slight indication of the sufferings of the troops from that disease, as they include those only in which it showed itself in the form of scorbutic sores and eruptions. Nearly all the Medical Officers stated that the greater proportion of the diseases of the bowels were complicated with scurvy, and the results of *post mortem* examination fully confirmed that opinion. The cases recorded as frost-bite, too, were those only in which that happened to be the prominent or sole affection; numbers admitted for fevers and diseases of the bowels had also to be treated for frost-bites, though to prevent the complexity which must necessarily have arisen from entering the same men twice in the Returns, the graver disease only has been noticed.

It should also be kept in view that the deaths which took place at Scutari were not always from the same disease as originally came under treatment in the Crimea. Many who were sent away from the army suffering only under frost-bite or scurvy, recovered from these, in a great measure at Scutari, but died subsequently from fever contracted there; while, in other cases, men who had been sent from the Crimea labouring under fever, partially recovered, but afterwards sank under diarrhœa or dysentery. Whether these diseases, that proved so fatal at Scutari, originated in any peculiarity of the climate there, or were merely the result of previous sufferings and broken constitution, it is impossible for us to determine; we can only submit such information as has been obtained from the Returns, and deplore a loss which is probably unparalleled in the annals of our military history.

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RETURN forwarded with the Adjutant-General's letter of 22nd June, 1855, showing the Deaths in the Infantry, from 1st October, 1854, to 1st May, 1855.

Camp before Sebastopol, June 15, 1855.

Regiment.		In the Crimea.	At Scutari.	On board ship; or elsewhere.	Total.	Total in each Division.
1ST DIVISION.	Grenadier Guards	190	201	20	411	} 2,193
	Coldstream Guards	120	269	45	434	
	Scots Fusilier Guards	178	162	35	375	
	42nd Foot	91	57	11	159	
	79th "	189	72	16	277	
	93rd "	106	59	13	178	
63rd "	173	162	24	359		
2ND DIVISION.	2nd Battalion 1st Foot	—	—	—	—	} 1,656
	30th Foot	87	80	2	169	
	55th "	84	107	18	209	
	62nd "	106	40	7	153	
	41st "	168	70	57	295	
	47th "	115	90	19	224	
	49th "	125	78	19	222	
95th "	224	139	21	384		
3RD DIVISION.	1st Battalion 1st Foot	244	108	None reported.	352	} 2,434
	4th Foot	94	84	17	195	
	14th "	11	2	3	16	
	39th "	27	11	8	46	
	50th "	281	92	38	411	
	89th "	133	52	19	204	
	9th "	122	63	4	189	
	18th "	39	17	2	58	
	28th "	185	91	15	291	
38th "	185	115	33	333		
44th "	217	111	11	339		
4TH DIVISION.	17th Foot	70	15	11	96	} 1 712
	20th "	135	116	10	261	
	21st "	130	108	13	251	
	57th "	107	61	6	174	
	46th "	253	194	3	450	
	48th "	—	—	—	—	
	68th "	84	89	5	178	
1st Battalion Rifle Brigade	141	121	40	302		
LIGHT DIVISION.	7th Foot	131	117	25	273	} 2,751
	19th "	145	103	22	270	
	23rd "	269	164	12	445	
	33rd "	183	144	9	336	
	34th "	70	23	12	105	
	77th "	168	89	42	299	
	88th "	174	169	2	345	
	90th "	105	68	4	177	
97th "	188	59	39	286		

troops serving in
Treatment at S

CTIONS.

DIV
C

by Returns B.
Invalided to England as
shown by Returns B.
Admitted into Hospital in
the Crimea, as shown by
Returns A.

30th F
55th
62nd
95th

2ND DIVISION.

3RD DIVISION.

4TH DIVISION.

LIGHT DIVISION.

