

In view of the alarming fact that the plague shows no tendency to diminish, the Indian Government has decided to materially strengthen the personnel of the Bombay Plague Committee, and to increase the force at its disposal for carrying out the necessary preventive measures.

The *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, relates the following ghastly story of what lately happened in the Peshawur hospital:—"Four corpses were taken into the mortuary and laid on slabs. Something was being done to one of the bodies when one of the 'corpses' sat up on the slab. Two orderlies bolted at the sight. The 'corpse' lived and recovered."

The *Kansas City Journal* says:—"All sorts of special trains have been run over Kansas railroads, but the oddest one yet is reported from Fort Scott. It ran from Parsons to Appleton City, Mo., and consisted of one car and a locomotive. On one of the seats of the car, under the watchful eye of the brakeman, rested a small bottle, and it was to convey this bottle that the special train was run. A doctor at Appleton City had broken his leg, and lockjaw followed. A certain kind of medicine was needed which could not be procured nearer than Parsons, one hundred miles away, and the special train was called to go in quest of it. The run was made at a faster rate than a mile a minute."

## Review.

### AMBROISE PARÉ AND HIS TIMES.

THE name of Ambroise Paré is familiar to many nurses, from the fact that his well-known words, "*Je le pansay, Dieu le guarit*" (I dressed him, and God healed him), appear on the cover of *Misericordia*, the monthly organ of the Guild of St. Barnabas for Nurses. They will, therefore, welcome the delightful volume which has recently appeared, written by Mr. Stephen Paget, F.R.C.S., and published by Messrs. G. P. Putnam, New York and London, which contains an account of his life. The book is dedicated to Sir Thomas Smith, Surgeon-Extraordinary to Her Majesty the Queen, and Senior Surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and Sir Thomas Smith's many admirers will think that Mr. Paget has chosen wisely and well in selecting him for this honour.

As in his "Life of John Hunter," so, in the present volume Mr. Paget has allowed his hero to tell his own tale as much as possible, and has shown his skill as an author by weaving the material at his disposal into a harmonious whole. By so doing he displays the instinct of the true artist whose master-touch is apparent in every line of his picture, but whose initials are written small in an inconspicuous corner. There is no doubt that "Ambroise Paré" is a fascinating book. Mr. Paget is fortunate in his subject, for it is not given to many men to live in such stirring times as those in which Ambroise Paré moved, and perhaps no surgeon ever had so extensive an experience on the battlefield, or was so often in such personal danger, as that which fell to his lot. The chief characteristics of this wonderful man which strike one on reading the book are, perhaps, the reality of his goodness, his outspoken bravery, his distrust of tradition, and his desire to make independent investigations for himself, his hatred of inflicting unnecessary

pain, and his directness in answering the calumnies of his enemies; for though, perhaps, because, his whole life was spent in doing good, in advancing the interests of his profession and in the cause of science, enemies he had in plenty, and when he was at the head of his profession—Chief Surgeon to the King, and a member of the King's Council—the jealousy of his colleagues was so great that they tried, when Henri III. was ill, to keep him out of their consultations.

To one of his adversaries, Etienne Gourmelen, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine (despicable as he is), we have every reason to be grateful. His attack upon Paré when he was over seventy years of age, for using ligatures instead of the cautery, after amputation, drew from Paré his inimitable and invaluable history of his thirty years' service in the army. In the course of this history he claims that his use of the ligature was based upon experience, and makes the justifiable retort to his detractor: "My discovery was not made by sitting in a chair, and thinking, but by years of hard practical work in Paris, and with the army." This was no vain boast, and Paré not only had plenty of work but also shared the dangers and hardships of the campaigns; as he himself tells us, "God knows how scarce we were of victuals, and I protest before Him that at three divers times I thought to die of hunger, and it was not for want of money, for I had enough of it, but we could not get victuals save by force, because the country people collected them all into the towns and castles." The work which fell to Paré's share was enormous. During the siege of Hesdin he relates, "The dead were advanced in putrefaction, piled one upon the other like faggots, and not covered with earth, because we had none. And if I went into a soldier's lodging, there were soldiers waiting for me at the door when I came out, for me to dress others; it was who should have me, and they carried me like the body of a saint, with my feet off the ground, fighting for me. I could not satisfy this great number of wounded, nor had I got what I wanted for their treatment." Interesting in the extreme is Paré's account of his treatment of a case in which a gunshot wound had injured the lung. "I withdrew some scales of bone, and put in each wound a tent with a large head, fastened with a thread, lest on inspiration it should be drawn into the cavity of the chest—which has happened with surgeons—to the detriment of the poor wounded" (this accident is not unknown even at the present day), "for being fallen in you cannot get them out, and then they beget corruption, being foreign bodies." Paré's coolness in the time of danger may be exemplified by the following instances. Once when he was taken prisoner his skill so impressed the Austrian Emperor's surgeon that he offered to pay him well if he would stay with him. "I gave him," says Paré, "many thanks, and said I had no wish to serve any country but my own. Then he told me I was a fool, and if he were a prisoner, as I was, he would serve a devil to get his freedom. In the end I told him flat I would not stop with him." To a similar offer under like circumstances from the Duc de Savoie, he relates, "I sent back my very humble thanks, and that I had decided not to take service under any foreigner."

Again, when on the day of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, the King told Paré that everyone now now turn Catholic, Paré coolly answered him: "By the light of God, Sire, I think you remember your promise never to command these four things of me

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