

Interesting original ... notices of the cholera morbus, amongst which are the orders and regulations of the Privy Council [proposed by the Board of Health] ... letters and papers ... by J. Johnson ... and S. Blandford ... To which are added ... notices respecting the Great Plague ... in 1665.

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INTERESTING

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED

NOTICES

OF THE

CHOLERA MORBUS,

AMONGST WHICH ARE

THE ORDERS AND REGULATIONS OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL,
EDITORIAL ARTICLE FROM THE LONDON MEDICAL GAZETTE
ENTITLED, "CAN THE CHOLERA BE EXCLUDED OR
CONFINED?"

LETTERS AND PAPERS ON THE SUBJECT BY J. JOHNSON, M.D
AND SILAS BLANDFORD, SURGEON, R.N.

FROM THE MORNING CHRONICLE, THE EXAMINER, THE
WESTMINSTER REVIEW, THE NEWS, THE SPECTATOR,
THE LIVERPOOL MERCURY, &c.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

INTERESTING NOTICES

RESPECTING THE

GREAT PLAGUE IN LONDON

IN 1665.

LIVERPOOL: PRINTED BY E. SMITH AND CO. LORD STREET.
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EDITORIAL PREFATORY NOTE.

IN prefacing our pamphlet with the alarming article from the *London Gazette*, we must not suppress our opinion, that it was injudicious to give general publicity to such a document, without some accompanying comments calculated to abate the panic which its perusal is likely to produce, especially in the minds of the ignorant, the timid, and nervous.

Since these regulations may be considered as an official document, we thought it incumbent upon us to give them a place in our little work ; but, in so doing, we take the opportunity to apprise our readers, that they will, in the course of this pamphlet, find some observations which can hardly fail to counteract the alarm which the *Gazette* regulations will, in all probability, inspire. The *London Courier*, in which the letters of Dr. Johnson were inserted, contained some very judicious editorial remarks on the subject of the Cholera panic.

“ If the calamity must visit this country,” says the editor, “ let us be prepared to meet it ; but let us not have our nerves shaken by a medical bugbear, sanctioned by the College of Physicians, and crowned with the official chaplet of the *Royal Gazette*.”

We shall conclude our prefatory note with this further extract from the *Courier* :—“ We recommend

to the attentive perusal of our readers a letter from the pen of Dr. James Johnson, one of the King's Physicians, on the subject of cholera. Dr. Johnson is, from his long acquaintance with the disease in India, and, from his high standing here as a physician, a better authority, perhaps, than any other in this country, and it is not very creditable to the Board of Health to have put forth their opinions publicly without having consulted that gentleman. If Dr. Johnson and other medical men of practical knowledge in such matters had been required to take part in the deliberations of the Board of Health, we should not have had six columns of the *Gazette* filled with recommendations calculated to create unnecessary alarm, and borrowed as it seems, in a great measure, from the regulations which existed at the time of the great plague."

In the course of the following pages there are several editorial articles from the *Liverpool Mercury*, and other journals, the object of which is to shew the great improbability that this country will ever again experience a dreadful visitation similar to that which is generally styled "The Great Plague in London."

THE CHOLERA MORBUS.

(FROM THE LONDON GAZETTE.)

AT the Council Chamber, Whitehall, the 20th day of October, 1831, by a Committee of the Lords of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council. Their Lordships this day took into consideration certain rules and regulations proposed by the Board of Health, for the purpose of preventing the introduction and spreading of the disease, called Cholera Morbus, in the United Kingdom, together with an account of the symptoms and treatment of the said disease: and were pleased to order that the same be printed and published in *The Gazette*, and circulated in all the principal ports, creeks, and other stations of the said United Kingdom, with a view that all persons be made acquainted therewith, and conform themselves thereto.

W. S. BATHURST.

1. The measures of external precaution for preventing the introduction of the cholera morbus by a rigorous quarantine have hitherto been found effectual, but as the disease approaches the neighbouring shores, not only is the necessity of increased vigilance more apparent, but it is also consistent with common prudence that the country should be prepared to meet the possible contingency of so dreaded a calamity. The intention of the following observations, therefore, is to submit to the public such suggestions as it appears to the Board of Health should either be immediately acted upon, or so far carried into operation as that, in any case, the country should not be found uninformed as to the best means of providing for its internal protection. To effect the prevention of the introduction of the disorder, the most active co-operation, not only of the local authorities along the coast in the

measures of Government, but likewise the exercise of the utmost caution by all the inhabitants of such parts of the country becomes indispensably necessary. The quarantine regulations established by the Government are sufficient, it is confidently hoped, to prevent the disorder from being communicated through any intercourse with the Continent in the regular channel of trade or passage, but they cannot guard against its introduction by means of the secret and surreptitious intercourse which is known to exist between the coast of England and the opposite shores.

2. By such means this fatal disorder, in spite of all quarantine regulations, and of the utmost vigilance on the part of Government, might be introduced into the United Kingdom; and it is clear that this danger can only be obviated by the most strenuous efforts on the part of all persons of any influence to put a stop to such practices, the utmost exertions should be used to effect this end. The magistrates, the clergy, and all persons resident on the coast, it is hoped, will endeavour to impress upon the population of their different districts (and particularly of the retired villages along the sea shore) the danger to which they expose themselves by engaging in illicit intercourse with persons coming from the Continent; and should appeal to their fears in warning them of the imminent risk which they incur by holding any communication with smugglers and others, who may evade the quarantine regulations. To meet the other objects adverted to in the introduction, namely, to prepare for the possible contingency of the country being visited by this disorder, as well as to assist in its prevention, it is recommended, that in every town and village, commencing with those on the coast, there should be established a Local Board of Health, to consist of the chief and other magistrates, the clergymen of the parish, two or more physicians or medical practitioners, and three or more of the principal inhabitants; and one of the medical members should be appointed to correspond with the Board of Health in London. Every large town should be divided into districts, having a district committee of two or three members, one of whom should be of the medical profession, to watch over its health, and to give the earliest information to the Board of Health in the town, whose instructions they will carry into effect.

3. As the most effectual means of preventing the spreading of any pestilence, has always been found to be the immediate separation of the sick from the healthy, it is of the utmost importance that the very first cases of cholera which may appear, should be made known as early as possible; concealment of the sick would not only endanger the safety of the public, but (as success in the treatment of the cholera has been found mainly to depend on medical assistance having been given in the earliest stage of the disease) would likewise deprive the patient of his best chance of recovery.

4. To carry into effect the separation of the sick from the healthy, it would be very expedient that one or more houses should be kept in view in each town or its neighbourhood, as places to which every case of the disease, as soon as detected, might be removed, provided the family of the affected person consent to such removal, and, in case of refusal, a conspicuous mark ("Sick") should be placed in front of the house, to warn persons that it is in quarantine; and even when persons with the disease shall have been removed, and the house shall have been purified, the word "Caution" should be substituted, as denoting suspicion of the disease; and the inhabitants of such house should not be at liberty to move out or communicate with other persons, until, by the authority of the Local Board, the mark shall have been removed. In some towns it may be found possible to appropriate a public hospitable for this purpose; or, should any barrack exist in the neighbourhood, it might, under the authority of the Commander of the forces, be similarly applied.

5. Wherever it may be allowed to remove the sick from their own habitations to the previously selected and detached buildings, the houses from which they have been so removed, as well as the houses in which the sick have chosen to remain, should be thoroughly purified in the following manner:—Decayed articles, such as rags, cordage, papers, old clothes, hangings, should be burnt, filth of every description removed, clothing and furniture should be submitted to copious effusions of water, and boiled in a strong ley; drains and privies thoroughly cleansed by streams of water and chloride of lime; ablution of wood work should be performed by a strong ley of soap and water; the walls of the house, from the cellar to the garret, should be hot lime-washed, all loose and decayed

pieces of plastering should be removed. Free and continued admission of fresh air to all parts of the house and furniture should be enjoined for at least a week. It is impossible to impress too strongly the necessity of extreme cleanliness and free ventilation; they are points of the very greatest importance, whether in the houses of the sick, or generally as a measure of precaution.

6. It is recommended that those who may fall victims to this formidable disease, should be buried in a detached ground in the vicinity of the house, that may have been selected for the reception of cholera patients. By this regulation it is intended to confine as much as possible every source of infection to one spot; on the same principle, all persons who may be employed in the removal of the sick from their own houses, as well as all those who may attend upon cholera patients in the capacity of nurses, should live apart from the rest of the community. It should here be observed, that the fewer the number of persons employed in these duties the better, as then the chance of spreading the infection by their means will be diminished.

7. Wherever objections arise to the removal of the sick from the healthy, or other causes exist to render such a step not advisable, the same prospect of success in extinguishing the seeds of the pestilence cannot be expected. Much, however, may be done, even in these difficult circumstances, by following the same principles of prudence, and by avoiding all unnecessary communication with the public out of doors; all articles of food, or other necessities required by the family, should be placed in front of the house, and received by one of the inhabitants of the house, after the person delivering them shall have retired.

8. Until the time during which the contagion of cholera lies dormant in the human frame has been more accurately ascertained, it will be necessary, for the sake of perfect security, that convalescents from the disease, and those who have had any communication with them, should be kept under observation for a period of not less than twenty days. The occupiers of each house where the disease may occur or be supposed to have occurred, are enjoined to report the fact immediately to the Local Board of Health in the town where they reside, in order that the professional member of such board may imme-

diately visit, report, and, if permitted to do so, cause the patient to be removed to the place allotted for the sick. In every town the name and residence of each of the members of the District Committee should be fixed on the doors of the Church, or other conspicuous place.

9. All intercourse with any infected town and the neighbouring country must be prevented by the best means within the power of the magistrates, who will have to make regulations for the supply of provisions; but such regulations are intended only for extreme cases; and the difficulty of carrying such a plan into effect on any extended scale will undoubtedly be great; but, as a precaution of great importance, it is most essential that it should be an object of consideration, in order to guard against the spreading of infection.

10. Other measures, of a more coercive nature, may be rendered expedient for the common safety, if, unfortunately, so fatal a disease should ever show itself in this country in the terrific way in which it has appeared in various parts of Europe; and it may become necessary to draw troops, or a strong body of police, around infected places, so as utterly to exclude the inhabitants from all intercourse with the country; and we feel sure, that what is demanded for the common safety of the State, will always be acquiesced in with a willing submission to the necessity which imposes it. The Board particularly invites attention to a fact confirmed by all the communications received from abroad, namely, that the poor, ill-fed, and unhealthy part of the population, and especially those who have been addicted to drinking spirituous liquors, and indulgence in irregular habits, have been the greatest sufferers from this disease; and that the infection has been most virulent, and has spread more rapidly and extensively in the districts of towns where the streets are narrow and the population crowded, and where little or no attention has been paid to cleanliness and ventilation. They are aware of the difficulty of removing the evils referred to, but they trust that attention thus awakened will ensure the most active endeavours of all magistrates, resident clergymen, and persons of influence or authority, to promote their mitigation: and as the amount of danger and the necessity of precaution may become more apparent, they will look with increased confidence to the individual exertions of those who may be enabled to employ them beneficially in furtherance of the suggestions above stated.

BOARD OF HEALTH, COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

October 20, 1831.

The following are the early symptoms of the disease in its most marked form, as it occurred to the observation of Dr. Russel and Dr. Barry, at St. Petersburg, corroborated by the accounts from other places where the disease has prevailed:—

Giddiness, sick stomach, nervous agitation, intermittent, slow, or small pulse, cramps beginning at the tops of the fingers and toes, and rapidly approaching the trunk, give the first warning. Vomiting or purging, or both these evacuations of a liquid like rice water or whey, or barley water, come on; the features become sharp and contracted, the eye sinks, the look is expressive of terror and wildness; the lips, face, neck, hands, and feet, and soon after the thighs, arms, and whole surface assume a leaden, blue, purple, black, or deep brown tint, according to the complexion of the individual, varying in shade with the intensity of the attack. The fingers and toes are reduced in size, the skin and soft parts covering them are wrinkled, shrivelled, and folded; the nails put on a bluish pearly white; the larger superficial veins are marked by flat lines of a deeper black; the pulse becomes either small as a thread, and scarcely vibrating, or else totally extinct. The skin is deadly cold, and often damp, the tongue always moist, often white and loaded, but flabby and chilled like a piece of dead flesh. The voice is nearly gone; the respiration quick, irregular, and imperfectly performed. The patient speaks in a whisper. He struggles for breath, and often lays his hand on his heart to point out the seat of his distress.— Sometimes there are rigid spasms of the legs, thighs, and loins. The secretion of urine is totally suspended; vomiting and purgings, which are far from being the most important or dangerous symptoms, and which, in a very great number of cases of the disease, have not been profuse, or have been arrested by medicine early in the attack, succeed. It is evident that the most urgent and peculiar symptom of this disease is the sudden depression of the vital powers; proved by the diminished action of the heart, the coldness of the surface and extremities, and the stagnant state of the whole circulation. It is important to advert to this fact, as pointing

out the instant measures which may safely and beneficially be employed where medical aid cannot be immediately procured. All means tending to restore the circulation and maintain the warmth of the body should be had recourse to without delay. The patients should always immediately be put to bed, wrapt up in hot blankets, and warmth should be sustained by other external applications, such as repeated frictions with flannels and camphorated spirits; poultices of mustard and linseed (equal parts) to the stomach, particularly where pain and vomiting exist; similar poultices to the feet and legs, to restore their warmth. The returning heat of the body may be promoted by bags containing hot salt or bran applied to different parts of it. For the same purpose of restoring and sustaining the circulation, white wine whey, with spice, hot brandy and water, or sal volatile, in the dose of a teaspoonful in hot water, frequently repeated, or from five to twenty drops of some of the essential oils, as peppermint, cloves, or cajeput, in a wine glass of water, may be administered; with the same view, where the stomach will bear it, warm broth with spice may be employed. In very severe cases, or where medical aid is difficult to be obtained, from twenty to forty drops of laudanum may be given in any of the warm drinks previously recommended. These simple means are proposed as resources in the incipient stage of the disease, where medical aid has not yet been obtained. In reference to the further means to be adopted in the treatment of this disease, it is necessary to state, that no specific remedy has yet been ascertained; nor has any plan of cure been sufficiently commended by success to warrant its express recommendation from authority. The Board have already published a detailed statement of the methods of treatment adopted in India, and of the different opinions entertained as to the use of bleeding, emetics, calomel, opium, &c. There is reason to believe that more information on this subject may be obtained from those part of the Continent where the disease is now prevailing; but even should it be otherwise, the greatest confidence may be reported in the intelligence and zeal which the medical practitioners of this country will employ in establishing an appropriate method of cure.