CAVALRY
DRAGOONS
ARTILLERY

2,818	4,658	3,485	3,481	3,489	333	309	333	626	489	927	371	36	5,576	1,601	1,601	200	600
2,746	4,651	3,481	3,481	3,489	333	309	333	626	489	927	371	36	5,576	1,601	1,601	200	600
2,818	4,658	3,485	3,481	3,489	333	309	333	626	489	927	371	36	5,576	1,601	1,601	200	600

ABSTRACT sh
distinguish
each Weel

LIGHT DIVISION.
Present under Arr
Batmen, and other
Sick { Present ..
Absent ..
On Command ..
Missing and Priso

DUTY
Camp Guards and
Working Parties a

1ST DIVISION.
Present under Arr
Batmen, and other
Sick { Present ..
Absent ..
On Command ..
Missing and Priso

DUTY
Camp Guards and
Working Parties &
Outlying Picquets

2ND DIVISION.
Present under Arr
Batmen, and other
Sick { Present ..
Absent ..
On Command ..
Missing and Priso

DUTY
Camp Guards and
Working Parties :

October, 1854, to the 30th April, 1855,
 Observations taken on the average of one day in
 June, 1855

owing
 ing th
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MARCH.				APRIL.			
1	8	15	22	1	8	15	22
2,962	3,224	3,915	3,865	3,863	3,863	3,871	3,774
954	1,046	375	392	381	386	395	402
889	890	797	799	705	757	650	637
2,796	2,619	2,574	2,460	2,271	2,155	2,101	2,171
277	279	308	289	274	267	224	224
32	21	19	20	25	15	12	8
7,910	8,079	7,988	7,825	7,519	7,443	7,253	7,216

ners

ice. The other Fatigues were detailed by Regiments, but

780	780	1,140	1,280	1,180	1,200	800	1,200
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nd

303	275	486	639	581	766	752	771
376	390	227	144	151	152	159	158
275	205	166	171	211	225	229	209
1,360	1,331	1,249	1,123	963	871	740	657
329	386	375	349	366	247	242	242
5	5	5	5	2	2	2	2
2,648	2,592	2,508	2,431	2,274	2,263	2,124	2,039

n

160	226	260	247	249	332	282	179
..	To Bala	klava.	..	..	..	..	..
..

2,178	2,166	2,827	2,645	2,617	2,637	2,601	2,596
786	792	319	306	308	317	313	299
693	750	726	547	562	519	473	436
1,735	1,636	1,602	1,571	1,439	1,364	1,297	1,250
201	170	167	215	162	138	139	150
16	15	16	16	16	15	14	15
5,609	5,529	5,657	5,300	5,104	4,990	4,837	4,746

ing of 20 Men daily. All other Fatigues were detailed by the

.. | 1,500 | .. | .. | 1,500 | 1,100 | 700 | 500
 h, the Second Division furnished strong picquets day and

ABSTRACT OF INFORMATION OBTAINED BY COLONEL TULLOCH RELATIVE TO THE EXTENT OF DUTY PERFORMED BY THE INFANTRY CORPS BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, FROM 1ST OCTOBER, 1854, TO 30TH APRIL, 1855, AND NOT INCLUDED IN COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

THE information submitted on this head will be sufficient to show, that though my colleague and I did not, as Commissioners, examine the Adjutant-General or his Department, I obtained from him all the facts and Returns likely to be useful with reference to the subjects into which Sir John McNeill and myself were directed to inquire, and, indeed, more than either of us considered ourselves strictly warranted in calling for, by the tenor of our instructions. It is now brought forward in order to meet the statement of Sir Richard Airey, that no inquiries were made in that Department, where information, bearing, in an important degree, on the various questions at issue, might, in his opinion, have been obtained.

The following is a copy of the letter addressed by me to the Adjutant-General, calling for this information, and of his reply:—

Colonel Tulloch to Major-General D'Estcourt.

Balaklava, June 1, 1855.

As a check upon the Returns which we have found it necessary to call for from the Medical Officers, will you have the goodness to furnish Sir John McNeill, and myself, with a Return showing the deaths in each division (or regiment if you can give it) from 1st October to 1st May last, distinguishing, if possible, those which took place at Scutari, or on ship board, from those in the Crimea.

