

There is an outbreak of smallpox at Hull—100 cases having been admitted into the new infectious hospital during the week.

The horrors of plague are quite overshadowed by the War. Nevertheless, this terrible disease is quietly creeping over the face of the globe. From Rio de Janeiro we hear that it has broken out in the island of Santos, a day's journey away, and that all cases are to be cared for, on floating hospitals in the Bay; but as there are few trained nurses available, the patients will not have the best chance of recovery.

Considerable alarm is felt in New York because of the arrival of the steamer *Taylor* from Brazil with evidences of bubonic plague aboard her. On the way up Mr. Hope, an Englishman, died and was buried at sea. Almost immediately afterwards Captain Cook, who had been nursing him, was taken ill, and when the steamer arrived at quarantine last night the health officer who examined him said he was suffering from symptoms of what appeared to be the plague. The case, however, was not a well developed one, and the other health officers who were called in to a consultation were unable to give definite assurances either way. The vessel was, however, detained, and the captain and several members of the crew who were ill were sent to Swinbourne Island. The rest of the crew remain on board the vessel, which now floats the yellow flag, at quarantine. News has been telegraphed of the suspected case all along the Atlantic seaboard, and all health officers have been notified to be vigilant and take precautions.

Dr. Pestana of Lisbon, died recently of plague contracted during his investigation of the disease at Oporto. Another doctor noticed, when Dr. Pestana was dissecting the body of a victim of the plague at Oporto, that he used his nails instead of instruments. It is thus believed that he contracted the disease in this way. Only a quarter of an hour before he died, and while yet delirious, Dr. Pestana said:—"The plague is a disease which is not understood by the doctors of to-day. They know no more about it now than in olden times."

Small-pox has broken out at Herschel, Cape Colony. The disease is supposed to have been imported by natives from the Transvaal.

Medicos Repudiate Midwives.

THE East York and North Lincoln Branch of the British Medical Association, and the Hull Medical Society recently held a joint meeting at the Hull Infirmary when the following resolutions were unanimously passed:—

"That we, the members of the medical profession in East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire, view with grave concern and alarm the attempts to create an inferior order of practitioners as contemplated in the Midwives' Bill already drafted, and we are of opinion

that the passing into law of any such Bill can only be disastrous to the welfare of the general public, and will still further open the door to all sorts of irresponsible medical practice."

"That, on the grounds set forth in the memorials of the Corporate and Medical Reform Association, Limited, and on the following resolution of the General Medical Council in reply thereto, of June 9th, 1899—'That as regards the issue of certificates in midwifery referred to in the memorials, the council is of opinion that, as the Midwives' Bill is now before Parliament, it should at present refrain from taking any action. As regards the certificates granted to spectacle makers, the Council exercises no jurisdiction over such opticians, but will be prepared to consider any properly substantiated charge of improper conduct made against a registered medical practitioner with reference to this subject'—this meeting in the first place condemns as illegal the action of the General Medical Council in framing the certificate of the London Obstetrical Society, and in sanctioning these and other certificates in midwifery, which are now a precedent for the certification of opticians and others in breach of the Medical Acts, and, secondly, calls upon the Council to rescind such sanction, and place itself in a position to deal judicially, and on like principles with charges that may be brought before it for covering midwives or opticians; and upon the President of the Council to retire from connection with the London Obstetrical Society so long as that Society issues such certificates."

"That this meeting repudiates, as inconsistent alike with the public safety and the rights of the medical profession, conferred by the Medical Acts, the General Medical Council's 'recommendations' to the Privy Council on the subject of registration of midwives; by which it is proposed that, contrary to the Medical Acts, and in repeal thereof, medical attendance on poor women in so-called normal labour is to be entrusted to persons not medically educated as the law for the safety of the people now requires."

"That whereas the General Medical Council has (1) contrary to the Medical Acts recognized the certification of unqualified practitioners as competent in branches of medical practice (midwives, and by inference opticians) (2) recommended to the Privy Council provisions to legalize the practice of midwifery by persons not medically educated (3) in 1897 and 1899 rejected applications to recommend to the Privy Council an increase in the number of direct representatives; (4) in 1897 wilfully, and contrary to the express provisions of the Medical Acts, maintained its illegal form of return of its corporate members, thus conspiring to deprive constituents of certain corporations of the right to choose their corporate members of the Council, and has, in 1897 refused to take part in securing any of the reforms of the Council and the Medical Acts urgently necessary in the interests of the public and the medical profession, this meeting now declares that in the above specific respects, as well as in its present constitution, the General Medical Council does not represent the Medical Profession, or provide for the public interest, and ought to be reconstituted and reformed by an Amending Medical Act."

We entirely agree that the London Obstetrical Society places itself in an untenable position by examining women with only three months' special training. Candidates should be either bona-fide medical students or bona-fide pupil nurses.

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