HENRY HALFORD,
President of the Board.

In reference to the preceding *Gazette* regulations, the editor of the *Spectator* makes the following judicious remarks :

“Instead of a set of rules, which we fear will be found wholly impracticable, and a description of symptoms, with which the whole of the reading public are theoretically as conversant as himself, and a catalogue of medicines, good to be kept as preventives, which had been published in all the newspapers many months before it obtained the sanction of his name, we regret that Sir Henry Hallford did not furnish us with a few plain facts by which to regulate the extent of our apprehensions, which are always greater as their object is undefined. Without entering on the *vexato questio* of infection and contagion, we may remark, that until the cholera reached Europe, no one among the most zealous of the contagionists had ever thought of any such restrictions on personal liberty as Sir Henry Hallford commands rather than recommends. Since its arrival in Europe, there has been in Russia, in Hungary, at Berlin, at Vienna, and elsewhere, a numerous array of expedients, in the shape of quarantines, cordon sanitaires, &c. to prevent the admission and spread of the disease ; and, what is specially worthy of notice, in every case, the precautions, after being productive of great public inconvenience, have been abandoned, not as useless merely, but as tending to aggravate the evil against which they were directed. We believe also (at least such seems to be the fact established in the various reports) that as long as the severe precautions alluded to were observed, and as long as by their agency the minds of the ignorant were subject to the agitation of a constantly expected attack, so long did cholera continue to rage ; and that no sooner were the precautions abandoned, and the fears of the public got a breathing space, than the disease abated in its virulence. Again, it seems established beyond doubt or question, that cholera, in Asia and in Europe, has selected its victims chiefly from among the badly fed, the dissipated, the diseased ; that temperate and regular livers have uniformly escaped. It seems also established, that though the disease has been very deadly where it did attack, yet the proportion of the whole deaths to the whole population, in places that it has visited, has been very small. It is even asserted, that the abstinence practised at Moscow, as a preventive, not only kept the people from the cholera, but from other diseases, to such a degree, that while cholera raged

in that city, the number of deaths was, on the whole, less than usual! Now, let us see for a moment what would be the result of that system of isolation which Sir Henry Halford recommends. It would inflict the most grievous injury on individuals. Who is to report the cases? An ignorant parochial officer—one of the worthies that John Reeve so humorously personates on the stage. Who is to investigate them? A local board, which, in the nature of things, would always condemn the patient, because, the grand object of the regulation being prevention, where that object was attained a little extra precaution could do no ill. For every disease, then, to which humanity is obnoxious, let it ever so remotely resemble cholera, we would have a family condemned to one of two alternatives, either to send a beloved child or parent to a public hospital, where they would never be permitted to look on him again, alive or dead; or to be imprisoned within their dwelling-place for not less than three weeks, and possibly for a much longer period. We have no objection, be it recollected, to any precaution, however cruel it may appear, provided it be shown to be necessary. But if it be established, as we think it is, that for the reception of the infection of cholera a certain habit of body is requisite, why should we be called on to form hospitals, to shut up houses, to draw cordons, to introduce dismay, misery, and confusion into every house, street, and town, in order to guard the healthy and abstinent public against that from which they are already guarded by nature much more effectually than all the resources of art? Again, if it be established, as we think it is, that depression of mind has a decided tendency to produce the habit of body which predisposes to cholera, was it not worthy of consideration, how far the zeal of the Medical Board, by the fears which it must generate, might increase this predisposition, and thus cause more disease than all the safeguards will prevent? We would not dogmatise on topics foreign to our ordinary studies; but in what we have now said, we have been merely reasoning on facts open to the whole of the public, and on which any one who has a judgment to exercise is as well qualified to speak as the most experienced among the Medical Board; who, in the case of the regulations that we have been discussing, do not, it must be borne in mind, speak of what they have seen, but merely of what has been told to them."

CAN CHOLERA BE EXCLUDED OR CONFINED ?



FROM THE LONDON MEDICAL GAZETTE.

Even before the words we now write have come before our readers, facts may have given a practical answer to our question; but, though we apprehend not so speedy a solution, our deliberate opinion is, that protection by exclusion, though within the range of possibility, and, therefore, to be attempted, is no longer within the pale of probable events. The destructive malady has now traversed nearly an eighth part of the earth's surface,—it has gone on heedless of man's contrivances,—it has baffled every human precaution,—it has come even from the banks of the Ganges, and approaches the *divisos orbe Britannos*; and now, that it is nearly upon our shores, it scarcely remains for us to say, “Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further !”

We must confess we have long since lost all confidence in the continental system of quarantine and cordons; so far as they might be supposed to protect the nations of Europe against the invader. Russia tried them amply, and to its cost; and, if any care was neglected, Prussia guarded cautiously against such neglect. Another powerful nation,—Austria, hoping to profit by the experience of both, followed their example in an amended form. Yet what has been the result? Why, Berlin and Vienna (which are even still struggling with the monster) were, after all, unable to protect themselves from his fatal ingress. Nay, the cordons of Vienna nearly occasioned a civil war; and at Berlin, where they were only maintained by the rigour of strong despotism, the King of Prussia was soon convinced of his mistake, and hastened to repeal those “sanitary laws” which experience taught him were so fruitless, so expensive, so ruinous to commerce, and so tyrannical. In his proclamation, dated from Charlottenburgh, Sept. 6, 1831, he complains, that “the Asiatic cholera had penetrated into his dominions in spite of measures the most rigorous, precautions the most active, and vigilance the most sustained, which had all proved useless and

unsuccessful in averting or even checking its progress." He adds, "and now, since the disease is in our kingdom, and the eyes of government have been opened by experience, I have ordered the rules, hitherto prevailing, to undergo a complete revision, and a conscientious examination as to all the circumstances worthy of being entertained, in order to arrive at a proper modification of those rules, partly from an acquaintance with the most approved modes of treating the disease, and partly from the exigencies of the occasion. The rigorous measures of isolation by cordons, established on the frontiers, and in the interior of the country, have hitherto acted *unfavourably* on the industrious habits of my people, and threaten, if they be maintained much longer, to destroy the comforts of numerous families, and, in short, to become *more ruinous to the country than the malady itself*." The Board of Health, at Berlin, was enjoined to publish forthwith such changes in the "rules" as their experience had suggested to be beneficial; while, meantime, the military cordons were almost everywhere discontinued, and such other restrictions as originated in the (so called) "sanitary laws," were considerably modified.

It is very remarkable, that at the very time the King of Prussia was taking these measures, dictated by his sad experience, and lopping off the heavy expense of cordons, the French minister was procuring a grant of a million from the Chambers to try all the same experiments over again; he was urging even then the salutary effects of *cordons sanitaires*, and insisting that sufficient precaution had not been taken wherever the disease had got admission. He took Prussia for his example. "The Russians, Poles, Hungarians, and Wallachians," said M. d'Argout, "have fallen victims to their own negligence—they have shown the most culpable contempt for the sanitary measures prescribed by the contagionists; while the Prussians, with persevering and most praiseworthy rigour, have followed up the ordinances of their government—they have spared no sacrifice—they have omitted no precaution—they have resisted the invasion of the disease—and behold their *most signal success!*" Even then, as we have said, the disease was settled in Berlin, and the king was abolishing the cordons. But the knowledge of this fact came too late, and the million was already voted.

To do the French justice, however, all their attention is not

now turned to frontier regulations; they seem to be rather intent upon the best method of grappling with the foe when he gets in amongst them; and they have profited considerably by the example of their continental neighbours.

And shall not we, then, weigh well the consequences before we adopt the strict enforcement of similar regulations? Shall we not consider cautiously the certain injury to trade, and the extremely doubtful advantages to the public health? For our own parts *we* have spoken; keep it out, if our fleets on the broad seas can accomplish this; but once among us, we have little faith in any attempt to lock it up, while the whole economy of society must be destroyed in the very attempt.

But if we cannot shut out this fierce intruder, it remains to be considered what we are to do with him when amongst us.—Can we hold him in durance? Can we make him our prisoner, and strangle him in his dungeon? Alas! we fear not. He has never yet been subdued in that way. He becomes more bloated and venomous by confinement; he thrives on the thick foul vapours of the lazar-house; he is the monster “that doth make the meat it feeds on.” We should beware, then, how we attempt to isolate the disease. Experience has shown that it has never yet been shut up, that it has not come forth from its confinement with increased severity; whilst, on the other hand, it is enfeebled and it languishes in the pure air of heaven. It will not be restrained; it cannot be extinguished; it is in progress; and we will be wise in suffering it, as far as may be, to “pass peaceably.” It will abide with us, we doubt not, in its progress; and it is to the event of that visitation that our attention should be principally turned. We repeat, that we can repose no faith in any measures taken for the exclusion of cholera, except the forlorn hope afforded by our quarantine; and we have no confidence in any means of arresting it, if once introduced, except on those which have for their immediate object the abolition of every thing like a *nidus* for its reception. It is in this respect, we think, that the labours of the Board of Health will be most usefully put in requisition. They cannot announce a specific remedy for the disease, because none exists, or at least has been discovered. It has become the fashion to censure this body, for no other reason, apparently, than that they have not afforded to the public “satisfactory information,” when there was nothing satis-

factory to give. Periodicals and journals may, without impropriety, publish every fact or suggestion as it occurs, for the public will estimate these for themselves; and we have been among the foremost to present them with the most interesting details. But the Board of Health are very differently situated; their first care must be, not to mislead. They must sift statements, to separate those which are solid; they must weigh conclusions, to ascertain their real value. To them the public anxiously look, as to an authority by which they are to be guided; and one premature recommendation might be productive of evil which could never be remedied. The public cannot be too strongly cautioned against the nostrums with which the press is overloaded; they are almost all the products of men writing in their closets, without having seen a solitary specimen of the disease. But, again, it has been said, and with great apparent reason—why are there not among them some who have seen the disease in India? and we confess, that so strong did this objection at first appear to us, that it seemed to be unanswerable. A more extensive acquaintance, however, with the accounts given by the Indian practitioners, and, in particular, the circumstance of their opinions having been, in some essential points, refuted by the history of the disease in Europe, have led us to doubt very much whether any advantage would have been derived from the assistance of these gentlemen in the Board. The doctrine that cholera is not contagious, held by the majority of the Indian practitioners, is rendered more than doubtful by its European invasion. The treatment by large doses of calomel and opium enjoined by most of them, has been tried, and found wanting. The opinions of the Indian practitioners may be of value as regards cholera in India; but the cholera in Europe has refused to conform itself to their views, and we therefore think it would not be prudent to be guided by their opinions. We cannot avoid the conclusion, that a set of intelligent men, with minds free from preconceived notions, and with no favourite theory to maintain, are more likely to arrive at safe conclusions. All the information that is to be had upon the subject the Board of Health possess; and they have availed themselves of the assistance of several intelligent men, who have seen the disease in Asia. They know that a trust of fearful responsibility is reposed in their hands, and that the eyes of

the public are anxiously fixed upon them. They number among them some of the most experienced and talented physicians of the metropolis, and they will soon have the co-operation of the enterprising men now on their return from Russia. While, therefore, we see fully the difficulty of their situation in a period of such alarm, and while we are satisfied that more is expected of them than, in the nature of things, they can effect, we feel assured that a general attention to the directions which—certainly not without due deliberation—they have issued, will do all which foresight can accomplish to mitigate the evil, should all efforts prove insufficient entirely to avert it.

RESUMÉ OF THE POLISH CHOLERA.

At a recent sitting of the French Academy of Medicine, M.M. Chamberet and Allibert, Members of the Warsaw Medical Commission, assisted; and upon being invited to give the meeting some account of the results of their experience, M. Chamberet rose and said:—That he had no doubt of the identity of the Polish and Indian cholera: that with regard to *symptomatology*, the most striking circumstances were the epigastric anxiety, the excessive and multiplied discharges from the stomach and bowels, the cramps, the sinking of the features, &c. The disease, he continued, suddenly attacked those who were apparently in the most perfect health. On the second or third day the nervous symptoms prevail: the patient is like one *deadly sea-sick*: he is in a state of idiotism. If, however, he gets over the fourth or fifth day, he will probably recover.

The great predisposing cause, M. Chamberet is of opinion, is a peculiar state of the atmosphere; but besides this, there are poverty, want of food, and frequently indigestion from surfeiting, which act as occasional causes. The Polish soldiers, who get their rations for three or four days at a time, gorge themselves on the first day, and thus expose themselves an easy prey to the disease.

With regard to the *morbid anatomy* of cholera, M. Chamberet states that inflammation of the digestive tube is never absent except when the malady has proved rapidly mortal.

