

inches of floor, has an army of 49,500,000 deadly enemies (germs) on the floor alone, to say nothing of other millions in the front and rear, on both flanks and overhead. Our contemporary after this, we should explain, possesses the very appropriate title of "Siftings." It appears to us that such statements as these, numerically interesting as they may be, are absolutely valueless except they be designed to make the nervous and the hypochondriacal arrive at the conclusion that life cannot be worth living, and, in fact, that there is very little chance of living at all. Our contemporary should remember that if the millions of which it speaks with such timorousness remained on the floor of the railway carriage, they really could not do any harm to anyone. We would, however, point the moral of the story by expressing a hope that the managers of our railways will keep these millions in view, and will, for the sake of the nervous public, direct that some attention should be paid to an occasional cleansing of the floor, and certainly to the windows of the passenger compartments so as to permit travellers to see something outside the carriages beyond the microscopic millions of germs collected in the dust which so copiously adorns—for the scientific sifter—and disfigures—for the unscientific traveller—the window panes.

THE PLAGUE.

Some fifty years ago the popular objugation took the form of requesting one's opponent to go to Hongkong, but it has lived that reputation down. A new terror has recently been added to this salubrious spot by the outbreak of an infectious disease, which is believed to be closely similar to that which devastated Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries under the name of "The Plague." It is said to be more or less endemic in China, but subject to violent and widespread outbreaks in other parts of Asia. This disease is sudden in its onset, always attended with high fever and great depression, quickly followed by swellings in the groins, neck, axilla, and other parts. In most cases the patient becomes comatose within twenty-four to fifty-six hours, and so dies. If the case lasts long enough, the glands break down into abscesses, and many patients who survive the first onset, die subsequently from exhaustion. It appears to us that the disease is essentially septicæmic and affecting the lymphatic system, and that, therefore, it will be found to be of bacterial origin, the germs obtaining admission to the system probably through both air and water, that is to say, through the thoracic glands and those of the intestines. To some extent, this theory is proved by the significant fact that in the present epidemic, the Europeans have suffered hardly at all from the disease, whilst the natives have died by thousands.

Reflections

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.



THE Prince of WALES has been re-elected president of the Society of Arts, which office he has held since 1864. The new vice-presidents are the Duke of YORK, the Earl of ROSEBURY, LORD HALSBURY, and Sir COURTENAY BOYLE.

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THE new building of the British Home for Incurables, was opened by Her Royal Highness the Princess of WALES, on Tuesday last, and it is interesting to remember that this was the first Charity with which the Princess was specially interested, and was the first with which she became prominently connected in 1863.

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The site of the building is in Crown Lane, at the upper end of Streatham Common, and is one of the highest points south of the Thames, the frontage being about 300 ft. In choosing a new locality for the home, which had to be removed from the Clapham Road in consequence of the lease of the old premises running out, it was important to obtain a site with a long frontage, a southern aspect, convenience of access from town, so that inmates should not be shut off altogether from their friends, and a district of such a character as to insure the active interest of the residents in the welfare of the inmates. All these essentials have been secured, and the building, which has been erected from the designs of the late Mr. Arthur Cawston, is in every respect adapted to the purpose for which it has been erected, giving, as it does, to the patients a beautiful home with delightful surroundings. As the building is not a hospital but a home, the recognised principles of hospital planning have not been followed. The inmates are grouped into separate families, each with its own living rooms, sleeping rooms, service, and sanitary wing. Long corridors would have been monotonous and unsuitable to this treatment, and the architect has avoided the difficulty by dividing the length of the building into two blocks. The western portion is stepped back 50 ft. further from the road than the eastern block, and thus a light and cheerful effect has been obtained, as the corridor runs at the rear of the patients' living rooms, and has windows on its northern side. Every possible need and exigence has been anticipated, with the result that the inmates and staff have the maximum of convenience and comfort.

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The total cost, exclusive of the chapel, the gift of Miss LEICESTER, has been £27,500. Towards this

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