

SAY IT IS CONTAGIOUS.

AND "IT," OF COURSE, MEANS THE GRIPPE.

Its Diagnosis in Centuries That Are Past—Its Chief Mystery Solved to Be as Much a Mystery as Ever The Lines on Which It Travels.

The disease which today is known as the "grippe," or "la grippe," appears to be nothing more or less than the old time influenza.

The latter name was given to the disease by the Italians in the 17th century, who ascribed it to the influence of the stars, hence the name "influenza."

This disease is referred to in the works of ancient physicians, but it is only during the last three centuries that accurate descriptions of it have been given by medical writers in connection with epidemics which have occurred from time to time.

The older accepted description of this peculiar disease may be briefly given to show how closely it resembles that which we now call the grippe. It is described as a specific febrile disease of the miasmatic order of zymotic disease, which is usually attended with an extreme degree of lassitude and prostration. The most prominent symptoms are chills and great sensibility to cold over the surface of the body. The mucous membranes lining the air passages are chiefly affected, the nostrils discharging an acrid fluid, accompanied with coughing and a yellowish expectoration, which is most troublesome at night. The eyes are injected and watery, and there is intense frontal headache especially over the eyes, sometimes attended with giddiness, delirium or lethargy and excessive insomnia.

The fever attending the disease is sometimes very severe, and the type varies in different epidemics and localities. The sense of taste is generally disordered, and there is great oppression over the region of the heart.

Notwithstanding the great improvements which have taken place in scientific observation and in statistical facilities, says the American Analyst, "the chief mysteries of the disease remain as much mysteries as ever." [This statement was made before the announcement was made from Berlin that Dr. Pfeiffer, Koch's son-in-law, had discovered the characteristic bacilli, which is the cause of the trouble.] The microbe, if it is a microbe that does the mischief, is undiscovered, nor has the problem of the method of propagation been fully solved. Upon the latter point, however—that of the method of propagation—the recent official report of the British government presents some important information.

The inquiry was intrusted to Dr. Franklin Parsons, who has sought information in every quarter of the globe. The facts which the report has got together seem to show that the disease is carried by contagion from person to person, and is not carried in the atmosphere. This opinion is expressed very decidedly by Dr. Parsons and other experts, and is deduced from a variety of facts.

The general course of the disease has been, in the northern hemisphere, from east to west, and, therefore, in a direction contrary to the prevailing surface winds. It has followed the lines of human intercourse, striking the cities first, and the provincial towns and rural districts later. It seems also to be pretty well established that the disease does not travel faster than human beings or than letters can travel.

The fact also that the disease has prevailed independently of weather or climate seems to point to the probability that it is not of atmospheric origin. It has appeared in all seasons, existing simultaneously in the northern and southern hemispheres—that is, at opposite seasons of the year. It has flourished under all kinds and conditions of heat and cold, dryness and moisture, in Russia and in India, in Great Britain and in the dry air of Egypt. In Spain it was ushered in by a month of cold, dry weather, and in New York and New England by the moistest and mildest season on record.

It is, of course, well known that the disease has spread rapidly to the various members of households into which it has been introduced. It accords with the theory of infection; also that the disease has usually attacked persons liable to infection. Thus husbands who go to town daily on business have been attacked before their wives. It is claimed, further, that persons living out of the way of infection have, as a rule, escaped the disease. The persons so favored would be deep-sea fishermen, lighthouse keepers and the like. Dr. Parsons has made many inquiries among these classes, and the replies have shown that they have usually been exempt.

JAPAN'S WAGE EARNERS.
Thirty Cents a Day Makes Happy an Ordinary Workman.

Wages in Japan are small, but living is cheap. Ordinary mechanics earn on an average thirty sen (about twenty-five cents) a day. A sen is less than your one cent. Of course, good mechanics make more than thirty sen. But, however skillful he is at his trade, a mechanic seldom earns over sixty sen a day. He not only supports himself beautifully with the sixty sen, but also keeps his family in sustenance for a whole day.

If you send for, say a carpenter, the night before to come next day and do some work about your house, he fixes his own time. Leave it to him, he will do right by you. He comes at six in the morning and, after he has lead by the master of the house, considers the work to be done. Then he sits down, examines his kit of tools and usually proceeds to what the plane iron. And he goes himself or sends a man to procure board, lath, etc., at the dealer's. He is slow but sure.