The mucous membrane of the stomach and intestines is lined with a pultaceous liquid, of a greyish colour, mixed with mucous and alimentary matters. The liver is soft; and its membrane detachable with the greatest ease. The gall-bladder distended with a large quantity of greenish bile. The venous system is gorged with thick black blood; the urinary bladder generally empty, and contracted, sometimes to the size of a common nut; the meninges are generally injected; and a quantity of limpid, and sometimes bloody serum, is contained by the archnoid and rachidian membranes. As to *treatment*, numerous have been the articles of medicine employed, but all of them apparently with equal success. Calomel and nitrate of bismuth have been much lauded. Dr. Leo put twenty-two patients on the nitrate, and twenty of them died. Thirty were put on calomel, twelve of whom recovered, and the remaining eighteen died. But the approved method adopted by the committee was this:—bleeding; warm infusion; spirituous frictions; and sinapisms applied to a large portion of the surface of the body.

And as to the question of *contagion*, the whole body of the Polish physicians reject the doctrine *in toto*. The disease, it is true, broke out at Warsaw on the 10th of April, after a bloody engagement between the Poles and Russians, but weeks and months before this, it has been ascertained that the cholera prevailed sporadically in the country. One physician, in particular, distinctly noted three fatal cases; there is at least, then, some uncertainty about its origin. But it is remarkable that there were about a hundred physicians, French, English, and German, employed about the sick in Warsaw, none of whom suffered from the cholera; ten of them even inoculated themselves with the blood of choleric patients. Nor were the porters or nurses of the hospitals, nor the undertakers, less exempt from the disease than the physicians. M. Chamberet added, that he had never seen cases that had been left totally destitute of medical aid; but the physician-general had, and he affirmed that the mortality was not greater among them than among those who enjoyed medical assistance; and that mortality was, probably, on the whole, about fifty per cent.

The thanks of the Académie were voted to M. Chamberet for his very satisfactory communications.

FROM THE EXAMINER.

The progress of the cholera morbus on the Continent has excited very serious alarm in the minds of most persons, of the middle and higher classes of people in London. Should England escape the pestilence, we do not think we shall have to ascribe our deliverance to the talents of the medical officers of the Board of Health, or to any measures of which they are the authors. On another occasion, we shall, perhaps, have to make some observations on the composition and working of this Board. For the present we shall merely state some reasons why the bulk of the English people have, of all people in Europe, the least ground for apprehension. One great fact established, by all the evidence yet received, is, that, in every country which the pestilence has attacked, its ravages have been the greatest amongst those classes who live the worst,—who are badly fed—badly clothed—badly housed—or who are uncleanly or dissipated in their habits, and, consequently, debilitated in their persons. The court and aristocracy of Vienna are, perhaps, the most corrupt and dissipated in Europe; and it appears that amongst them the ravages of the cholera has been proportionate to their condition, nearly as great as amongst the poorer classes, whose debility is occasioned by want. A very considerable body of evidence might be adduced to prove that the bodily condition of every class of the English people is better, that is to say, that their pre-disposition to disease is less than that of the same classes of almost any people on the Continent. The best tables of mortality used for the insurance of lives show, that amongst the English people the average proportion of deaths is less than is found to occur amongst the people of any nation on the Continent, with respect to whom any tolerably accurate tables of mortality have been obtained. We happen to have before us a passage contained in the article on *Conder's Italy*, in the last number of the *Westminster Review*, and, for convenience of reference, we quote it in illustration of the difference:—

“The expectation of life for the whole mass of Britain is at least 1 in 45, which affords to all our classes a superiority of fifteen years above even the easy class of the Romans. ‘In an average,’ says Hawkins, ‘of the ten years, from 1816 to

1826, the annual mortality in Rome was 1 in $24\frac{1}{4}$: that out of every twenty-five individuals in the eternal city, one was annually buried. In Naples, the ratio of mortality is somewhat less, being 1 in $28\frac{1}{4}$ annually. Let us now look to London. The rate of mortality there is annually 1 in 40. In England generally, it is 1 in 60. In Paris, it is 1 in 32. In France generally, it is 1 in 40 (the same as London; and twenty more unfavourable than England.) In Nice, it is 1 in 31. In Glasgow, it is 1 in 44. In the Pays de Vaud, 1 in 49, or 11 more unfavourable than England generally.' (p. 264.) The insalubrious food of the inhabitants of France and Italy generally, and particularly during their many fasts, is exceedingly prejudicial to health."

To those who are acquainted with the subject of life insurance, it would appear a truism to state that the superior value of life is dependant on superior health and bodily condition. We have not an opportunity of referring to Hawkins' authorities; but the figures given may be taken to represent sufficiently well the relative value of life, that is, the relative operation of all the causes of mortality—the relative state of health, and predisposition to disease in the countries named. In all the places on the Continent where the cholera has not appeared, it is believed to be contagious; in all the places which it has ravaged, it is believed not to be contagious, but epidemic. No cordon will keep out the pestilence which comes in a cloud; and we should be glad if we could perceive conclusive evidence that the disease is contagious, rather than epidemic. It must be assumed, that the Board of Health is fully convinced that the disease is contagious; and, as the evidence must have been before them a considerable time, their conclusion cannot have been recently formed. Why then did they not, whilst Parliament was sitting, apply for the legislative sanction to enforce the sanitary regulations, even with the penalty of death? If the disorder is not contagious, but epidemic, many of their regulations, such as the shutting up of private families, will aggravate the evil. Defoe, in his "History of the Plague in London," gives an appalling picture of the suffering created by several of the old and inefficient plague regulations, which the Board appears to have copied.

FROM THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW.

The last number of *The Westminster Review* contains an article on "Spasmodic Cholera," replete with valuable practical information. The writer clearly leans to the opinion that the cholera is contagious as well as epidemic, and proceeds from an unfavourable condition of the earth. The following are among the remedies he prescribes for this formidable and extraordinary pestilence :—

"If the patient be seen as soon as he is attacked, a vein should be opened in the arm, and blood should be abstracted in proportion to the violence of the symptoms, and the powers of the patient. At the same time a pill, composed of twenty grains of calomel and two grains of solid opium, should be taken, and instantly followed by a draught composed of one ounce of camphor mixture, one drachm of laudanum, and one drachm of ether. The entire body, but more especially the extremities, should be rubbed with warm flannel, or flannel steeped in spirits of turpentine, and bottles containing hot water are to be applied to the feet. If these measures succeed in affording relief, the pill and draught may be repeated in the evening, and half an ounce of castor oil should be given on the following morning, after which, no further danger need be apprehended. But if the symptoms remain unabated, and, as often happens, no blood can be obtained by the lancet, from twenty to thirty leeches should be applied to the pit of the stomach; the pill and draught should be repeated every two hours, until the spasms relax; and, after the leeches have done bleeding, the bowels should be covered with a mustard poultice or a blister. As soon as bile appears in the evacuations, strong hopes of recovery may be entertained, and half a drachm of compound jalep powder, mixed up with two ounces of peppermint water, may then be given to solicit this secretion, and be repeated if necessary. The attack, if violent, seldom continues longer than from twelve to twenty hours; but inflammatory action is not unfrequently set up afterwards in the brain, stomach, or other important organs, which requires both skill and watchfulness. As medical assistance, however, can always be procured before the case has progressed so far, these accidental consequences may in general be avoided."

The following remarks are so much in accordance with the view we have taken of this subject in the *Liverpool Mercury*, that we have much pleasure in transcribing them :—

(FROM THE NEWS.)

We beg to draw the attention of our readers to the official document put forth by the Privy Council, respecting the disease called cholera morbus. That the publication of this paper is kindly and humanely intended, we readily admit; but we very much question its prudence at the present moment. Sure we are, that it will tend to hasten the departure of many a timid, nervous person, from this world unto (we hope) a better. We are old enough to recollect a proclamation, issued by the Pitt Administration, admonishing the people to provide against an apprehended famine. What was the consequence? The very famine it warned the public against;—for which it was afterwards proved there were hardly any other grounds than the fears of the Government, expressed in the publication of the proclamation. Under present circumstances, we are convinced that numerous cases of cholera will soon occur. Every little pain felt by nervous people will be transformed into an incipient of the disease; and many a complaint, which a dose of rhubarb tincture would safely remove, will be treated, *secundem artem, a la cholera*, and the patient thereby removed to another place. We must be allowed to add, that the English are, in general, a cleanly people. Whoever has travelled on the Continent, more especially in the countries where the disease has proved the most fatal, will agree with us, that it would be absurd to make a general comparison, in point of domestic food and cleanliness, between the Northmen and the English. We therefore doubt the prudence of the interference of Government at the present moment. If the plague of 1665 raged in the metropolis, more terrific injunctions could not be put forth than are contained in the document we are bidden to publish. Indeed, we think the Privy Council have referred to the registers of that period, and have transcribed them for the benefit of the victims of the plague; expected, or rather advertised for, in the year 1831.

IS THE CHOLERA INFECTIOUS?

Extract of a letter just received from Prague:—"The terrors of the pestilential touch of this demon of the East has vanished from amongst us. Notwithstanding our frequent intercourse with countries suffering under its visitation, Bohemia remains entirely free from infection. Numberless travellers, and goods of all descriptions continually arrive in our city from Vienna and other places where the cholera prevails, and yet no instance of the disease has occurred amongst us, although no letters are fumigated, no *cordons sanitaires* are maintained, and business proceeds throughout the country as if no such malady existed. What stronger proof against the opinions of the contagionists can be adduced?"—*London paper.*

 The following quiz from the *Court Journal* will amuse those of our readers who think with us that every fair means should be adopted to counteract the unreasonable panic which is at present so general.

THE IMPENDING PANIC.

If a sot or a gourmand's days be in any way dear to him, he will not fail to arm himself against his worst enemy with the means we are about to lay down. His first care must be to supply himself with a bandage of Indian-rubber, to pass round his whole body, after whitewashing; this he will guard externally with a circumvolving pitch-plaister; and then protect both by a roll of Welsh flannel, not less than thirty inches wide, and six yards long. Upon his breast he must wear a life-preserver, always charged with hot sand; and in lieu of a belcher and stiffner, a lamb's-wool cravat, stuffed with peppercorns, cayenne, and juniper-berries. His ears must be kept closed with two bags of cotton, saturated with camphor; he must never omit to suspend a vinaigrette with ether, musk, and thieves' vinegar to his nose; or to keep a sprig of rosemary between his teeth. Over the corporeal muniments we have pointed out, it will be as well for him to put on a shirt, provided he expose it three times a day to the action of chlorine fumigations; next to this he will wear a flannel waistcoat, the

warmth of which he must keep up by the application of heated tiles, independently of an additional vest, well padded with calx of chlorine; the thighs and legs must be defended with flannel trowsers, gathered into plaits, vigonia stockings, boiled in spice and vinegar, and the thickest livery cloth of kalmuc gaiters, stuffed with camphor, bismuth, or any other infallible preservative which the Board of Health in their wisdom may prescribe. But there will be little hope for him if he take a meal without first inhaling the fumes of carburetted hydrogen or carbonic acid gas. He must have his shoes made large enough to place flat receptacles for hot water under the soles of his feet; and as frequent renovations of the liquid may prove inconvenient, military or mud boots, lined with bear skin, over the whole will effectually prevent the invasion of frigid air. To the hollow of his back, and both arm-pits, he must not forget to attach flasks of hot water; or if a narrow-necked stone jar, hermetically corked, can be conveniently introduced, he will find it more effectual. He must let his hair grow, because Dr. Meyer has discovered that, if snipped, it becomes a cholera conductor; this rule applies both to the chin, whiskers, mustachios, and pericranium. Over the whole he will throw a sailor's watch-coat, but not before it has lain forty days in a solution of chlorine; and over this it is advisable he should wear a cloak of the coarsest camlet, lined with oilskin. His head should be shielded with the like. In his right-hand pocket he should carry about him a pound or two of rosemary, and half as much camphor; and in his left-hand pocket a pound or two of peppermint, and half as much camomile. Item, in the dexter pocket of his trowsers, a pint of cajeput oil; and in his sinister, a pint of spirits of camphorettered ether. His hat may be made a convenient receptacle for gelatine, well spiced, enough to carry a quart of broth; instead of a bamboo, he must carry the trunk of a juniper in his right hand, and the stump of an accacia in his left; it would be well, too, if he replaced his leathern fob with one of asbestos, since, by that means, he could wear a red-hot tile next the lower regions of the stomach. But he should never move abroad without trailing a little truck after him,* so that if in spite of all these precautions he should be

* Let him beware of delegating this office to any shaggy or hairy domestic, and above all, to his lady's poodle, seeing that every ringlet of his skin is an epidemic conductor.

glazed by contact with a choleric acquaintance, he should have an ample supply of new flannels, under and upper garments, scrubbing and rubbing-brushes, chlorine, vapour baths, tiles, camphor, warming-pans, and Ripley's Indorouses instantly at hand. We have omitted to add, that he should not move about without a mask of interlaced mint and sage, or guarding his mouth with a comforter, into which, to avoid expense, he may empty his pepper box and mustard-pot.

With inflexible attention to these guards and appliances, our friends may rest assured that they will be the first to shake hands with the cholera, and laugh at

ALL THE TALENTS OF THE FACULTY.

[LETTER I.]