I presume you will also be able to let me have a Statement showing the strength of each Division, say on the first day of every week during this period, showing the number sick and on duty in the trenches, or otherwise employed on that day. The latter is a matter which is rather out of the usual course of our inquiries; but as the extent of duty of this kind is alleged as a reason for not making a road, as well as being the cause of much of the evil which

has occurred, it would be as well that we should be prepared with some information to elucidate that statement, and in case you are of that opinion I hope you will be able to have such a Return ready by Monday next, when we hope to be again at head-quarters.

Assistant Adjutant-General Pakenham to Colonel Tulloch.

*Head-Quarters before Sebastopol,
22nd June, 1855.*

Sir,

IN compliance with your request, I have the honour to inclose a Return, showing the deaths which occurred in each regiment of this army from 1st October, 1854. to 1st May, 1855, and Returns (6) showing the strength of each Division, during same period, with the numbers sick and on duty.

It is to be observed, however, that the figures given as men on duty include only those actually in the trenches, and that no precise account is given of the numbers of men employed in carrying stores, provisions, and ammunition from Balaklava, attending the sick, draining camps, procuring fuel, &c., which really occupied all hands every day.

I have, &c.,

W. L. PAKENHAM, *Lieutenant-Colonel,*
Assistant Adjutant-General.

For the Adjutant-General.

It will be seen by the last paragraph of my letter, that this information on the subject of duty was entirely voluntary on the part of the Adjutant-General, to whom I had explained that it was not asked for by me in my capacity as Commissioner, but merely in case reference was required to it, in connection with any military question, on which I might be asked to give information after my return.

Beyond these Returns of Duty it does not appear, even had he been examined, what information could have been obtained from the Adjutant-General's Department bearing in the slightest degree on the questions affecting the distribution of the Stores, into which the Commissioners were directed to inquire. The period of their arrival—when taken into store—the quantities issued—and the dates when issued, were all established by Returns, signed either by the Quartermaster-General, or his Assistants or

Storekeeper; and the reasons why the stores were not issued were given, so far apparently as they could be given, by the two officers under whose direction the distribution had been made. Not one of the reasons assigned by them involved, apparently, the slightest necessity for going to any other Department, either for confirmation or refutation.

The Abstract herewith submitted refers only to the Infantry, and the Highland Brigade has not been included because it was stationed at Balaklava, where, though the daily working parties were numerous, the duties were not so severe. See p. 172.

It is stated, that in the 2nd, 3rd, and Light Divisions the above were exclusive of all regimental fatigues, and it will be observed that the Deputy Adjutant-General, in transmitting the Return adds:—

“ That the figures given as men on duty include only those actually in the trenches, and that no precise account is given of the number of men employed in carrying stores, provisions, and ammunition from Balaklava, attending the sick, draining camps, procuring fuel, &c., which really occupied all hands every day.”

There is reason to believe, also, from the evidence of some of the Medical Officers, that many of the men nominally returned as effective, were not capable of taking their tour of duty in consequence of suffering under the incipient stages of disease, or being convalescents who would be likely to relapse if sent to the trenches in bad weather, and this still further increased the pressure on the remainder.

The ordinary duties of these men, involving watching and exposure had previously, when in garrison, seldom come round oftener than once in four or five nights, and then they were only exposed for two hours in six, and could repose on a guard-bed in the interval; but duties in the trenches, particularly in bad weather, admitted of no such relaxation; they were incessant. Contrasted with the ordinary duties of a British soldier, or with what is usual in other armies in the field, those here recorded may be designated

as excessive, particularly considering the reduced physical condition of the men. But this will be seen better by referring to a summary of the Returns for some of the months, say, January, which gives the following result:—

Rank and File.	Brigade of Guards.	2nd Division.	3rd Division.	4th Division.	Light Division.	Total.
Effective and present } under arms }	948	2,469	2,668	2,332	2,770	11,367
Detailed for duty of } various kinds daily .. }	403	827	1,170	1,431	1,490	5,321

The results for December and February were much the same as in January; indeed, it was not till the termination of the winter, when the sick began to return to duty; when considerable drafts and other reinforcements arrived, and when a new division of the ground between the British and French armies was made, that any material relaxation took place.

