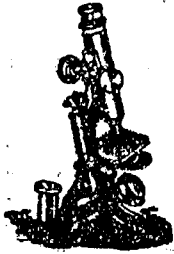


Medical Matters.

THE PLAGUE AT ZANZIBAR.



The appearance of the plague at Zanzibar must occasion anxiety to all who are acquainted with the island, for should it gain a foothold in the native quarter, with its teeming population and closely-packed huts, it may be difficult to eradicate. Assuming that plague is infectious, then it is matter for much congratulation to the port sanitary authorities that, so far, the island has been free from the disease, for it is in constant communication with Bombay. The present theory which is gaining ground that, excepting the pneumonic variety, plague is not infectious is, however, probably correct. As we recently reported, it is now held that the trouble always and everywhere has been from crowded sites, too long inhabited, without drainage. In this event the source of trouble is probably in the native huts, and the remedy—evacuation. The authorities have long been prepared to isolate cases of plague on a small island a few miles from Zanzibar.

YELLOW FEVER IN NEW ORLEANS.

The epidemic of yellow fever now prevailing in New Orleans illustrates forcibly, according to the *Lancet*, the old and the new methods of controlling this scourge. In the country we have the old-fashioned "shot-gun" quarantine in full operation, but in the city the latest methods of sanitary science are taught and enforced. Of the former we read such reports as the following:—"The Governor has directed the commander of the State Guard to detail as many men as might be necessary to act as guards on all trains entering the State, and at all points where boats run, in order to establish a strict State quarantine against all points where the yellow fever is found to exist." It is reported that the State of Mississippi has five armed boats patrolling the coast to prevent fishermen from breaking through the quarantine lines, and armed guards patrol the lines of railroads entering the State. On the other hand, the health officer of New Orleans has issued the following sensible advice and information:—"The spread of yellow fever is easily controlled by the application of very simple rules. Whether or not New Orleans will be rid of yellow fever at

an early date depends in a very large measure on the degree of assistance each householder is willing to contribute to the work of eradication. Yellow fever is transmitted by the bite of a mosquito whose breeding places are cisterns, water barrels, and similar collections of water. This mosquito bites in the daytime usually, and in order to become infectious must bite a patient during the first three days of the fever and then ten days must elapse before it is capable of transmitting the disease. Mosquitoes are not dangerous before the tenth day after biting the sick and the patient is not dangerous after the third day of the fever. Therefore protect from mosquitoes, day and night, all cases of fever for three days and then destroy before the tenth day after the beginning of the illness the mosquitoes that are in the room." The mayor has issued a proclamation, approved by the State board and the United States Public Health Service, which requires all citizens to allow no stagnant water on their premises; to screen all cisterns after treating the surface with oil; to place oil in cesspools and privy vaults; to sleep under nets; and to screen doors and windows.

MEDITERRANEAN FEVER.

Malta fever, says a contemporary, is a distressing ailment to which English people are peculiarly susceptible, and which under the name of Mediterranean fever is almost equally prevalent at Gibraltar as at Malta. It is caused by a blood parasite, of which a great deal is known, but the means of transmission of which has hitherto been mysterious. It is now announced by Major Horrocks, R.A.M.C., and Dr. Zammit, who were members of the Royal Society Commission, that goats seem to be capable of transmitting the disease; and the inference is that Malta fever may result from drinking infected goats' milk. The characteristic parasite has been found both in goats' blood and goats' milk. That itself would not be sufficient to show that infected goats' milk was the source of infection in man any more than milk infected with bovine tuberculosis was the source of human tuberculosis, though it would probably influence a good many people not to take risks. But it has been shown that monkeys, which are closely allied physiologically to man, can be infected by it, and therefore a strong case is made out for man's being equally susceptible. Another confirmatory point is that in Gibraltar goats are almost the only source of the milk supply.

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