

(French West Africa). The infected area was immediately isolated. Steps are being taken, says *Reuter*, to destroy the mosquito which propagates the disease. The districts of Goree, Dakar, and Rufisque have been placed under observation.

The extermination of rats which has been tried in 60 towns of the Punjab, hitherto centres of endemic plague, has been attended with extraordinary success. Though the operations are still incomplete, they have proved the close connection between rats and the spread of plague.

The experiment is regarded as of immense importance, in view of the fact that a million people have already died of plague in the Punjab alone. As the rat is the host of the flea, which is coming to be regarded as the agent in conveying plague to man, its extermination is a matter of primary importance.

Some of the difficulties of coping with the disease are indicated in the India Sanitary Report for 1904, just issued as a Blue Book. "It is not easy," says the Report, "to deal with a religious tenet that forbids the holder to leave an infected place, with a tenderness for animal life that will not sanction the destruction of a deadly serpent, with ignorance that is convinced that plague is introduced and fostered by Government in order to reduce the redundant population, with suspicion that sees the disseminating agents in every disinfecting party, or with timidity that may be turned by an ill-considered action to fanatical frenzy."

We heartily agree with the views of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the Indian reformer, who for the last twenty years has been working for the suppression of the opium trade, who has always held that that trade is bad—bad for India as well as for China. It is, he asserts, nothing less than a crime to poison a great nation by forcing opium upon it. China has always been against the traffic, but we have consistently forced it upon her. In regard to India, he said to a contemporary: "Let us stop this cursed traffic, and let us devote the land that will be released thereby to the cultivation of agricultural produce. That will add to the prosperity of India, and will clear England's good name before the world."

We are thankful that tardily the British Government is taking steps to remove the blot, which has stained our national escutcheon, of forcing this terrible trade on an unwilling nation.

The Government has imposed stringent regulations rendering the possession of cocaine in the Punjab in any quantity and any form a serious offence.

New York is to have an open air hospital for tuberculous children for which 125,000 dol. was contributed by Mr. Rockefeller, and an equal amount by other philanthropists. New York has 4,500 cases of tuberculosis of bones in children. It is proposed to have a chain of these hospitals all along the coast.

An Idyll from the East.

BY A DISTRICT NURSE.

What's in a name? Well, hers was Gutter-son! and it must be allowed that it is not an elevating patronymic. She was handicapped by it at the start.

She lived in Poplar—lived, of course, is a form of speech; rather, she kept herself alive by pursuing the trade of a trouser finisher. Her best week's earnings never brought her in more than 5s. 6d., owing, as she would tell you, "to me pore thumb, darlin', bein' so crippled."

For the district nurse, who paid her an occasional visit of a purely friendly and unprofessional character, she had a queer affection and was most anxious to stand well in her opinion. For her benefit she would keep accounts to show you "I don't waste me money, darlin'." They would read somewhat as follows: Rent 2s. 6d., Bred 4d., Bakon 1½d., Parerfene 4d., Sope 1d., Matches ¼d., Coles 6d., Tea 2d., Thread 2d., Inshurence 2d.

She was of a somewhat religious turn of mind, and would attend Sunday evening worship, where she apparently became conscious of a deficiency of wearing apparel, for she asked her friend the nurse if she knew a lady who could give her a "little pair of gloves," as "it looks so to stretch out a bare and when you are passed a Psalter!" She was provided with a pair edged with fur which she wore with much pride when she went to what she always spoke of rather virtuously, and in the possessive, as "me Church."

Poor Mrs. G.! She had a hard life indeed, but she contrived to keep a cheerful front, and, though she would often spend 16 hours a day on the unpoetical garments of her trade, would yet have the spirit to pat them affectionately and speak of anything special in that line as "a beautiful little pair."

She had a parish allowance of bread and meat which she used to keep rolled up in a newspaper, "on account of the bugs, darlin'." They certainly were not appetising looking viands, and she might be excused for wishing they could be exchanged for "a 'addick or a lovely bit of fat bacon," and great was her delight when some such tasty leavings were sent to her from the kindly vicarage hard by.

Apologies to Mr. Gutter-son for having so far ignored his existence! He was at this period lying ill in the Parish Infirmary, and his wife was most devoted in her attendance upon him, sparing time which to her meant existence, to sit by his bedside, till the Friend of the poor

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