One obvious cause of this extreme pressure may be traced to the circumstance, that at this time the number of sick in hospital and at Scutari, considerably exceeded the force fit for duty, as may be seen by the following summary for the month of January:—

	Brigade of Guards.	2nd Division.	3rd Division.	4th Division.	Light Division.	Total.
Sick—Present	403	534	1,023	1,004	1,194	4,158
Sick—Absent	1,063	1,708	1,373	1,802	1,921	7,867
Total Sick	1,466	2,242	2,396	2,806	3,115	12,025

So that the 11,367 effectives shown on the preceding page, had to perform not only their own duty, but that of the 12,025 who were sick, and this, too, under the most adverse circumstances. So large a number of sick, also involved the necessity for many men being withdrawn from duty to attend upon them, and increased the pressure on the remainder.

The routine of duty in particular regiments is thus described by various officers :—

Lord West, commanding the 21st Regiment, states that :—

“ Those for the day covering party are roused out of their tents at 4 o'clock in the morning, have about a mile and a-half to march down through snow and mud, and get back to their camp about 7 o'clock in the evening, being thus exposed in open trenches for 15 hours to such inclement weather as now prevails. Most of them will go on the following evening at 5 o'clock, and remain out all night till 6 o'clock the following morning; this routine has been kept up incessantly for the last six weeks.”

Lieutenant Colonel Maxwell, commanding the 46th Regiment, a corps which was nearly annihilated by sickness in the months of November and December, states that the number of hours his men were in the trenches in every 24, was 12 in the first of these months, and $10\frac{1}{2}$ in the second; and it was stated by the Surgeon and verified by the Lieutenant-Colonel, that at one time the men were in the trenches for six successive nights, and had only one night in bed in the course of a week, but that afterwards the duty was better regulated.

The duties in the Light Division are thus described by Deputy Inspector-General Alexander, in a letter dated 10th December, 1854 :—

“ In the 7th Fusiliers, men were in the trenches 24 hours, without relief, up to or about the 17th November: on the 14th two companies were kept on piquet for 36 hours, when, of course, no cooking took place.

“ In the 19th Regiment, taking the total number of hours for November, viz. 720—304 have been passed by the men either on duty in the trenches or on piquet, which is 10 hours daily for each man, the remaining 14 being passed in bringing water, seeking for

fuel, cooking, and other duties, &c. In the 23rd Fusileers, the average return gives to each man, one night in camp and one on duty; many men, however, had to go on duty with their companies two or three nights running, doing 24 hours duty to 12 in camp.

“ In the 33rd Regiment, the men, on an average, were something less than one night in their tents, with water and fuel fatigues when off duty; they are in consequence weak and wasted from the incessant and severe duty.

“ In the 77th Regiment, the men were either in the trenches or outlying piquet every second night; on the intervening days, guards besides water and fuel fatigues, &c.

“ In the 88th Regiment, no man has ever more than one night in his tent, has 12 hours in the trenches, and 24 hours on piquet, and then has to look after wood for cooking, water, &c. &c.”

A Return and letter from Captain Forman, commanding the right wing of the 2nd Battalion of the Rifle Brigade, also shows that in November that wing was on duty 17 times, namely: 9 in the trenches and 8 in piquet, and that the average daily duty performed by each man was about $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours, in addition to two hours spent in going to and from the trenches, besides the fatigue of procuring wood and water, and other regimental duties.

In December the amount of duty in that corps is described as being rather less, viz., only about 9 hours in the trenches or piquets exclusive of other duties.

These few individual instances will be sufficient to show how the system worked, and there appears no reason to suppose that (except, perhaps, in the 46th Regiment,) they differed from the ordinary routine of duty in other corps during this period.