ON THE CONTAGION OF CHOLERA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

SIR,—About four months ago you did me the favour to insert a letter on the subject of cholera, at a time when a great panic prevailed. Nothing has since happened to disturb the prognostication which I then ventured to give. But the tocsin of alarm is now again resounding through these isles, and the picture which is drawn of the contagious character of cholera is enough to frighten the multitude from their just propriety. Your correspondent, Mr. Pearl, (Tuesday, 26th,) has disseminated through the country a partial account of the history of cholera contagion, (and that from a single source,) with all the confidence which usually attends a paucity of information. I beg to draw the attention of some of your readers to some of the facts, or rather allegations, of this writer. He tells us that the cholera broke out at Jessore, 100 miles from Calcutta, in August, 1817, and “spreading from village to village, it reached that city a month afterwards.” See what Mr. Kennedy, a decided contagionist, says on that point of history. At page 20, he says—and the information is taken from official documents—that the cholera commenced its ravages at Jessore, sixty-two miles from Calcutta, in August—the report to Government being dated the 28th of that month. And what sort of place is Jessore? “It is a crowded,

dirty, ill-ventilated place, surrounded by a thick jungle, and exposed, during the rains, to the effluvia of an immense quantity of stagnant water." In a few weeks 10,000 of the inhabitants died! Well! what of Calcutta? "Many cases of cholera," says Mr. Kennedy, "had occurred in Calcutta among the native inhabitants, as early as the middle of August," but it was near the end of the month before the disease became very alarming. With respect to the introduction of the disease from Jessore, Mr. Kennedy remarks,—“The question raised is of little interest, for in Jessore and in Calcutta the condition of the people and of the atmosphere must have been very similar, and the probability follows that sooner or later a similar disease would have been generated in both, though no intercourse had existed between them.” So much for the dogmatical assertion of Mr. Pearl, that the cholera crept from village to village for “100 miles,” and that in the space of a few days, or rather hours, since the disease broke out simultaneously, or very nearly so, in both places, according even to Mr. Kennedy, the strong advocate of contagion. All the sturdy statements in Mr. Pearl’s letter respecting the propagation of cholera in India are on a par with the above, and to these I shall oppose a single passage from an official report respecting the grand army under the Marquis of Hastings, encamped on the banks of the Ganges, in November, 1817. “The disease, as it were in an instant, gained fresh vigour, and burst forth with irresistible violence in every direction. Unsubjected to the laws of contact and proximity of situation, it outstripped the plague in the width of its range and fatality.” And how was this terrific malady stayed? The army merely “crossed the clear stream of the Bitwah, and upon its high and dry banks, at Erich, got rid of the pestilence, and met with returning health.” Here there was no purification, no quarantine, no segregation of the sick. Yet a trifling change of air, from an unhealthy to a healthy site, put an end to the contagion! But then of what value is this official document, when put in opposition to the dictum of a country surgeon, at Diss, in Norfolk, who never saw the disease, and never had his foot in any country where it existed?

As to the exportation of cholera from Hindostan to the Mauritius, in the *Topaze* frigate, it is one of the grossest im-

positions on the credulity of mankind that ever was foisted on the public ear. A ship sails from India in health, has a few of her crew affected by cholera while crossing the Line, arrives at the Isle of France in perfect health, and instantly spreads an epidemic disease through the island ! This is too bad.

But let us leave Asia and come nearer home. Cholera first appeared at Orenburg, on the river Ural, on the 26th of August, 1829, one thousand miles north of Tabreez, where it prevailed only seven years previously ! It was found quite impossible to trace the introduction of the disease into Orenburg. The caravans, the rivers, the roads, were, as usual, suspected by the contagionists ; but none of them could be proved guilty. The last caravan arrived thirty-five days before the disease broke out, and the travellers were in perfect health. The contagionists then suspected some half savage tribes of Kerghis-Kalsacks, who led a wandering life on the opposite side of the Ural, and who have an effectual recipe for cholera and all other diseases, namely, that of instantly abandoning any one who falls sick to starve and die on the naked earth ! In fourteen days after breaking out at Orenburg, the cholera suddenly burst forth at Rasupna, sixty miles of Orenburg, without any villages on the line of communication being infected.

Let us now come to Moscow. Dr. Albers, at the head of a medical commission from the Prussian Government, reports (March, 1831) that "when cholera first reached Moscow, all the physicians of that city were persuaded of its contagious nature ; but the experience gained in the course of the epidemic produced an entirely opposite conviction."—*English Parliamentary Reports*. "In many houses," continues Dr. Albers, "it happened that one individual attacked by cholera was attended indiscriminately by all the relatives, and yet the disease did not spread to any of the inmates." The nurses remained free from the distemper, daily visiting with their friends, "without in the least communicating the disease."—*ib.* The Doctor shrewdly remarks, that "all those who stand up for contagion have not witnessed the disease."—*ib.*

Among those who did not see the disease, but who vouched strongly for its contagious character, is Sir William Crichton. The inaccuracies (I will not call them mis-statements) in his reports are numerous. I need only mention one as a sample.

He boldly avers that "the first who died of cholera, wherever it appeared, were individuals who arrived from infected places." This is diametrically opposite to fact. The first victims at Orenburg not only were natives of the place, but had no communication with strangers from other places. Sir William tells us that it was not ascertained who was the first individual who died of cholera in Moscow; but he makes up for this lack of proof by supposing that the first victim was a student, who had leave of absence from Saratof.

In the report of a committee on cholera in Moscow, by order of the Russian Emperor, we are told (*English Parliamentary Report*) that "at the opening of bodies of persons who had died of the cholera, to the minute inspection of which four or five hours a day, for nearly a month, were devoted, neither those who attended at these operations, nor any of the assisting physicians, nor any of the attendants, caught the infection, though scarcely any precaution was used."—*ib.* The story of the fifteen labourers attacked with cholera on opening a pack of hemp at Riga, is now acknowledged to be a notorious falsehood; and all your readers know that cholera broke out at Hamburgh in a "deep cellar," filled with abandoned characters and abominable filth. Mr. Searle, an Indian practitioner, who saw the disease on an extensive scale in the East, and suffered from it in person, went to Moscow, and lived in the hospitals there. He declares his conviction that cholera is not contagious. All, or almost all, cordons and quarantines have been abolished in those countries where the epidemic has been witnessed, and the disease is not now half so much dreaded at Hamburgh, as when it was no nearer them than Moscow. Finally, by a demi-official communication in last Saturday's *Medical Gazette*, it appears that Drs. Russell and Barry have come to the conclusion that cholera is not communicable by goods or clothes, but only by persons actually labouring under the disease. From the same source we learn that there is a German colony on the Nova, thirteen versts from St. Petersburg, where the houses are detached in gardens, and the surrounding country highly cultivated. Thither some persons fled on cholera appearing in the capital. "One of these, a female, took the disease, and died of it; but it did not spread, no other instance of it having occurred, though her bed seems afterwards to have been used."—*Medical Gazette.*

"Indeed, there are many instances in which the beds and clothes of those who have died seem to have been made use of with impunity." Again—"At the Foundling Hospital a good many children died of cholera, and several nurses had it; and it is a curious fact, that when any of these last, who were suckling, had the disease, so as to render it necessary for the infant to be given to another nurse, none of those who gave the breast in this way became affected with cholera, although, in many instances, the infant's clothes were not changed."—Letters from Drs. Russell and Barry, *Medical Gazette*, Oct. 22, 1831.

Is this, Mr. Editor, the frightful contagion which is to sever the finest ties of humanity, and make man dread his species more than he does the lions or tigers of the woods? Is the unmanly, perhaps chimerical, dread of this contagion trumpeted forth by terrorists through all parts of empire, to make us desert and fly from our friends or neighbours when stricken with the pestilence, and when they stand most in need of consolation and assistance? The ultra-fear of this contagion will do more; it will paralyze commerce, arrest manufactures, and throw tens of thousands into that indigence and despondency which are the most powerful predisponents and auxiliaries of contagion, if contagion exist! That a focus of infection may be generated occasionally in deep cellars, and the crowded hovels of poverty, I do not doubt. The same takes place every year with fevers and other diseases. But that the germs of cholera can be thence carried by individuals in health throughout this country, I will not believe, because it is contrary to experience. The conductors of the daily and weekly press incur a fearful responsibility by lending their aid in sounding the tocsin of alarm, and thus generating an atmosphere of terror around every individual; an atmosphere which will render contagion, if it exist, ten times more virulent; and if it exist not, will render the individual ten times more susceptible to the inscrutable cause of the pestilence!

I leave it, Sir, to your humanity and to your judgment whether or not it may be just and philanthropic to disseminate the antidote, after having given diffusion to the poison of contagion. The most recent conclusions to which our medical officers (Drs. Russell and Barry) have come, now limit the contagious character of cholera to an extremely narrow point,

and after four months I have no hesitation in reiterating my opinion, that if cholera come to these shores, it will come shorn of its fatality, and coercible to a degree that will make the terrorists ashamed of their ominous predictions and their visionary speculations. JAMES JOHNSON, M.D.

Suffolk-place, Pall Mall, Oct. 27, 1831.

[LETTER II.]

TO THE EDITOR OF THE LONDON COURIER.

SIR,—Before entering on a consideration of the sanatory code, promulgated by authority, you will perhaps allow me space for one more short letter on the subject of CONTAGION. It is upon the *outrageous* estimate which is formed of this character of cholera, real or supposed, that almost the whole of the sanatory code is based. It is stated recently, in a journal of great respectability, that during a period of the late epidemic cholera in Berlin, 409 houses were visited by the disease, and that in 273 of these, only *one* individual in each house was affected, while in the remaining 136 four or five suffered in each mansion. Such is the density of population in the parts of Berlin infected with cholera, that the calculation assigns 4,200 families, making an average of four persons to each family, in the above number of houses, being an aggregate of 16,800 people, who had lived in *immediate contact* with cholera. Of this mass 763 were stricken with the disease, or about one in eighteen persons. Thus we find that, in a great majority of the houses, only *one* person was attacked, though the computation allots an average of 48 individuals to each house. This density of population will not surprise those who know the height of houses on the Continent, and the multitude of people who are compressed into a very narrow space. But the above statistical report, if it approach to any thing like correctness, must convince every unbiassed mind that, if contagion be a component part of cholera, it is a fraction that scarcely deserves to be taken into calculation by the medical or the political observer. Every one knows the vigilance of the police and the rigour of the Prussian Government in enforcing every precaution emanating from quarantine and *cordon sanitaires*. Let us now hear the result, and that from the lips of a paternal Sovereign. The King of Prussia, in a proclamation dated Sep. 16, 1831, bewails that

"the Asiatic cholera had penetrated into his dominions in spite of measures the most rigorous, precautions the most active, and vigilance the most sustained, which had all proved useless and unsuccessful in averting or even checking its progress. And now," says his Majesty, "since the disease is in our kingdom, and *the eyes of Government have been opened by experience*, I have ordered the rules hitherto prevailing to undergo a complete revision. The rigorous measures of *isolation by cordons*, established on the frontiers, and in the interior of the country, have hitherto acted *unfavourably* on the industrious habits of my people, and threaten, if they be maintained much longer, to destroy the comforts of numerous families, and, in short, to become *more ruinous to the country than the malady itself*."

The above document, Sir, is tolerably strong; but to those who are sceptical as to the sincerity of emanations from the Throne, I would submit a document from science. In a recent sitting of the Royal Academy in Paris, Drs. Chamberet and Allibert, members of the Warsaw Medical Commission, publicly declared that *the whole body of the Polish physicians rejected the doctrine of contagion in cholera in toto*. They state that there were about a hundred physicians, French, English, and German, employed about the sick in Warsaw, *not one of whom caught the cholera*. Ten of them even inoculated themselves with the blood of cholera patients, without *success*. The porters, the nurses of the hospital, and the undertakers were equally exempted from the disease.

To this, Sir, I beg to add the testimony of Mr. Searle, who went to Warsaw, and sojourned in the hospitals there during the epidemic—a gentleman who actually suffered in person from cholera in India, and who wrote a treatise on the disease before it visited this part of Europe. His words are these, dated in Warsaw:—"After all I have heard, either in India or Poland,—after all I have read, seen, or thought upon the subject,—I arrive at this conclusion, *that the disease is not contagious*."

Weighing all these circumstances, Sir, and bearing in mind that the Russian Autocrat (with men as mute as marble, and yet as ductile as wax, to execute all quarantine restrictions) has long given up his cordons, his fumigations, and his purifications,—recollecting that the cold, the cautious, and the calcu-

ting Metternich found it more difficult to arrest the march of cholera than the march of intellect in the Austrian States, and consequently gave up the attempt, after nearly inducing a civil war,—I think I have adduced fair grounds for opposing experience to prejudice, facts to theory, and reason to terror. But before concluding this letter, I beg to say that I deny not the *possibility* of a disease, *originally and ordinarily devoid of a contagious character*, becoming *infectious*, under certain circumstances. It will be the object of another communication to show that the means resorted to by unwise and impolitic regulations, with the view of preventing the spread of a disease, are sometimes precisely those which are best calculated to give it activity, and to endow it with a destructive character which it did not primarily possess.

In this investigation, Sir, I shall not call in question the *motives* of any man, or of any body of men. I shall not impugn the judgment of any man; but I shall claim that liberty to which every Briton has an undoubted right, namely, that of calmly and philosophically weighing the merits of *opinions*, and the propriety of *practices*, whether they emanate from a high or a low rank in society. I shall appeal to the reason and not to the passions of the public; and to the tribunal of that public only do I hold myself amenable.

J. JOHNSON, M. D.

Suffolk-place, Nov. 2, 1831.

CHOLERA MORBUS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE LONDON COURIER.

SIR,—Instead of raising and promoting as much as possible fears and alarms in the public mind on the subject of this terrific disease, as is, at present, too much the fashion, it appears to me that medical men should, so far as they can consistently with the dreadful and dangerous nature of the complaint, endeavour to allay the now excited feeling regarding it; and it is with that view that I presume to obtrude, with your permission, through the medium of your valuable journal, a few observations for the public attention and consideration.