The Japanese carpenter is an artist. You should not molest him in his work or you will make him lose inspiration. The foreign resident in Japan, particularly the American, gets fidgety in watching the Japanese carpenter work in his yard, and that vitiates the work.

Let the Japanese carpenter alone; he does not need, cannot stand, "bossing." He smokes his tiny brass and bamboo pipe now and then—very often, rather—and when he smokes he does not work, though he critically contemplates his work. That is the moment of inspiration. But smoking with a Japanese workman is not long; it is to fill up a moment of thought or of consultation.

At noon he lunches with dispatch and

sits smoking till about 1 p. m. After an hour or two of work he takes a nap among the littered chips on the mat, head pillowed upon a block of wood he has been laboring upon. The siesta lasts about half an hour or less. On waking our carpenter smokes and applies himself afresh to work. He now keeps at it till sundown.

Taken altogether, making deductions for the examination of tools, the multi-smoking, the siesta, etc., he works fully ten hours.

Merchants and tradesmen have what they call Kumiai an agreement among men of the same business not to undersell one another, to keep up a standard of their goods, to preserve union and business comity among themselves, and towards the government to prove law abiding, etc.

In front of his establishment the proprietor hangs out the sign of membership, a board on which is written that Gohsei or Kichibei is a member of Tokyo Watch Dealers' Association, or of the Bath House Keepers' Union. The seal of said Kumiai is branded on it.

It is worthy of notice that workmen in the employments new to Japan—printing and the like—have been the first to make any show at all of self-protection, aping their western brethren.

For all this it is perfectly safe to say that the majority of workmen are still servile and they have practically no good system of self-protection. From the belittling restrictions of feudal days they haven't yet fully delivered themselves.—N. Y. Press.

CURIOSITIES OF OATH-TAKING.

How the Natives of Different Countries are Sworn.

A Chinese witness on entering the box immediately knelt down, and a china saucer having been handed to him he, still in the same posture, smashed it against the rail. The usher then, though an interpreter, addressed him thus—"You shall tell the truth and the whole truth; the saucer is cracked, and if you do not tell the truth your soul will be cracked like the saucer."

A Jew is sworn upon the Pentateuch with his head covered. A witness was permitted to kiss the Old Testament alone, because it countenanced swearing and the New prohibited it. And when on trial for high treason one of the witnesses refused to take the oath as usually administered, but put his hands to his buttons, and, in reply to the question whether he was sworn, stated that he was under an oath, it was held sufficient.

Lord George Gordon, before embracing the Jewish religion, was sworn in the Scotch manner, by holding up his hand without touching the book or kissing it, and the form of oath administered was—"You swear according to the custom of your country, and of the religion you profess, that the evidence, &c."

A Mohammedan witness first placed his right hand flat upon the book, put the other hand to his forehead, then brought the top of his forehead down until it touched the book. He then looked for some time upon it, and, being asked what effect that ceremony was to produce, he answered that he was bound by it to speak the truth.

A curious kind of curse-oath is found among the Nagas of Assam. Two men will lay hold of a dog by head and feet, a third will then, with a single blow of the das, chop it in two—this being emblematic of the fate expected to befall the perjurer.

In lawsuits between Russians and the wild Ostiaks of Siberia, it is customary to bring into court the head of a bear, the Ostiak making the gesture of eating, and calling on the bear to devour him in like manner if he does not tell the truth.

Among the curiosities of the subject are quaint oaths of kings. William the Conqueror swore "by the splendor of God;" William Rufus, "by that and that;" John "by God's teeth;" and others, are the old oaths. "By God's body and wounds," converted into "oddsbodkins" and "wounds."

In early ages men swore involuntarily by Styx and Tiber, and to this day an oath on water of the Ganges is to the Hindoo the most binding of pledges, for the goddess will take awful vengeance on the perjurer's children.—Globe.

French Bank Bills.

All bills are issued by the Bank of France, which carries on the whole process of manufacture, including even that of the paper on which they are printed and the ink used. The paper factory is at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, where linen rags are so treated as to produce a paper of a peculiar quality. This special paper is made, inspected, cut into sheets, and sent to Paris under the care of two of the bank officials, who are held responsible for every sheet.

The sheets are packed in bundles of 1,000 in each and are printed in the basement of the bank building in Paris.

