

followed by New Zealand (24). England and Wales are just behind the United States (31), which led in 1949 by 1.

#### Smallpox.

Fewer babies were vaccinated against smallpox, the infant vaccination rate falling to 27 per cent. of babies born. "The final judgment cannot be reached until the 1950 figures are available, but it seems that parents, and possibly also the medical profession, have become more casual about the need for infant vaccination in infancy, first because thereby the slight risk of complications is diminished, whereas this risk is increased if primary vaccination be postponed until it becomes obligatory for foreign travel, military service or on account of the threat of an epidemic; and secondly, because the security of the community from epidemic spread depends not a little on the level of immunity therein."

#### Influenza.

Of 5,665 deaths ascribed to influenza, 3,853 occurred during the first quarter of the year when there was a widespread epidemic of mild influenza. "The difference between total deaths from all causes in 1949 (with a mild epidemic of virus influenza) and 1948 (when there was no virus influenza) was 41,000: 29,000 of this excess was in the first quarter and 10,000 in the second. Here is an obvious field for further investigation into the effect of virus influenza on those factors in total mortality which do not, at first sight, seem related to influenza," observes Sir John.

#### Diphtheria.

The triumphs of the immunisation campaign continued. The number of deaths, 84, is less than one-thirtieth of the average annual number in the five years preceding the beginning of the immunisation campaign. The number of corrected notifications is 1,881, compared with 3,560 in 1948 or 50,693 in 1941. That they have fallen so much "shows what an enormous saving of child illness, of parental anxiety and of hospital beds, has been achieved . . ."

Unfortunately the case-fatality that is the percentage of (corrected notifications) cases which prove fatal, shows little change. This may in part be due to the fact that diphtheria is now so uncommon, it may be easy to miss the early cases of an outbreak, and so delay treatment.

#### Q. Fever.

A new star—long expected—rose over the horizon of British epidemiology in July. This was Q fever, a rickettsial disease, first recognised as a human disease in 1935 in Australia. The outstanding clinical feature in man is an atypical pneumonia; the disease is usually mild but debilitating, so that convalescence may be prolonged; it is usually transmitted by ticks to cattle, and by dust or milk to man.

#### Typhoid.

Notifications of typhoid fever showed a slight decrease from 348 cases in 1948 to 280 and deaths declined from 38 to 19. Paratyphoid cases increased from 373 to 579 and deaths from 10 to 13. The outstanding fact of the year in relation to typhoid fever was the introduction and great success of its treatment by chloramphenicol (chloromycetin).

#### Malaria.

In view of the many ex-servicemen who have returned from malarious regions, and of the many foreigners now living in this country who still yield positive blood films, it is remarkable that only four cases of indigenous malaria were reported in 1949.

The report describes the great and successful part the Ministry's malaria laboratory—now the Malaria Reference Laboratory of the Public Health Laboratory Service—played in the demonstration of the pre-erythrocytic stage of the malignant tertian malaria parasite, *Plasmodium falciparum*, in the human liver.

(To be concluded.)

## London Streets and Associations.

"THE HAPPINESS OF LONDON," said Doctor Johnson, "is not to be conceived but by those who have lived in it, and when a man has tired of London, he has tired of Life; for there is in London most of all what Life can afford!" And it was Boswell who said that London was superior over all other cities, not only for variety of enjoyment, but also for comfort.

In many instances the memory of its worthy citizens has been perpetuated by streets which bear their names, but this must also be guarded by the observation that we miss many worthy names whose absence we deplore. We seek in vain for the street or street-corner commemorating Stowe, the foremost historian of London; Chaucer, father of our poetry, born by Wallbrook, although Wallbrook still remains. Defoe, born in Fore Street and resident near Cornhill; Hogarth, the painter of London who lived and characterised its people and manner.

Our Kings, Queens and Princes, and especially Queen Victoria are seen everywhere, but with some uncertainty and much inconvenience Grub Street has been changed to Milton Street. The former name originated from the fact that the street was much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries and temporary poems. It was said to be the resort of those who had abandoned hope of literary fame. Johnson did not himself know it as a resident, although in his early days he was well-qualified to do so.

We ask why Petticoat Lane (where it used to be said that you lost your gold-chain at the beginning of it and it was offered to you to buy at the end of the Lane), was changed to the very ordinary name of Middlesex Street, which seems to be undignified and unjustifiable. Our ancient and time-honoured thoroughfares are often found with names eloquent with local history in associations and allusions; it is good to know for our entertainment and information.

#### Cheapside Today.

A long gorge through a cliff of buildings, broken at its middle by that church whose steeple holds the bells which symbolise the voice of all London's people. At the eastern end are the temples of England's commerce and finance, and at the western end, the temple of what worldly men understand by the term Religion. The sky is webbed by wire and streets are choked with traffic—motor buses, taxis, private cars. The ears receive an artillery of brakes and gears, horns, hoofs, wheels and voices. The shop of a music-dealer gushes forth music which is being played two hundred miles away.

At either end are Tube stations and subways, and at intervals, traffic lights, yellow crossing beacons and bus-stops, neon signs and shops for every need.

Try to visualise the same Cheapside over five hundred years ago—a broad street with wooden houses one storey high and without chimneys, all brightly-coloured and most of them displaying a gilded pendant sign. At one end was the "Standard," in the middle the Conduit and at the other end the Cross, which was brightly gilded; the whole breadth roughly laid with stones. Then, as now, at one end a temple to St. Paul and at the other, a rendezvous for merchants. And where it now has arc-lights suspended over the road by cables, it then had lanterns slung across on ropes of straw. At that time shops were closed after sunset and household lights were dimmed, but as centuries passed and lighting became essential to public order, new means of lighting were discovered and London became brighter; the lights glittering and glowing in the sky.

Cheapside was London's most important street and held the essence of London of most of the early periods. Up to the eighteenth century its daily scene was a pageant of contrasted characters who exhibited their contrast in their dress, deportment and speech. The Cheapside of everyday

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