In the first place, the complaint is not, I assert, of an infectious nature, and by way of experimental proof of such my

assertion, I would not hesitate to wear the clothes of any respectable man who might have died of it—ay, allowing him to die in such clothes, and to, immediately after death, put them upon my own person, and wear them for any number of successive days. So much for infection. Then it will be naturally asked, what is the cause of the disease? There is a primary, an exciting, and an immediate cause of the cholera. The primary cause is generating in the system for some considerable time previously to the breaking out of the disease, and it requires an exciting cause to bring it into action, which is the peculiar state of the atmosphere, being powerfully noxious at the time it be brought in contact with the blood, by inhalation, the system being pre-disposed to be acted upon by it. The exciting cause so acting upon the primary, produces the immediate; and thus have we the disease called the cholera; and then follow all the distressing and dangerous symptoms and effects, which so suddenly and alarmingly develop themselves; and hence it is that those who indulge in excesses, particularly of spirituous liquors, are mostly victims to the malady. To lay down any specific rule or medicine for the cure of the cholera is impossible; there are no two cases precisely alike ever to be met with. The remedy which would effect a cure in one case might cause death in another; in treating it a medical man must be guided entirely by the existing symptoms and the general bodily health and strength of the patient. Stimulants are sometimes indispensably necessary, but at others just as much to be avoided.

The best and surest safeguard against the attack of cholera is to pay attention to the general health. No doubt external cleanliness is very desirable in promoting the comfort and vigour of the human frame; but it will not have the effect of warding off the cholera morbus. There is such a thing as internal filth, and this is the sort of rubbish most necessary to be cleared away to keep off the cholera, paying, at the same time, particular attention to the patient. Those in the apparently most robust and florid health are as subject to the influence of the disease as those whose appearances of health are diametrically opposite; indeed, more so, because the blood of persons in apparently extraordinary good and florid health is generally in an inflamed state.

I have had no trifling practical experience in this complaint, and on board ship in India, the instant it made its appearance, my attention was drawn as much to those of the crew, who had the appearance of being in good health, as to those who were suffering under the influence of the disease; and by this course I averted, in a great measure, its virulence, and nearly wholly so its mortality; and the same course promptly observed, either with an army of soldiers, or in any neighbourhood visited by the disorder, would, I have no doubt, be attended with the like beneficial result.

SILAS BLANDFORD, Surgeon, Royal Navy.

20, *Dover-street, Piccadilly*, Oct. 27, 1831.

PREVENTION OF CHOLERA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

SIR,—I pray you allow me, through the medium of your patriotic journal, to relieve myself from a compunction of conscience, not of selfishness, I assure you. I may tell you, Sir, that I am a man of proverbs; and that which says “an atom of practice is worth a volume of theory,” I very much approve.

I have read in your valuable paper Government measures for the prevention of the cholera: cleanliness, and a free ventilation, seem prominent features. Now, looking at the boundless uncleanness which pervade so many parts of this mightily increased metropolis, I am led to conclude, that it must have been by some miracle that we have hitherto been saved from that scourge which has made such devastation (recently, and in so many countries) on the human race.

It is not, Sir, inappropriate to my subject, that I should tell you, some time ago, in consequence of my garden having been robbed of linen, I accompanied a constable to the interior of that far and justly-famed St. Giles's; there, indeed, Mr. Editor, did I witness such a scene in Bainbridge-street, that sympathy compels me to spare you from the effect of a detail, persuaded as I am that it would not be surpassed in operation by a couple of scruples of ipecacuanha—enough there was to very soon induce me to relinquish all further pursuit of my stolen linen in that quarter. The number of

wretched creatures huddled, or rather crammed together in each and every house which I entered, exceeds belief; and the stagnant filth,—of this, for the reason I have assigned, as well as a respect for the feelings of your numerous readers, I must not say more, than it is only to be believed (to the extent) by being seen.

In passing the Southwark Bridge-road, there necessarily is seen the exterior of another place of distinction (of which there are so many in this far-famed London.) A mount of filth, only fenced from the road by boards about four feet high; and from the habitations I shall only say, “Good Lord, deliver us!” I think it is called “The Back of the Mint.”

We need “Reform,” and I pray God that we may soon have it. I am thinking, Mr. Editor, why not instantly set about a work so essential to our very existence, and sweep from the face of the metropolis all these pestiferous places—the very sort of places, we are told, which has given rise to the cholera in most of the places where it has made its ravages.

Building materials are cheap, and thousands of poor crave employment; then why not, on the sites of the places so prostrated, build “squares of health,” (a conduit in the centre) and the apartments secured from fire, as the Fleet, &c. under the guidance of “Officers of Health,” and consequent cleanliness, to meliorate the condition of the poor, and, above all, for the benefit of the community?*

Nuisances generally, both stationary and moving—that frequent filthy, disgusting sight, of the nacker’s cart, why not so simple a remedy, at least as a covering to it? If the acts of Parliament were as efficient of these, as some penal statutes are to informers, the great numbers would not exist with impunity as they now do, and are constantly increasing.

An indictment of one of these cost me £300, beside great personal risk to which I was exposed by a set of desperadoes, a slaughter-yard, and that, too, in one of the very principal streets of London; the offal stored for feeding numbers of pigs on the premises; of the effect you will judge.

True, I succeeded in the removal, but the cost, labour, length of time, and personal sacrifices were such, that I should on no account undertake, single-handed, such another task.

* Admirable materials for the historian? What an example to other countries! and, above all, what a benefit to our own!

I am, Sir, quite aware of the value of the columns of your journal, yet I have, for many years past, witnessed the readiness with which you have given insertion to matters that might possibly benefit the public; I have no other motive, and therefore I go a little further. The water is also quite legitimate of that important subject of health, which at this moment presses on the public attention.

Some time ago the Legislature entertained the matter, and demonstrations were given of its prejudicial commixture. I then verily anticipated an early change for the better, a water "void of savour or taste." Mine is the Thames water, and I have recently taken due care that the cistern be cleansed every week; yet, Sir, the sediment in that short time almost exceeds belief. There is also a something in this water so adhesive, that a glazed stone pitcher has a fur on its internal surface so firmly fixed, in a few days, as only to be removed by sharp friction.

Indeed, I have oft heard the watermen complain of a similar effect on their boats, and which they attribute to the gas water emptied into the Thames.

Another adage, Sir, and I conclude. Under the pending danger, I hope we shall not "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Monday.

J. G.

CHOLERA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

SIR,—The instructions issued by Government in the *Gazette* of last night, for the prevention of the cholera morbus, and the remedies proposed by the Board of Health in the event of its arrival in this country, are so judicious, that every method should be adopted for circulating the information as widely as possible, particularly among the poorer classes of the community. This cannot be effected in the limited circulation of the *Gazette*, to which few poor people have access. Among a variety of modes, I would suggest that a notice, containing the instructions and remedies, should be stuck up on the door of each parish church, workhouse, and police station in the metropolis, and along the eastern and south-eastern coasts. This might be enforced by a circular from the Home Office.

If you can find room for this communication, and will direct attention to it in some way or other, you will render a service to the public, and very much oblige, Sir, your most obedient servant,

MEDICUS.

Saturday, October 22.

F

REPORTED APPROACH OF THE CHOLERA MORBUS.

(From the *Liverpool Mercury* of October 28.

"You may as well kill a man outright as frighten him to death."—*Proverb.*

"Conceit will kill, and conceit will cure."—*Ibid.*

The apprehension that the cholera is gradually making its approach to our shores is gaining ground every day; it almost supersedes every other topic; and the circumstance is deeply to be regretted, as the panic it will occasion may produce consequences almost as serious as those which would result from the actual presence of the dreadful scourge itself.

It has been said that "it is cruel to probe the wound which cannot be healed," and we would add, that it is gratuitous wantonness to alarm a whole community with forebodings of the cholera, unless more good than evil were likely to result from the general diffusion of the disastrous tidings.

Some of our contemporaries, by a species of second sight, have announced that the cholera, in its progressive and devastating march, will reach our shores in a fortnight or three weeks at furthest.

With all due deference to these profound divers into futurity, we take leave to doubt the accuracy of their gloomy predictions, because that highly-gifted mortal, *Zadkiel, the Seer*, the seventh son of a seventh son, no doubt, and secondary only to the renowned Francis Moore, has not said one word on the subject in the last edition of his *Herald of Astrology*.

Let it not be for a moment imagined that we would make light of a dreadful visitation of Providence; nothing can possibly be more foreign to our thoughts and feelings; but we trust that we may be allowed, without the imputation of unbecoming levity, to deprecate the mischievous augury of those foreboders of calamity, who, as the song goes,

"Frighten our women, our children, our beaux,"

by their dismal croakings, which serve no other purpose than to disturb the slumbers of the timid and credulous, who form the majority of the community.

If it were even certain that the cholera would arrive to scourge us in a given time, we should doubt the propriety of publicly proclaiming the fact, as its knowledge would spread universal consternation and despondency, which would infallibly render the chance of escape or of recovery very precarious, as it is acknowledged by all writers on such subjects, that in all disorders, and more especially in diseases of this description, the mind has a powerful influence over the body, an influence which operates for good or for evil in the degree that confidence or despondency has the ascendancy.

It is a universally admitted fact that one of the most certain preventives of any disease is cleanliness and fresh air; and we take this opportunity of recommending a general whitewashing of dwelling-houses, and close attention to ventilation. Independent of frequent whitewashing and thorough ventilation at the Night Asylum, to which the most ill clothed and ill fed of the community resort, there is frequent use made of the chloride of lime; and we take this occasion to observe, that one pound, which may be purchased for about threepence or fourpence, is sufficient to impregnate five gallons of water, the proportion adopted in our well-conducted Workhouse.

THE CHOLERA.

(From the *Liverpool Mercury* of Nov. 4.)

"Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"

We are so impressed with the importance of this subject, and with the necessity of allaying as much as possible the panic into which the community has been thrown, by the anticipation of the rapid approach of the cholera to our shores, that we are collecting together, into a small pamphlet, several interesting letters, and other papers of acknowledged ability, tending, upon the whole, rather to inspire hope and confidence, than to add to the apprehension which already pervades almost all ranks of the community.

The cholera has been assimilated to the plague, or pest, although the comparison must be most vague, according to the authority of an eminent French writer, who says of the latter, "*On comprend dans la peste toutes les maladies contagieuses, qui sont au nombre de deux ou trois mille.*"

As the subjects, however, may be supposed to bear some analogy, we shall, in our pamphlet, introduce some interesting accounts of the great plague in London, of which we shall merely observe, *en passant*, that the recurrence of a similar visitation cannot be reasonably anticipated in this country, for causes which must be obvious on a moment's reflection.

Previously to the great fire in London, the plague was a very frequent periodical visitor of the metropolis, and of other parts of the kingdom; but for more than a century and a half it has scarcely been heard of. This happy change, it is generally admitted, has been effected principally by a greater attention to cleanliness and the ventilation of our streets and dwellings than was observed in the time to which we have adverted. The concurrent testimony of several of our historians confirms the statement of the writer from whose works we make the following extract relative to the state of London:—

"The streets were dunghills for carrion, and every species of filth; kennels and vaults were seldom cleaned, and common sewers and canals were choked up, and every part of the city sent forth exhalations sufficient to corrupt the air of a whole country."

Any person who will take the trouble to compare the writings of medical men on the cholera morbus will, we believe, arrive at the conclusion that these gentlemen, by their own showing, neither exactly comprehend the origin or the nature of this dreadful visitation. Thus ignorant of the cause of the disease, it would seem to follow that they must be ignorant also of the mode of treatment; but fortunately for mankind this is not exactly the case. If all the human maladies whose cause or origin baffles the investigation of scientific men were incurable, the world would soon be so thinned as to supersede the necessity of any of the national checks to population enumerated by Mr. Malthus. Chance, however, has put us in possession of many remedies for diseases of the nature of which we are imperfectly informed. The discovery of the medicinal qualities of that powerful agent in the pharmacopeia, Peruvian bark, was the result of pure accident; and chance had no small share in the grand discovery of vaccination which enriched and immortalized Dr. Jenner.

The experience of successive ages (for the cholera is of such antiquity as to be noticed in the Bible) has pointed out certain modes of successfully treating the disease, although, as we have already observed, great discrepancy of opinion prevails respecting its cause and its properties. One fact, however, seems to be generally admitted by those who differ widely as to the nature of the disorder; they all agree that the best chance of escaping its attack is moderation in diet, moderate exercise, and good air: as those persons who are ill fed and clothed, and especially those who are addicted to dram-drinking, are generally amongst the first victims.

Dr. Johnson's opinions as to the mischievous tendency of gratuitously spreading panic through the land are so much in accordance with the views we have long entertained on this point, and which we expressed several years ago, when the most exaggerated alarm about hydrophobia prevailed, that we shall here transcribe the commencement of his letter to the editor of the *London Times*, the whole of which will be found in our pamphlet:—

“Instead of raising and promoting as much as possible fears and alarms in the public mind on the subject of this terrific disease, as is at present too much the fashion, it appears to me that medical men should, as far as they can consistently with the dreadful and dangerous nature of the complaint, endeavour to allay the now excited feelings regarding it.”

Mr. Silas Blandford, surgeon, Royal Navy, whose letter to the editor of the *London Courier* is also included in our little work, is so decided a sceptic as to the presumed infectious nature of the cholera that he has volunteered the following unequivocal test of the correctness of his opinion:—

“In the first place,” says he, “the complaint is not, I assert, of an infectious nature, and by way of experimental proof of such my assertion I would not hesitate to wear the clothes of any respectable man who might have died of it; ay, allowing him to die in such clothes,

and immediately after death to put them upon my own person, and wear them for any number of successive days."