A series of bills consist of 1,000, and twenty-five series, lettered A, B, C, etc., and tied up together under the name of an "alphabet." After each operation the bills are verified by women, who sign their names on the band placed around the bundles. As there are nine operations there must be nine verifications, and the final verification is repeated by a fresh set of inspectors, so that nothing can be overlooked. After the bills are complete they are delivered to the secretary of the bank, who examines them and gives a receipt for them, discharging the head of the printing department from further responsibility. They are then placed in the vaults and are withdrawn for issue only by order of the governors of the bank.

Methods of London Thieves.

At the next assizes in London the trial of a new kind of thieves promises to be interesting. Their method was to visit unoccupied houses in the outskirts of the city in the daytime. They drove up in an elegant carriage, and when they found nobody at home the house was marked. In the night they came in a wagon, broke into the house and carried off their booty. When it turned out they were mistaken and that parties were in the house they simply offered to sell photographs and albums.

One of the members rode a bicycle and took his notes of the houses that were good for robbing. Mr. and Mrs. Clarke were the leaders of the gang. They lived in one of the suburbs, were highly respected by all their neighbors and were extensively invited to tea parties, dinners, etc.

So many have been cured of rheumatism by Hood's Sarsaparilla that we urge all who suffer from the disease to try this medicine.

DAMIENS' EXECUTION.

The Story of the Horrible Punishment Inflicted Upon Him.

On Wednesday afternoon, January 5, 1757, Louis XV., King of France, descended to his carriage at Versailles palace, and as he was about to get into his carriage a stout man, dressed in black, pushed aside the officer in attendance, came up to the king, put his hand on his shoulder and gave him a stab in the side with a pocket knife. The man made no attempt to escape.

The man was immediately taken and made no resistance, and was conveyed to prison, where an officer of high rank ordered the soldiers to heat the tongs red hot and burn the legs of the poor wretch, which was done to the great satisfaction of all beholders. He was so severely burned that he was a sufferer thenceforth as long as he was permitted to live.

It was even proposed in the guard room to heat the fireplace with tongs and burn him on the spot; and this would certainly have been attempted but for the interposition of a civilian who was present.

After a long trial, in which nothing of importance was discovered, the 28th of March was appointed as the day for his torture and execution. On the morning of the day named he was taken to the torture chamber and subjected to the greatest amount of anguish which he could endure without danger of dying. As a writer observes:

"The wedges used in compressing his legs were inserted at intervals, so as not to fatigue him, and if he appeared on the point of swooning the wedge was removed and reinserted after a time."

This was the sentence carried out: First, his right hand, with which he had struck the King, was burned off; next, masses of flesh were torn from him by red-hot pincers, and melted led and rosin poured into the wounds; lastly, a strong horse was attached to each of his four limbs, and an attempt was made in this way to tear him to pieces. After a considerable period it was found impossible to do this, and a message was sent for permission to cut the muscles of the joints, to facilitate the execution of this part of the sentence. This was refused, and the attempt was renewed and was again unsuccessful.

A second time word was dispatched to the Hotel de Ville that the horses could not tear the dying wretch asunder. The required permission was then given, and the muscles were severed. But it was not until both legs and one arm had been torn off that the prisoner expired.

From the moment when the execution began until he breathed his last was a period of an hour and a quarter, during which he uttered nothing but inarticulate cries and shrieks extorted from him by his agony.

PRINCE AND PLAYER.

They Play Cards and Meet with Very Sharp Sharps.

While in Chicago during his journey around the world Prince George of Greece visited the Columbia theatre and witnessed the efforts of Mr. James T. Powers in "A Straight Tip." On the steamer in which the prince sailed to England Actor Powers was a passenger and in due time the comedian was presented to the prince, who remembered Mr. Powers very well from his Chicago performance. One day a game of poker was started in the smoking cabin, and, although neither his highness nor his comicality understood the game, they both joined in it. There were four others in the party. Two were, as they said, commercial travellers: one was an actor personally known to Powers and the fourth was an Englishman traveling for pleasure.

Presently Prince George and Mr. Powers got a hand in the game. At first the betting was light, but after a while the stakes increased and with them the excitement. Powers and the Prince were heavy losers. So also was the Englishman. The sole winners in the game were the two commercial travellers. Finally a big jackpot was opened by the prince. Powers is not a gambler, but he is not in the least observant. He threw away two small pairs and passed out. Then the betting began. Everybody stayed in except the actor, and when the cards were drawn there was a considerable pot on the table.