Though this information is not included in the Report, it was submitted, as the result of my individual inquiries, to Lord Panmure, in case he considered it expedient either to communicate it to the Military Authorities, whose duty it more especially is to attend to such matters, or to make it public; and in his hands I left it.

Two deductions may at least be drawn from these Returns.

1. That such severe duties, combined with scanty

nourishment and insufficient clothing, must, no doubt, have added greatly to the sickness and mortality.

2. That they necessarily prevented any such extensive undertaking as the formation of a road to Balaklava

3. But, that they could have presented no positive obstacle to the employment, say of one hundred men from each Regiment for a single day early in December, and the like number for another day in the end of that month or early in January, to carry up the Rugs, Great Coats, Blankets, Coatees, and Trousers, in the Quartermaster-Generals Store, provided no other means of transport could have been devised.

This painful inquiry into the loss of an army is now completed, and during the last six months there has been leisure calmly and deliberately to weigh the evidence adduced on both sides. Public opinion will pronounce the verdict, whether it perished "by the visitation of God" or from mortal agency.

Into the final opinion of the Board, that there does not appear to be any ground for further proceedings, I do not intend to enter. My object in coming before it was, not to show that the rewards of a grateful Sovereign and a generous nation had been unfortunately bestowed, but to establish the accuracy of what my colleague and I had stated in our Report. By this feeling I have been guided throughout the whole course of these proceedings, and I have sometimes even perilled my own vindication rather than appear in the character of a prosecutor.

The main object of the Commissioners throughout the painful and invidious duty imposed upon them by the Government was, by a fair exposition of the

sufferings of the troops and the causes which led to them, to provide some security against the recurrence of similar disasters in future, ever bearing in mind the adage of Cicero—

“ Delicto dolere, correctione gaudere, nos oportet.”

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

Sir John McNeill to Lord Panmure.

My Lord,

February 9, 1856.

THE Commission which you sent to the Crimea to inquire into the supplies of the Army has finished its work by reporting its proceedings, and the time has come when I may venture, I hope, without impropriety, to represent to your Lordship the zealous and efficient co-operation for which I am indebted to Colonel Tulloch. I find that he is anxious for active professional employment, and with that view is very desirous of the promotion which, I believe, he was permitted to hope for at the conclusion of the service on which he was engaged with me.

For myself, I have no favor to ask; but it would be very agreeable to me to see the services of Colonel Tulloch rewarded in the manner which would be most acceptable to him.

I have the honour to be,
(Signed) JOHN McNEILL.

No. 2.

Sir John McNeill to Colonel Tulloch.

Granton House, Edinburgh,

My dear Colonel,

January, 5, 1857.

You have sent me the proof-sheets of a pamphlet which you propose to publish, and have requested me to inform you of any statements of facts that I may find in them which appear to me not to be perfectly accurate; but, after reading them over, I am unable to say that I have observed any such statements, relating to matters of fact, within my knowledge.

I ought, perhaps, to tell you that I have not attempted to verify your quotations, references or calculations, which, from your habitual accuracy, are no doubt quite correct. I may observe, however, that these proof-sheets seem still to require revision and

are, of course, subject to any modifications or amendments that you may think it proper to make in revising them.

You certainly have presented a curious picture of the means by which a Board of General Officers, selected by the Government, have attempted to discredit every statement, almost, that any one chose to complain of in the Report of Commissioners selected, by the same Government, to conduct an inquiry in the Crimea, and who are admitted to have faithfully carried out their instructions. That attempt has, I believe, utterly failed; but it has not been without its use. The disasters in the Crimea exposed the defects of some parts of our military system in the field, and the proceedings at Chelsea have laid bare some of its deformities at home. Let us hope that the result will be the improvement of both.