In the words of our motto well may we exclaim, "Who shall decide when doctors disagree?" The editors of the *London Medical Gazette* appear to dissent from Mr. Blandford, if we may judge from the following passage which occurs in their work of the 29th of October:—"The doctrine that cholera is not contagious, held by the majority of the Indian practitioners, is rendered more than doubtful by the European invasion." We are, however, soon afterwards informed in the same work that the whole body of the Polish physicians reject *in toto* the doctrine that the cholera is contagious.

We must, for the present, leave our readers to draw their own inferences from this conflicting testimony, and shall merely further observe, that our pamphlet, which will be ready for their perusal in a few days, will greatly aid them in arriving at a rational conclusion.

The intelligent editors of the *Monthly Review*, in their publication for the present month, conclude an able article on the subject of the cholera with the following excellent and humane advice, which we recommend to the attentive consideration of our townsmen:

"According to all the accounts from every part of Europe where the malady has appeared, there is no point more clearly ascertained than this, that the *poor* have been its principal victims. Their scanty nourishment, their very indifferent food, their confinement, both when sleeping and waking, to small and ill-ventilated apartments, their exposure when occupied out of doors to the inclemency of the weather, their thin clothing, their want of flannel under garments, of worsted stockings and strong shoes, and their immoderate use of spirituous liquors, must ever place them as the foremost and the most numerous in the ranks of death, when they have such an enemy as the cholera to contend against. To the opulent and easy classes of the community we should therefore appeal, if it were only for their own safety, not to mention the nobler motive of charity; we should entreat them to think often of the poor who every where surround us, and who must be every where ill clad, ill fed, ill housed, and exposed to that constant depression of mind, which, more than any other circumstance, invites and encourages the malady. Soups may be made for them at little cost; warm clothing, especially flannels, may be provided for them in abundance by very small subscriptions; coals and wood, and lime for whitewashing their apartments, might through the same means be supplied to them, at least during the approaching winter, and until all danger of the cholera shall have passed away. One good effect from the apprehensions which it has already excited, will at least thus have been produced, and the general habits of the lower orders may, possibly, be in the end very much improved, both in a moral and a physical point of view."

In furtherance of these benevolent suggestions, which are in perfect accordance with the regulations we have uniformly endeavoured to enforce, we beg to add that there are two institutions in Liverpool which are especially entitled to humane consideration at this particular crisis,—the Strangers' Friend Society and the Night Asylum for the Houseless Poor; and we avail ourselves of this occasion to add, that an immediate revival of the SOUP-HOUSES would contribute most essentially to the health and comfort of the poor.

THE GREAT PLAGUE IN LONDON, IN 1665.

(FROM PERCY'S HISTORIES.)

Frequently as London had been visited with the plague, and fatal as had been its ravages, no physical precautions were adopted to prevent its recurrence; the houses, which in this city had always been close and confined, had become much more so by the mansions, which had formerly been occupied by noblemen, being subdivided to excess, and crowded with people; the streets were still dunghills for carrion and every species of filth; the ditches, kennels, and vaults were seldom cleansed; the common sewers and canals were almost choked up; and every part of the city sent forth exhalations sufficient to corrupt the air of a whole country. At length, as if to rebuke the citizens for thus neglecting the many admonitions that had been given to them, the metropolis was consigned for a whole year to a pestilence more obstinate in its nature, and more destructive in its effects than any that had preceded it. Although the plague of 1665, the Great Plague as it is called, to distinguish it from all others, is generally supposed to have been brought from the Levant in some goods imported through Holland by a tradesman in Long Acre, (yet independently of the doubt which exists as to this disease being at all importable,) there is strong reason to believe that it is to be attributed to the same causes as produced those that preceded it, the narrow streets, confined air, and want of cleanliness. This seems the more probable, as for a long period London had not been wholly free from the plague. Maitland says, for five and twenty years previous to 1665, it had not been clear of the malady, and that even from the year 1603 until 1670, the bills of mortality exhibit but three years in which London, more or less, was not afflicted with the plague.

Even in 1665, when it broke out with unresisting fury, the populace considered it only as one of the judgments of the Almighty, to which submission was all they could offer, and conceived that to oppose it would be a mockery, or an insult to the Deity. The very fears and superstitions of the people were no inconsiderable auxiliaries to the plague; and they considered themselves as doomed to destruction, by the appearance of the heavens, and by a thousand indications, which, though as nothing in the eyes of philosophy, bring to the timid and superstitious "confirmations strong as proofs of

Holy Writ." A comet, which had appeared some months before the plague, was, when it broke out, considered as having foretold a judgment slow but severe, terrible and frightful.

These apprehensions were much increased by the pretended prophecies and astrological calculations of a set of impostors who pretended to be better acquainted with the future than their neighbours. They fabricated stories of malignant conjunctions of the planets, and levied from the credulous no inconsiderable sums, until the hand of death, which respected not their knowledge, levelled them with the dupes of their artifice. So eager were the people to consult fortune-tellers and conjurers, that "if but a grave fellow," says the author of the History of the Great Plague, attributed to Defoe, "in a velvet jacket, a band, and a black coat, which was the habit those quack conjurers generally went in, was but seen in the streets, the people would follow them in crowds, and ask them questions as they went along."

The almanacks, too, proved a source of terror, and the coming plague was thought to have been fixed in Lily's Almanack, Gadbury's Astrological Predictions, and Poor Robin's Almanack.

Lily, in his Astrological Predictions for 1665, certainly does speak of "strange fevers, even unto madness and frenzies, pestilence or plague, unwholesome airs, pestiferous winds, furious blasts, occasioning shipwrecks," that shall happen to some parts of Europe; but he afterwards adds, that "these afflictions, even of sickness, or war, effectively will more disturb and oppress those who inhabit in *hot countries, or near the Line*, and have abiding near the tropics."

Nor does it appear that the people were so much alarmed at this, as at a passage which appeared in his almanack for 1643, in which he gives "an astrological judgment of the conjunction of Saturn and Mars;" and vague and indeterminate with respect to time, as the inferences are, they are certainly remarkable. "In the year 1656 (says Lilly) the aphelism of Mars, who is the general significator of England, will be in Virgo, which is assuredly the ascendants of the English monarchy, but *Aries* of the kingdom: when this Absis, therefore, of Mars shall appear in Virgo, who shall expect less than a strange catastrophe of human affairs in this commonwealth, monarchy, and kingdom? There will then either in or about those times, on that year, or within ten years more or less of that time, or within a little time after, appear in this kingdom so strange a revolution of fate, so grand a catastrophe of human affairs unto this monarchy and government as never yet appeared; of which, as the times now stand, I have no liberty or encouragement to give any opinion; only it will be ominous to London, unto her merchants at seat, to her traffique at land, to her poor, to her rich, to all

sorts of people inhabiting in her, or her liberties, *by reason of sundry fires and a consuming plague.*"

The alarm of the citizens was aggravated by several publications, which were issued in the early stages of the plague, bearing most portentous titles, and all foretelling the destruction of the city. One of these pamphlets was entitled "Fair Warning;" a second "Britains Remembrancer," and a third had for its title an epigraph, "Come out of her, my people, lest ye be partakers of her plagues."

Fanatics, or visionaries, ran through the streets, agitated and agitating by their oral denunciations and predictions. One man ran about in a state of wild disorder, crying day and night like the man mentioned by Josephus, whose "Woe to Jerusalem" preceded and foretold its fall; he walked quickly, and with a voice and countenance beaming with horror, continually ejaculated, "O the great and dreadful God!" Another man, pretending a more than human authority for preaching to the city, went about like Jonah in the city of Nineveh, crying out, "Yet a few days, and London shall be destroyed."

However imaginary these horrors were, a fearful reality was soon experienced. The plague first began in Long Acre, towards the close of the year 1664, when two or three persons suddenly dying in one family, the timid neighbours took the alarm and removed into the city, whither they are supposed to have unfortunately carried the infection. Here it gathered strength from the denseness of the population, and soon its ravages became extensive. The lower classes were seized with a panic; and entertaining an absurd, but very general notion, that the plague visited London every twenty years, they took no means to counteract it.

A frost, which set in in December, and continued three months, if it did not exterminate the distemper, suspended its destructive effects; but no sooner had a thaw succeeded than it burst forth with increased force. From the month of February the plague began to advance; and when it was discovered that it had extended to several parishes, the magistrates issued an order, dated 1st July, 1665, to shut up all the infected houses, which were marked with a red cross, bearing this inscription, "Lord have mercy upon us!" Guards were constantly in attendance, to supply the sick with the necessary food, and to prevent them quitting their houses until forty days after recovery. This precaution is thought to have done much injury. Dr. Hodges, in his *Loimologia*, says, he verily believes that "many who were lost might have been alive, had not the tragical mark upon their door drove proper assistance from them." The same author adds, that what greatly contributed to the loss of the people thus shut up was the wicked practice of nurses. "These wretches," says he, "out of greediness to plunder the dead, would strangle their

patients, and charge it to the distemper in their throats! Others would directly convey the pestilential taint from sores of the infected to those who were well." This is a serious charge, but it is not without a parallel in our own times; for during the last Russian campaign, some men who were employed in clearing the hospitals of Wilna of the dead, at a certain sum per head, were actually detected in throwing the sick and wounded out of the window, in order to augment the number.

The plan of shutting up the houses had been first adopted in the plague of 1603, when an act of Parliament was passed to authorize it, entitled, "An Act for the charitable Relief and ordering of Persons infected with the Plague." If, on the one hand, it might be contended, that by suffering persons to leave houses infected by the plague, they might extend its ravages, it must on the other be allowed as more than probable, than in many cases whole families fell victims to it, who might have lived had they been allowed to quit the house on the first appearance of infection in any one of the family. If the destroyer, when only stalking forth among men free to fly from his approach, and to shrink from contact with him, committed such havock, it may be imagined how fell his ravages must have been among persons thus pent up together. Even those who retained full possession of health, might calculate the hours they had still to live; those who to-day turned out the bodies of their lifeless companions, might lay their certain account with following them on the morrow: no hope of escape being left to any, all must have prepared to die; and this consolation at least they must have had, that neither fear nor apprehension could any longer interfere with the tender offices of friendship and affection. The surviving son needed not to shrink from closing the eyes of his dying parent, nor the widowed wife to pillow her head on the cold breast of her departed spouse.

Rigorous as the prohibition to quit an infected house was, yet some were found to brave it. In the "City Remembrancer" for 1665, it is related that "a citizen broke out of his house in Aldersgate-street, and attempted, but was refused, going into the Angel, or the White Horse at Islington. At the Pyed Horse he pretended going into Lincolnshire; that he was entirely free from infection, and asked lodgings for the night. They had but a garret bed empty, and that but one night, expecting drovers with cattle next day. A servant showed him the room, which he gladly accepted. He was well dressed; and with a sigh, said he had seldom lain in such a lodging, but would make a shift, as it was but for one night, and in a dreadful time. He sat down on the bed, desiring a pint of warm ale, which was forgot. Next morning one asked what was become of the gentleman? The maid,

starting, said, she had never thought more of him ; he bespoke warm ale, but I forgot it. A person going up, found him dead across the bed ; his clothes were pulled off, his jaw fallen, his eyes open, in a most frightful posture ; the rug of the bed clasped hard in his hand. The alarm was great, having been free from the distemper, which spread immediately to the houses round about. Fourteen died of the plague that week in Islington."

In the months of May, June, and July, the plague had continued with more or less severity ; but in August and September it quickened into dreadful activity, sweeping away three, four, five, and sometimes eight thousand persons in a week. Then it was that the whole British nation wept for the miseries of her metropolis. In some houses carcasses lay waiting for burial, and in others, persons in their last agonies ; in one room were heard dying groans, and in another the ravings of delirium, mingled with the wailings of relations and friends, and the apprehensive shrieks of children. Infants passed at once from the womb to the grave. "Who would not," says Dr. Hodges, "burst with grief, to see the stock for a future generation hang upon the breast of a dead mother, or the marriage-bed changed the first night into a sepulchre, or the unhappy pair meet with death in their first embraces ? Some of the infected run about staggering like drunken men, and fell and expired in the streets ; while others lie half dead and comatose, but never to be waked but by the last trumpet."

The divine often received the stroke of death in the exercise of his sacred office ; the physician, finding no assistance in his own antidotes, died while administering them to others. The soldiery, retiring from an enemy with whom human power could not cope, encamped in the suburbs of the city ; but were overtaken, and fell unresisting victims of the great destroyer. Business was suspended ; and if in the market a solitary individual was seen purchasing the means of life, that life was often terminated ere he reached his home. The bells seemed hoarse with tolling ; and the sextons were not sufficient to bury the dead, with which the churchyards were so glutted that they were thrown into pits, in heaps of thirty or forty together.

In the month of September the disease was at its height, and more than 12,000 perished in one week. Some persons recommended fires in the streets, and they were kindled for three days, though many of the physicians were against it ; but "before the three days were quite expired, the heavens both mourned over so many funerals, and so wept for the fatal mistake, as to extinguish even the fires with their showers." A fatal night succeeded, in which more than four thousand persons expired.

Those moving sepulchres, the "dead carts," continually traversed the streets; while the appalling cry, "Bring out your dead," thrilled through every soul not yet dead to feeling. Then it was that parents, husbands, wives, and children, saw all that was dear to them thrown with a pitchfork into a cart, like the offal of the slaughter-house, to be conveyed without the walls, and flung in one promiscuous heap, without the rites of sepulture, without a coffin, and without a shroud.

