

of loss of blood soon show themselves. Pallor, faintness, coldness are observed in the patient. You must at once send for the Doctor. In the meantime, lower the head, and open the night-dress over the chest, and keep the face exposed to the air. Unpin the binder, remove the compresses, turn the patient on to her left side, immerse your left hand and arm in cold water, and make firm pressure upon the uterus in the manner I directed you to do in No. 83 of the *Record*. You will probably press out a quantity of blood or coagula, mostly arterial. If you find the uterus soft and indefinable and *not* hardening under pressure, you must douche the vulva, or rather apply a napkin, wrung out of cold water, to the vagina, and press it well in. You continue these measures until help arrives, by which time you may have been sufficiently fortunate enough to have restored the tonicity of the uterus. The patient will require your attention, and restoratives and stimulants must be given with *prudence*. You must not move or bind or compress the patient until Medical aid has arrived; and the Doctor will, when safe to do so, help you to put her straight, when she can be rebound, &c.

(To be continued.)

THE PROGRESS OF HYGIENE.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION BY DR. W. B. CHEADLE.

(Continued from page 322.)

GRADUALLY, however, as one mysterious problem of nature after another was discovered to be capable of explanation by simple laws, the belief in the direct interference of supernatural agents with the routine of human life, and the faith in magic and astrology began to fade. The occurrence of certain diseases was observed to be connected in some way or other—very regularly—with particular conditions in which individuals or communities were placed at the time; as, for example, bronchitis, with exposure to cold and damp; typhus fever, with filth and overcrowding. Further researches traced the relations of diseases to material causes more and more closely up to the present time.

Thus, for example, ague was traced to the emanations from marshy ground; scurvy to the lack of fresh vegetable food; one form of paralysis to poisoning by lead; consumption to the inhalation of coal dust, or steel dust, or stone dust, or the influence of low, damp, ill-drained localities, aided by foul air; tape-worm to mealy pork, or beef; typhoid fever to foul air or foul drinking water. It was further ascertained that contagious

diseases, such as scarlatina or small-pox, were communicated to healthy people by the transfer of infectious material from the bodies of persons suffering from these diseases.

Now the knowledge of the origin of certain diseases thus slowly acquired has also shown the means by which these diseases may be prevented; and the steps taken for this purpose have already effected a very gratifying diminution of mortality; the death-rate is lowered. Civilisation has its drawbacks from a sanitary point of view, as well as its advantages. Yet the balance seems to be largely in favour of the latter. If the advance of knowledge has developed unhealthy trades, such as the knife-grinders, the colliers and the match-makers, it has practically destroyed on the other hand plague and scurvy, small-pox and typhus.

The evils it has introduced kill their thousands indeed, but those it has destroyed killed their tens of thousands in older times; and then most of the diseases introduced by a higher civilisation are found to be preventible—are under our control.

Just see what has been effected by improved hygiene. The Great Plague in the year of its greatest severity, 1665, destroyed no less than sixty-three thousand persons in London alone. At the height of it, in the month of September—*i.e.*, from August 22 to September 26, according to Defoe—the bills of mortality reached thirty-eight thousand one hundred and ninety-five, and this is supposed to have been below the mark, for many cases were never registered. It was stamped out by the great fire of the following year, 1666, when a large portion of the most densely populated part of the town was burnt down, some thirteen thousand houses being destroyed. The same conditions of filth which formed such congenial soil for the plague poison have never been re-established, and the plague has never returned.

Take small-pox again. In the year 1661, one thousand two hundred and forty-six persons died of small-pox in London alone.* So great were its ravages, so constant its outbreaks, that for the half-century preceding the introduction of vaccination, 1750 to 1800, out of every thousand people who died eighty-eight to a hundred died of small-pox. In the half-century following the introduction of vaccination, the proportion fell steadily until in 1850 only sixteen out of every thousand deaths were due to small-pox.

I can remember that, when I was a boy, it was quite an ordinary occurrence to meet persons with faces horribly scarred and pitted with small-pox; not unfrequently they were blinded. Now such

* Poore's "London," page 25.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)