But, long before the Board of General Officers met at Chelsea, I had determined not to interfere, spontaneously, with their proceedings, and had urged you to adopt the same course. Having acted in a judicial, or *quasi* judicial, capacity, it appeared to me that we ought not to descend into such an arena of personal contention to defend the results, whatever they might be, of a most careful and conscientious investigation, and founded upon the evidence which accompanied our report. The Government had indignantly repudiated the imputation that they were putting us upon our trial. I could not, therefore, appear as a defender; and I certainly had no intention to appear as a prosecutor. I was of opinion that to take part in the proceedings at Chelsea, either as defender or as prosecutor, must tend to drag down to the level of personal differences questions which I had never regarded, or desired to see regarded, in any other light than that of their bearings upon the welfare of the army and the interests of the country. We had carried out the instructions of the Government to their entire satisfaction, and I considered it their especial duty to protect the public interests involved in the maintenance of the truths that had been established. I, therefore, left to them the whole responsibility of the course, in regard to us and to our Report, which they had thought proper to adopt and of which I could not pretend to understand the scope or objects. In short, I declined to interfere with the execution of the trust which had devolved upon Her Majesty's Ministers.

These views were communicated to you, and through you to the Secretary of State for War, early in March; but under the pressure of what you regarded as a military obligation, affecting you even in the civil capacity of Commissioner, it appeared to you after the Board met in April, that you could not, without incurring great hazard, avoid taking an active part in its proceedings. Having there maintained, single-handed and with acknowledged ability and integrity, a gallant contest against fearful odds, till your health gave way from excessive exertion, it is natural that you should now desire to review, deliberately, the results of those proceedings in which you were engaged and to complete what you had begun.

The same considerations which influenced me on the occasion to which I have referred, have led me to decline taking part in the pamphlet which you now propose to publish, as the sequel and complement of a course in which I could not concur. I still look to the Government for the assertion and maintenance of every truth in our Report which can be made available for the advancement of the public interests, and to anything else, so far as I am personally concerned, I have always been indifferent. But the Chelsea Report was not laid before Parliament till the last days of the Session, and I, therefore, consider it premature to depart from the course which I have hitherto pursued.

Although we have taken different lines in respect to these later transactions, arising from the different circumstances in which we were placed, I have much pleasure in stating that, throughout the whole of the difficult and often painful service which I was requested to undertake, and which we conducted together, I received from you, on all occasions, zealous, able, and manly co-operation. I considered it my first duty, after our Report had been presented, to bring your services to the notice of the Secretary of State for War in an official letter of the 9th February, 1856, and of which I soon afterwards sent you a copy.

I have only to add that, you are perfectly at liberty to make use of this letter in any manner that you may think proper, and that I remain,

My dear Colonel,

Very sincerely Yours,

JOHN McNEILL.

No. 3.

Colonel Tulloch to Sir De Lacy Evans.

Pension Office, 2, Whitehall Yard,

My dear General,

August 15, 1855.

AMONG the probable causes of sickness in the Crimea which came under the consideration of Sir John McNeill and myself, was the separation of the men for six or seven weeks from their knapsacks after landing. We thought it our duty, therefore, to put some questions to the Quartermaster-General's Department in the Crimea on this subject, and received the answer which I annex, and as that would appear to exonerate the Department, at the expense of the Lieutenant-Generals' commanding Divisions, perhaps you will be so good as to let me know whether you can afford me any information on the subject, seeing that you are a party interested in this solution of the question.

Yours very sincerely,
(Signed) A. M. TULLOCH.

Statement by Colonel Gordon referred to.

“That on the 1st October Sir E. Lyons was requested to send a ship to collect the knapsacks of the Army from the different transports, he appointed the ‘Orinoco,’ steamer for this duty, but in consequence of the Generals of Division, with the exception of the Duke of Cambridge, preferring not to receive the knapsacks at that time, there was some delay in sending her for them, and in the meanwhile many of the vessels went away on other duties.”

No. 4.

Sir De Lacy Evans to Colonel Tulloch.

My dear Colonel,

Bryanston Square, August 17, 1855.