Single graves were no longer dug in churchyards, but huge pits, sufficient almost to entomb a whole army. In Aldgate churchyard, after several pits, capable of holding sixty or a hundred bodies, had been dug and filled, the churchwardens caused one to be formed so large, that they were blamed, as making preparations to bury the whole parish. It was about forty feet in length, and fifteen or sixteen feet broad, and in some parts about twenty feet deep. Into this gulph they began to throw the dead on the 4th of September, and by the 20th of that month they had cast into it 1,114 dead bodies, when they were obliged to fill it up, as it was within six feet of the surface.

In other churchyards similar pits were dug, till they were choked with the dead, and additional burial grounds were formed in several parts of the town, some of which have ever since been used for the same purpose, while others have no trace of the dread calamity which first marked them out as sepulchres.

The burial ground in Bunhill-fields, in which many a sturdy Nonconformist and Dissenter rests in peace, was first appropriated to that purpose during the plague. A piece of ground near the street called Old Bethlem, in Moorfields, and the plot at the top of Hollywell-street, Shoreditch, and a third in Goswell-street, were also used as temporary burying-grounds on this melancholy occasion. Stepney, though at this time it had three distinct burying-grounds, overcharged them all with its dead; and there were no less than five other pieces of ground devoted to the dead. On two of these the parish churches of St. Paul, Shadwell, and St. John, Wapping, have since been built. A green field at the upper end of Hand-alley, in Bishopsgate-street, was inclosed for the parish of St. Botolph alone, though the inhabitants of some courts beyond its precincts were allowed to bring their dead to it. Two or three years after the plague, a scene took place here which seemed to bring back all the horrors of that dreadful period. The ground was purchased by Sir Robert Clayton, who immediately let it out on building leases. In digging the ground for the foundations, numberless bodies were dug up. "Some of them," says the author of *Reflections on the Bills of Mortality*, "remaining so plain to be seen, that the

women's skulls were distinguished by the long hair, and of others the flesh was not quite perished." On complaint being made, the bodies were removed to another place in the same ground, where "the ground," says the same author, "is palisadoed off in a little square, where lie the bones and remains of 2,000 bodies, carried by the dead carts to the grave in one year."

Horrible as these pits were, constables were obliged to be placed near them during the plague; for it was not unusual for persons infected, either seized by a fit of delirium, or, what is more probable, anxious to mingle with the bodies of all that was dear to them, to steal from their houses unobserved, or to obtain an egress by bribing the watchmen, and wrapped in blankets and rugs to throw themselves among the dead.

In this wreck of a city, which was half entombed, delirium hurried many even to a premature death. "People," says Defoe, "in the torment of their swellings, which was indeed intolerable, running out of their own government, raving and distracted, and often times laying violent hands upon themselves, throwing themselves out at their windows, shooting themselves, &c. Mothers murdering their own children in their lunacy, some dying of mere grief and passion, some of mere fright and surprise, without any infection at all; others frightened into despair and lunacy; others into melancholy madness."

Many were the cases in which the mother and her unborn offspring perished at once; in others, where they died for want of proper assistance in the hour of nature's sorrow. Others frequently sucked the fatal poison from the lips of their dying infants. The plague reached its height in August, and during that month and September, 50,000 perished. It was now that the dead carts were insufficient for the office, and the houses and streets were rendered tenfold more pestilential by their unburied dead. All who had survived now made the attempt to escape, and eighteen or twenty watchmen were killed in opposing the people when fleeing from the infected houses.

The change which now took place in the feelings of the people is thus vividly described by Defoe:—"As I have mentioned how the people were brought into a condition to despair of life, and abandon themselves, so this very thing had a strange effect among us for three or four weeks; that is, it made men bold and venturous; they were no more shy of one another, or restrained within doors, but went any where and every where, and began to converse. One would say to another, 'I do not ask you how you are, or say how I am. It is certain we shall all go; so 'tis no matter who is sick or who is sound; so they run deliberately into any place or company.'"

The moral lesson conveyed in the following passage is worthy of being kept in everlasting remembrance.

"As it brought the people into public company, so it was surprising how it brought them to crowd into the churches; they inquired no more unto whom they sat near to or far from, what offensive smells they met with, or what condition the people seemed to be in; but looking upon themselves all as so many dead corpses, they came to the churches without the least caution, and crowded together, as if their lives were of no consequence, compared to the work which they came about. Indeed, the zeal which they showed in coming, and the earnestness and affection they showed in their attention to what they heard, made it manifest, *what a value people would all put upon the worship of God, if they thought every day they attended at the church that it would be their last.* Nor was it without other strange effects, for it took away all manner of prejudice at, or scruple about, the person whom they found in the pulpit when they came to the churches. It cannot be doubted that many of the ministers of the parish churches were cut off among others in so common and so dreadful a calamity; and others had not courage enough to stand it, but removed into the country as they found means to escape. As then some parish churches were quite vacant and forsaken, the people made no scruple of desiring such Dissenters as had been a few years before deprived of their livings by virtue of the act of Parliament called the Act of Uniformity, to preach in the churches; nor did the Church ministers in that case make any difficulty of accepting their assistance; so that many of those whom they called silenced ministers had their mouths opened on this occasion, and preached publicly to the people."

The zeal and fidelity of these ministers was but ill requited when the danger was over. The penal clauses in the act of uniformity were not only not repealed, but as soon as Parliament met in October, a still more severe act was passed against them, by which it was enacted, that all Dissenting ministers should take oath "that it was not lawful, on any *pretence whatsoever*, to take arms against the king, or any commissioned by him; and that they would not, *at any time*, attempt an alteration in the government of church or state." Such as refused to take the oath were not to come within five miles of any city or parliament borough, or of the church where they had served.

The dead now were no longer numbered, for the parish clerks and sextons perished in the execution of their office. In the parish of Stepney alone, one hundred and sixteen sextons, grave-diggers, and carters employed in removing the dead bodies, died in one year. Ten thousand houses were at once deserted, and it is said, that during the plague, not fewer than 200,000 persons quitted the metropolis.

"Empty the streets with uncouth verdure clad,
Into the worst of deserts sudden turned
The cheerful haunts of man."

In the last week of September, the plague began somewhat to abate, and the bills of mortality fell from upwards of 8000 to little more than 6000 weekly. Every succeeding week the number of victims diminished, so that by the month of February, in the following year, the pestilence had wholly ceased. The number that perished during this plague, according to the returns, were 68,590 ; but Defoe asserts that the number was at least 100,000. The lives of a great many persons were preserved by means of the shipping on the Thames, into which the infection did not reach, except in a very few instances.

The survivors of this dreadful calamity would have perished of famine, but for the bounty of the affluent. The money subscribed is said to have amounted to £100,000 a week, to which Charles II humanely gave £1,000 weekly. In the parish of Cripplegate alone, the disbursements to the poor amounted to £17,000 a week. But even when the poor had obtained the money, they feared to lay it out in provisions, lest they should by this means catch the infection. If they bought a joint of meat in the market, they would not receive it from the butcher, but took it off the hooks themselves ; the butcher equally cautious would not touch the money, but had it dropped into a pot with vinegar kept for the purpose. Workmen were equally cautious with their masters, and even members of the same family with each other.

The conduct of the magistracy, during the prevalence of the calamity, did them infinite honour. Darwin has celebrated the heroic devotion of Sir John Lawrence, "London's generous Mayor," who,

"When contagion, with mephitic breath
And withered famine urged the work of death,

* * * * *

With food and faith, with med'cine and with prayer,
Rais'd the weak head, and stay'd the parting sigh ;
Or with new life relum'd the swimming eye."

"The vigilance of the magistrates," says the account ascribed to Defoe, "was put to the utmost trial, and, it must be confessed, can never be enough acknowledged ; whatever expense or trouble they were at, two things were never neglected in the city or suburbs either. First, provisions were always to be had in full plenty, and the price not much raised either hardly worth speaking. Second, no dead bodies lay unburied, or uncovered ; and if one walked from one end of the city to the other, no funeral, or sign of it, was to be seen in the day-time, except a little in the three first weeks in September."

The delivery of corn and coals at the wharfs was subjected to such judicious regulations, by the Lord Mayor and aldermen, that the traders brought up their vessels with full confidence of safety. For the security, too, of the country dealers by land, new markets were established on the outskirts of the metropolis, and proper regulations made to ensure the safety

of those who attended them. Either the Lord Mayor, or one, or both of the sheriffs, went every market-day on horseback to see these orders executed, and to take care that the country people had all possible encouragement and freedom in coming to the markets and going back again. The necessitous were furnished with food and money gratuitously, and the aldermen frequently rode through the streets on horseback, to inquire whether the wants of the people in the streets or houses were duly supplied.

In this year of desolation, the most appalling scenes were continually occurring, which language would in vain attempt to depict. Many were the instances in which bodies were found stripped naked by thieves; and others, where the stupor of disease was mistaken for the sleep of death, and bodies yet warm and breathing, were buried in the general mass.

Tradition relates a narrow escape of a poor piper, which has been further immortalized by that great sculptor, Cibber, in a statue well known in Tottenham-court-road. It represents a Highland piper playing on his pipes, with his dog and keg of liquor by his side. The piper, as the story goes, usually took his stand at the bottom of Holborn-hill, near St. Andrew's Church, and having one day met with some of his countrymen, he drank rather freely, and sought a couch on the steps of the church. As this was no time to sleep in the infected streets, when the dead cart arrived, one of the men did not hesitate to put his fork into the piper's belt, and transfer him to the cart. The piper's dog attempted to prevent his master from being carried off, but, unable to do this, he determined to accompany him, and leaping into the cart, began howling most piteously over the body of his master. The shaking of the cart along the rugged pavement, and the howling of the dog, at length awoke the piper, who, instinctively turning to his pipes, struck up a lively Scotch tune, to the great terror of the carters, who fancied they had got a cargo of ghosts, until lights having been procured, the piper was released, and his narrow escape was commemorated by one of his benefactors, who employed Cibber to execute a statue of him.

Defoe relates the story very differently. He says the piper was not blind, but a weak, ignorant man, who usually traversed the streets in the parish of St. Stephen, Coleman-street, about ten o'clock at night; and that it was John Haywood, the sexton of that parish, who was thus hurrying him away to a premature grave. Defoe also denies, on the authority of Hayward, that the poor fellow used his pipes in the cart.

THE GREAT PLAGUE IN LONDON, IN 1665.

(FROM BRAYLEY'S LONDINIANA, P. 211.)

The interesting nature of the following article, which appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for May, 1825, and relates to the conduct of a citizen during the direful calamity of the above year, will justify its insertion in these pages. The firmness and good sense exhibited by the grocer furnish an example of proper conduct, should our metropolis be ever again so unfortunate as to be chastised with the scourge of pestilence.

ACCOUNT OF A GROCER IN WOOD-STREET, CHEAPSIDE, WHO
PRESERVED HIMSELF AND FAMILY FROM INFECTION DURING
THE GREAT PLAGUE IN 1665.

This family consisted of the master and his wife, each of them between forty and fifty years of age, besides five children, three daughters and two sons, two maid-servants, and an apprentice. This tradesman, who was a wholesale grocer, had another apprentice nearly out of his time, a porter, and a boy, whom he kept some time; but seeing the desolation that was coming upon them, he sent the boy down to his friends in Staffordshire, and gave up his eldest apprentice the remainder of his time. As to the porter, he did not lodge in the house before, so there was no occasion for dismissing him; but being a poor man, and likely to fall into distress for want of employ, he was engaged to come every day and sit at the door as a watchman from nine in the morning till six in the evening, to receive orders, go upon errands, &c. The tradesman had a wicket made in the door to take in or send out any thing they thought fit; besides, there was a rope fastened to a little pulley to draw up or let any thing down into the street. By this rope they often let down victuals and cordials, or what else they thought fit, to the porter, and especially his wages constantly every week, or oftener, as he required.

The master having resolved to shut himself up with his family, had stored himself with all manner of provisions, and resolved to make it a standing rule that the door should not be opened on any account, fire excepted. No person within

was permitted to look out of the windows into the street, or open any casement, except a wooden window made for the purpose, where the pulley and rope was, and that up two pair of stairs; and this wooden window he caused to be covered with tin, that nothing infected should stick to it.

Whenever the wooden window was opened, he caused a flash of gunpowder to be made in the room, so as to fill it with smoke, which, as soon as the window was opened, would gush out with some force, so that it carried away what air was in the window, not suffering any to come in from abroad till it was purified by the sulphur in the gunpowder smoke. While this smoke lasted, business might be transacted with the porter; but the moment the smoke abated, another flash was made with the powder within.

At first, whilst they were ten in the family, the master allowed each of them a pound of bread per day; but as he had laid in a quantity of meal, he reduced one-sixth part for cake-bread, and such other sorts as might be made in the house. He also bought three thousand pound weight of biscuit, and had it put up in hogsheads, as if it was going to be shipped off; so that the baker thought the biscuits were for a ship the grocer was fitting out. This he caused to be taken away in a boat, and being brought up to Queenhithe, it was landed there and carted to his warehouse under the appearance of grocery. In the same manner he acted with twenty barrels of fine flour. He then caused a small oven to be fixed in the chimney of one of his upper apartments. Being well provided with beer, as the physicians advised every one that could afford it to drink moderately, and not let their spirits sink or be dejected, he laid in a reasonable quantity of wines, cordial waters, and brandy, and also some of the new and costly cordial at that time called plague water, besides medicines, &c. Having furnished himself with bread, flour, and beer, he then went to a butcher at Rotherhithe, none having yet died of the plague on that side of the water, and purchased three fat bullocks, which being killed, were pickled and barrelled up, together with six barrels of pork. These he also brought by water to Trigg Stairs, where he landed and carted them to his warehouse, as if it had been grocery. Bacon, cheese, and butter he procured out of the country. In fine, nothing was wanting that the situation he was going into could probably require. These preparations being made, he forbore shutting himself quite up for some months after the plague had begun, and even till there died about a thousand a week. But though the infection was very terrible in the out-parishes, especially about Holborn, St. Giles, Fleet-street, and the Strand, the city was very healthy, nor was the distemper felt in any great degree within the walls till the end of June or the beginning of July, in the second week of which it appeared, from the weekly bills, that 1268 had died in the

out-parts of different distempers. But in the whole of the 97 parishes within the walls only 28 had died of the distemper, and not more than 16 in all the buildings on the Surrey side of the water.