THE statement of Colonel Gordon, that the “Generals of Division (with the exception of the Duke of Cambridge) preferred not to receive the knapsacks at that time,” is, so far as I am concerned

entirely imaginary, and as I am convinced, without the slightest foundation whatever.

Very faithfully yours,
(Signed) DE LACY EVANS.

No. 5.

Colonel Tulloch to Sir Richard England.

Pension Office, 2, Whitehall Yard,

My dear General,

October 2, 1855.

AMONG the probable causes of sickness in the Crimea which came under the consideration of Sir John McNeill and myself, was the separation of the men, for seven or eight weeks, from their knapsacks, after landing. We thought it our duty, therefore, to put some questions to the Quarter-master-General's Department, in the Crimea, on this subject, and received the answer which I annex; and as that would appear to exonerate the Department at the expence of the Lieutenant Generals commanding Divisions, perhaps you will be so good as to let me know whether you recollect anything on the subject, as some of the Lieutenant Generals do not, and it would not answer to print any statement on which there might hereafter be a question.

Yours very sincerely,
(Signed) A. M. TULLOCH.

See Statement of Colonel Gordon annexed as on previous page.

No. 6.

Sir Richard England to Colonel Tulloch.

My dear Colonel,

Bath, October 8, 1855.

ABSENCE from home has prevented my replying to yours of the 2nd till now, and with reference to the question you ask, I regret to say that I cannot give a very satisfactory reply.

I cannot bring to my recollection that any proposal was made to me about the 1st of October of the last year, regarding the re-delivery of the soldiers' knapsacks; but I could have better answered that question if you had put it to me when in the Crimea.

Should you be desirous of positive information thereon, I have no doubt I could get it by reference, and so could you, by applying

to the General Officer who succeeded me in the command of the 3rd Division, who could refer thereon to documents, or to the Staff, or to Commanding Officers of Corps

I cannot, of my own recollection, state decidedly whether this proposition or offer was made to me or not. I should think *not*, because there would have been great difficulty in getting the knapsacks *up* at the moment in question, and my Division had not finally taken up its ground till the 2nd or 3rd before Sebastopol.

Whoever has answered your interrogatory by saying that the proposal *was made* to us, must have assured himself of the facts which, nevertheless, I confess my want of memory upon.

Believe me truly yours,

(Signed) R. ENGLAND.

No. 7.

Memorandum for Lord Panmure.

War Office, July 5, 1855.

ABOUT ten days before we left Sebastopol certain queries were sent to be answered by Major-General Airey in writing, and which had been specially framed in order to ascertain from his own statements whether the non-issue of various stores, sent out for the use of the men, was attributable to the Quartermaster-General's Department or not.

The Major-General objected to answering these queries at once, because they were necessarily of an accusatory character, but promised that the replies should be forwarded in a few days. They have not yet been received, and from the long delay in forwarding them, I am afraid either that they have been mis-sent, or that there is no intention of forwarding them.

Without this information it is impossible for Sir John McNeill and myself to close our Report, and I trust, therefore, that a telegraphic communication may be authorized to Major-General Airey, requesting that he would forward, by the first mail, the answers to the queries sent by me to him, as also the evidence of Colonel Gordon, left with that officer for correction, but never returned; or in the event of these having been already forwarded, to state on what date and how they were sent.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. M. TULLOCH.

Reply by Electric Telegraph communicated to Colonel Tulloch 16th July, as follows.

Major-General Airey's answers have been sent by the mail on 10th July, and Colonel Gordon is on his way home with his evidence. Started 3d July.

No. 8.

Memorandum sent by Mr. Sisson, Chief Clerk in the Pension Department, to Colonel Tulloch during his absence in the Highlands on 30th August, 1855.

COLONEL GORDON called to say that he has only received a part of the Appendix of his evidence (that I sent from you this morning); that he is about to return to Scotland in a few days, before he goes out again to the Crimea, and that he *should like to have the remainder of his evidence when it comes from the printer, instead of waiting for it to be sent to and returned by you.* Also, that he shall see Sir John McNeill when he goes back to Scotland.