However, the next week after, it was doubled, and began to overspread the whole city and all the out-parts like a torrent. None of this family now were suffered to go out of the city to any public place, market, exchange, or church; and the master also warned his dealers and correspondents in the country not to send him any more goods, as he could no longer send goods away, or receive any sent to him.

On the 1st of July he began to place his porter on the outside of the door, where he built him a little hutch to sit in. By the 14th of July the weekly bills amounted to 1762 of all distempers; and as the parish of St. Alban's, Wood-street, was the second in the city that was infected, this tradesman bolted, barred, and locked himself in with all his house, taking the keys into his own keeping, and declared to all his family, that if any one of them, though it were his eldest son or daughter, should offer to stir out of the door, though but a yard off, they should not come in again upon any terms whatever. At the same time he nailed up all the casements of his windows or fastened the wooden shutters on the inside; those windows were excepted which were kept open for conversing with his porter, as before observed.

Till this time he had taken fresh meat of a country-woman, a higgler, who assuring him that she brought it from Waltham Abbey market, without opening it till she came to his door, he was satisfied, but now he forbade her to come any more. Being now closely shut up, they scarcely knew how it fared with their neighbours, except that they heard the bells continually tolling, and their porter gave them in the weekly bills of mortality, and at length informed them that the next house but two was infected; that three houses on the other side of the way were shut up, and that two servants out of another house, on the same side of the way, but on the other side of their house, were sent away to the pest-house beyond Old-street.

It was observable that it went hard with the poor servants being obliged to go out on errands, particularly to the markets, to apothecaries' and Chandler's shops; the latter were at that time the principal places for all necessaries except meat or fish. It was a great satisfaction to them that the people in the next house on one side had gone into the country at the beginning of the visitation, and had left the whole house locked up; the windows barred on the inside, and boarded on the outside; the house was also placed under the charge of the constable and watch. The other houses near them were all inhabited, and all infected, and at length all shut up; and in one or

more of them the whole of the families perished. By this time they heard a bell go ringing nightly along the streets, but not being like the sound of the ordinary bellman, they knew not what it meant. Not going by their door, the voice that went with it they could not distinguish; and as their porter did not sit at their door in the night, as he did in the day, they could not inquire. At length he informed them that the number of dead in the out-parts was so great, that it was impossible to bury them in due form, or to provide coffins, no one daring to come into the infected houses, and that therefore the Lord Mayor and aldermen had ordered carts to go about with a bellman to collect the dead bodies. This, he said, had been done in Holborn, St. Sepulchre's, and Cripplegate, for a fortnight, but that now they began to come into the city, especially into St. Olave, Silver-street. This being the next parish to St. Alban's, was frightful enough, and only on the other side of the way; and during that fortnight, which was the middle of August, not less than fourscore died in those two small parishes. The reason of this was supposed to be the joining both these parishes to the Cripplegate side of the wall, as the parish of Cripplegate was at that time dreadfully visited, the plague being come down that way from St. Giles's in the Fields, where it began, and the weight of the infection during the latter end of August and the beginning of September lay chiefly on that side of the city, from whence it went on to Bishopsgate, Shoreditch, and Whitechapel, and so to Stepney.

From the beginning to the end of August, or the first week in September, there died from 700 to 800, and almost 900 a week in Cripplegate parish only. All this while the family continued in good health, and the cheerful parent encouraged them to hope for preservation, whatever might happen without doors; still, when they received such bad news every day, they began to look upon one another with heavy hearts, believing they were all but dead corpses, and that the visitation was so appointed by Heaven as to sweep away the whole of the inhabitants, and that none would be left alive. In this distress the master prudently ordered all his family to lodge on the lower floor, or up one pair of stairs, and as many of them to sleep single as possible, whilst the rooms above were furnished with beds for any that might be taken sick, for whom a nurse should be procured, out of doors, and be drawn up by the pulley to the wooden shutter, so as not to come through the house at all, or converse with any of the family. He also proposed that if he himself should be taken ill, he would immediately submit to the nurse's attendance, and that none of his children should be suffered to come up stairs, or come near him; and that if he should die, his body should be let down by the pulley also, into the cart, and so of the

whole house, though his wife assured him that she would be shut up with him. This careful father was up every morning the first in the house, and went to every chamber door, servants as well as children, to ask them how they did, and when they answered "very well," he left them with this short reply, "Give God thanks."

His letters were brought by the postman or letter carrier to his porter, who smoked them with sulphur and gunpowder; then opening them and sprinkling them with vinegar, they were drawn up by the pulley, and then smoked again with strong perfumes, and taking them up with a pair of hair gloves, the hair outermost, he read them with a large reading glass at a considerable distance, and as they were read burnt them. At last the distemper raging more and more, he forbid his friends writing to him at all. The loss of his faithful porter heightened the calamity of this good man: he missed him at the usual time when he used to lower him down a mess of broth, or some other warm thing for his breakfast. He heard nothing of him all that day and the next, when the third day calling again for him within the door, he was answered by a strange voice in a melancholy tone, that Abraham was dead. "And who then are you?" said the master to the person who spoke. "I am his poor distressed widow, come to tell you your poor servant is gone." "Alas! poor woman," said he, "and what canst thou do then?" "Oh, Sir," said she, "I am provided for; I have the distemper upon me; I shall not be long after him." These words, he confessed, made his heart cold within him; but as he stood surrounded with the smoke of gunpowder, he did not immediately retire, but said to her again, "If you are in such a condition, good woman, why did you come out?" "I came, Sir," said she, "because I knew you would want poor Abraham to wait at your door, and I would let you know." "Well, but," says he, "if he is dead I must want him; you cannot help me." "No, Sir," said she, "but I have brought you an honest man, that will serve you as faithfully as he did." "But how do I know what he is, and as he comes with you that are sick, how do I know that he is not infected? I shall not dare to touch any thing that comes from him." "Oh, Sir," said she, "he is one of the *safe men*, for he had the distemper, and is recovered, so he is out of danger, or else I would not have brought him to you." This was an encouragement, and he was very glad of the new man, but would not believe the story of his recovery till he brought the constable of the parish and another person to vouch for it; while this was doing, the poor woman having answered some further questions, and receiving some money that was thrown down to her for her relief, went away.

After hearing the tolling of so many bells, it was now remarkable that there was not one to be heard. The reason,

as the new porter told him, was, that the number of the dead was so great, that the bells were not allowed to toll for any body; but that all were fetched away by the carts, rich as well as poor. In the midst of this misery, and just as the master began to be very well pleased with his new porter, especially as he had concluded that he was one that had had the distemper, he was greatly surprised; for, calling to him one morning, he received no answer. He called at different times all that day and the next, but could get no satisfaction but from a watchman who stood at the door of a house, who told him that his second porter, Thomas Molins, was sick of the plague. He added, that some persons who had recovered from the sickness three or four times, had died of it after all. On the following day the watchman informed him that Molins was carried away by the dead carts the night before. The grocer shut his wooden door immediately, and was exceedingly distressed to think that two poor men had thus lost their lives as it were to preserve him.

After a fortnight, growing impatient with being so entirely without intelligence, and seeing none of the weekly bills of mortality, nor knowing or hearing any thing but the doleful noise of the dead cart, he opened his wooden window, called to the watchman, and asked him how he did, and some questions about the house before which he was placed? "Alas! master," said he, "the distressed family are all dead and gone, except the journeyman, and he is carried to the pest-house. I am now placed at the next door, and they have three sick and one dead." Last week's bill, the watchman said, was above 8000; but that the plague decreased at the other end of the town, in St. Giles's and Holborn, the people being mostly dead or gone away; but that it increased dreadfully towards Aldgate and Stepney, also in Southwark, where it had been more moderate than in any other part of the town. Still between four and five hundred a week died in Cripplegate parish, and above eight hundred in Stepney.

This confined family now began to be much inconvenienced by the scurvy, in consequence of living so much upon salt provisions; however, by the use of limes and lemon juice, they soon improved. To say nothing of the infected houses marked with a cross, and "Lord have mercy upon us," written upon the doors, the streets had a melancholy prospect. The pavement was overgrown with grass; and it was not one time in twenty that they could see any one when they looked through their wicket, or so much as a door open. As for the shops, they were all shut close, excepting that a door was kept open at the apothecaries and chandlers, for admitting people that wanted medicine, &c. Not a coach or a cart was to be seen, except now and then a coach carrying some sick person to the pest-house; whilst perhaps three or four times in

the night, the bellman came about with the dead cart, crying "Bring out your dead."

The master of the house was now become so impatient, that he could not content himself without sometimes opening his wooden window to talk to the watchman, who continued posted at the door of the house that was shut up; but at last he looked for him, and found he was gone too, for which he was troubled the more, because he intended to have given him some money. One day, however, as he was looking through his glass, he saw this man standing on the other side of the street and looking up towards his house, upon which he ran immediately to his wooden window. The poor watchman told him he was glad to see him alive, and that he was dismissed from the house he had been set to watch, most of the people being dead; if he pleased to accept of his service, he would sit at his door in the day-time, as his two porters had done before. This offer being accepted, he threw the poor man two crowns, for which he was very thankful; and he had not been at the door many days, before he was able to inform his master that the weekly bill was decreased 1837 in one week, which had been the cause of great joy; that the burials were reduced under 200, though in Stepney they were as high as ever.

The next week the returns of deaths of all diseases did not exceed 5725, and the burials in Cripplegate were only 196, nothing when compared to 886 only a few weeks before. This tradesman's sons would fain have had him, like Noah, to have sent out a dove, or to have let them go out of doors to see how things were, and how the city looked; and they urged him the more, as they began to hear a noise of the people in the streets passing to and fro, and that pretty often; but he kept his resolution, and would not let any one stir out on any terms, or under any pretence whatever. The next week but two there was a further decrease in the bill of 1849; and now the porter knocked at his door, assuring him that the visitation was really going off, as the Lord Mayor had ordered the dead carts not to go about more than twice a week in several parts of the city. For this good news he let down to the watchman a pint bottle of good sack, with provisions for him and his family.

These flattering prospects, however, were followed by a terrible consternation in the whole family, from the idea that the master himself concluded he was struck with the plague; and it was feared that lest he should be the means of giving it to any of his children, he would oblige them to have him carried out to the pest-house; but his wife and all the children declared against it, protesting that they would rather have the distemper with him than be separated; and that they would leave the consequences to God's mercy. Happily a violent

perspiration relieved both him and them, and, in two or three days, he was about again, his disease having been nothing more than a common cold caught by standing too long at his wooden window talking with the watchman.

The joy of the family on this occasion may be easily conceived; they now began to look abroad for intelligence. And now they could see through their windows a new face of things in the streets and about the houses; people were frequently seen going up and down; others began to open their shops, at least half way; the hackney coaches were also heard rumbling in the streets; so that without calling to the porter, they could easily perceive that the distemper was greatly decreased, and that the people that were left had more courage than before; and, in a word, that the plague was going off, at least in the city, and chiefly on that side where they lived.

It was now the last week in October, and only twenty-two were interred in Cripplegate parish; still the bills were high in Stepney and Southwark. The master, however, contented himself with hearing how things were, and would not abate a tittle of his strictness in keeping his family from any communication whatever with the people out of doors. He was aware that the people would be rash in their joy, and, presuming too far, would return to their houses and bring out their goods, &c. on which others had died, and air them too soon, and so, perhaps, bring back the infection. And so it fell out, for about the middle of November the bills on a sudden increased 400 at once, and rose from 1000 to 1400; but the weather becoming cool again, the bills continued decreasing till the third week of November, when only 652 were returned as dying of the plague.

On the 1st of December he opened his street door, and walked out alone without any of his family, viewing the streets, the houses, and the shops, but cautiously avoided conversation with any one. In fact, he saw very few persons that he was acquainted with, except a few just in his own neighbourhood. He saw a vast number of houses that had been deserted; but in some of these the servants had returned, and were opening the windows and doors, making fires in all the rooms, burning perfumes, &c. and thus preparing the houses for the return of the families to whom they belonged. Returning again in a few hours, he resolved to keep in his close quarters one week longer, after which he removed with his family to a house in Tottenham High Cross, that had not been infected. Here they enjoyed good air, and fresh provisions brought from Waltham market. His house in London being fast locked up, excepting the gate into his yard, the key of which was entrusted to the watchman, he went or sent two or three times a week to see that things were in good order; and thus it continued till the February following, for the plague had not entirely ceased in the

city during the months of December and January. At the latter end of December it began to increase again, owing, as it was thought, to the people returning faster than ordinary to their dwellings; but by the beginning of February this family being well recovered, and in perfect health, and the city again filled with people, he removed back again, came to his house, opened his doors, and carried on his business as before. The overplus of the provisions, amounting to 1500lbs. of bread, five hogsheads of beer, 300lbs. of cheese, five flitches of bacon, and some barrels of salt beef and pork, he bestowed upon the poor in his neighbourhood, as a thanksgiving offering for the preservation he had experienced.*

* The style of the above narrative is so very similar to that of De Foe's "Journal of the Plague Year," that we may almost conclude it to have been written by him.

FINIS.

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AN AMPLE REPORT OF THE
Speeches of Lord Brougham and Earl Grey,
ON PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

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