I told him I would write you what he stated on the subject.

(Signed) C. SISSON.

No. 9.

Extract from Mr. Peel's letter to Colonel Tulloch, dated 17th April, 1856.

I AM directed by his Lordship to intimate to you that if legal or other assistance would be acceptable to you, in the performance of the duty, which, in the absence of Sir John McNeill, devolves entirely upon yourself, of sustaining the Report of the Crimean Commissioners before the Court of Inquiry, his lordship can have no objection to your availing yourself of it; and is prepared, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, to defray the expence of such assistance. The selection his Lordship would prefer to leave to you, but it must be understood that the duties of this assistant will be confined to assisting you. He is not to be permitted to address the court or to examine witnesses.

No. 10.

Extract from Colonel Tulloch's reply to Mr. F. Peel, dated 19th April.

Sir,

I HAVE to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 17th April, and to express my thanks for the permission to employ legal assistance at the expence of Government to advise me in the proceedings before the Board at Chelsea.

I would gladly have availed myself of this permission at an earlier stage of the proceedings, but the inquiry into the points raised by Lord Lucan is now, I apprehend, too far advanced for legal assistance to be of much advantage, as my course is already taken, and whatever might be the advice it is now too late to alter it; but when I find to what extent it may be necessary to defend myself against the attacks of the other officers implicated, I will gladly avail myself of legal advice, if there is any probability of its being useful. So far as I see at present, most of their statements may be met by referring these officers to the signed evidence in the Report, leaving it for the Board and them to determine whether that evidence is correct.

No. 11.

Mr. F. Peel to Dr. Balfour.

Sir,

War Department, May 19, 1856.

IN a communication from Sir John McNeill, dated 12th May, that gentleman states to Lord Panmure that he has reason to believe that Printer's "Proofs" of Colonel Gordon's evidence, corrected in his own hand, will be found among the documents of the Commission in Colonel Tulloch's Office, and that the proofs of Colonel Wetherall's evidence, bearing marks in Colonel Gordon's own hand of its having been revised by him, and of his having noticed an omission connected with that evidence, which appears to have been supplied on his demand, is also to be found there; Lord Panmure deems it important to ascertain whether Sir John McNeill is correctly informed, and, if so, that these documents should be submitted to the Chelsea Commission; but, as His Lordship is reluctant in the present

state of Colonel Tulloch's health, to trouble that officer on the subject, I am directed to request that you will be good enough to inquire into the case, and, if the papers can be found, Lord Panmure will cause them to be laid before the Commission.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. PEEL.

No. 12.

Dr. Balfour to Mr. F. Peel.

Sir,

Royal Military Asylum, May 20, 1856.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your letter of the 19th instant, $\frac{048}{61}$, I have the honour to forward the first proofs of Colonel Gordon's and Colonel Wetherall's evidence, with the manuscript corrections of Colonel Gordon, and beg to state, for Lord Panmure's information, that previously to Colonel Tulloch being compelled by illness to withdraw from the Court he had mentioned to me the existence of these proofs, corrected by Colonel Gordon. Upon his becoming completely disabled, I felt it to be my duty to communicate the circumstance to the Judge-Advocate General, and to submit the proofs in question for his inspection; and upon these proofs, he put certain questions to Colonel Gordon. It would, perhaps, be better, however, that they should be laid *officially* before the Board.

I beg further to state, that, with the concurrence of Sir James Clark and Mr. Martin, I took down from Colonel Tulloch's dictation, at different periods, the facts connected with the alleged omission of a portion of Colonel Wetherall's evidence; that from these I prepared an explanatory statement, which, after having been read and approved by Colonel Tulloch, I submitted on the 16th instant to the Board, through the Judge-Advocate-General, and was informed yesterday that it would be received by them, and although not read in Court would appear in the proceedings of the Board.

I have, &c.

(Signed) T. GRAHAM BALFOUR.