"I've got enough," replied the Prince nervously when the dealer offered to deal him cards. The Englishman drew two, the commercial traveller drew one card, Prince George promptly bet the limit. The Englishman threw down his cards and called for brandy and soda. The commercial traveller saw the prince's bet and raised it. The prince quickly bet again, and to and fro the financial banter went until the table resembled a faro lay-out, so completely was the board covered with chips and bank notes.

"What have you got?" the prince finally called.

"Four aces and a king," said the commercial man, reaching out his hand for the stakes.

"You beat me," remarked his highness sadly, laying down a king full.

"Hold on!" yelled Powers, jumping up and grabbing the money. "There is cheating here. Your jigsaws, these fellows are regular card sharps."

In an instant the table was in an uproar. The actor sprang to Powers' assistance, while the second commercial man sprang to aid his friend. Powers, however, held on like a vice to the money with one hand and to the gambler's arm with the other. "See, your royal nibs," he cried excitedly as he raised the imprisoned arm. In the commercial man's sleeve, just under the wrist, there was a small slit through which a card was sticking. Whereupon the prince and his two actor friends fell on the commercial traveller and, after giving him a sound thrashing, discovered that he had a complete gambling outfit in his pocket.

Something About Siam.

Siam has been until lately a terra incognita, a country whose only product so far as was known to Americans and Englishmen, was the famous Siamese twins. The first treaty of commerce was made by the Siamese government with England in 1857, since which a little has been added to our knowledge of the country and its people. The area of Siam is twice that of Great Britain and Ireland. The population is said to be about 6,000,000.

The Siamese sovereigns have usually been men of considerable ability and in energy and enlightenment are superior to most Asiatic potentates. The late King of Siam and his successor have done what

they could to introduce the forms of western civilization. Bangkok, the capital, has the electric light, trams and the government offices of European architecture, and at present the king has also shown himself a reformer of abuses, especially of the worst of Siamese social evils, the universality of serfdom and the prevalence of slavery.

Further and much needed reforms are expected from him, but even were the political and fiscal administration of the kingdom very much better than it is the Siamese, a light-hearted nation of Buddhists, fond of amusement and accustomed to frequent holidays, are little fitted to develop the great resources of their country. Its internal trade is chiefly in the hands of Chinamen, who, with the Malays, add some millions more to the estimated population already stated. Railways have been constructed and Europeans have been encouraged by the policy of Siamese royalty to settle at Bangkok and to develop the external trade of Siam.

MILLER BROS.' EXHIBIT.

It Contained the Best Pianos and Organs and Was Admirable.

At the recent exhibition, says the Halifax Mail, Miller Bros. (Granville street) occupied a large space (nearly the whole of the south end gallery), and their show presented a fine appearance. It was all enclosed by a nice neat railing (of turned bannisters) and the place raised about eight inches, while all was covered by a nice carpet, the walls and ceiling being nicely papered, and suspended from the ceiling were three electric lights, and their whole place tastefully and richly draped and some nice paintings hung. They showed fifteen fine organs and pianos. The Karn organ in church and parlor styles, some of which are very fine in both appearance and tone, ranging in price from \$75 to \$450. Also some fine Karn pianos in mahogany, walnut and rosewood finish. The Evan Bros. piano in mahogany, walnut and rosewood finish; both of those makes of pianos are becoming very popular. Prices of pianos shown ranged from \$350 to \$600. Occasionally some very sweet music could be heard from their department. They also showed in a separate booth ten of the celebrated Raymond sewing machines in different style of oak and walnut. Among them was a very fine cabinet machine, which attracted much attention, it being so simple to open and close and to operate: and when closed having the appearance of a writing desk. This machine has become of late years a general favorite with the public. This firm deserves credit for going to the trouble and expense they did in making so fine an exhibit. They received three diplomas on their organs and pianos. The highest award given, no prizes were offered. They have now been in business over twenty years and during that time have worked up a very large business in the lower provinces, which territory they control.

The monthly concerts at the school for the blind have been resumed. The first of these took place on Wednesday afternoon in the assembly hall of the institution. The visitors were conducted to different parts of the buildings, and were loud in their praises of the arrangement of the music rooms. Through the plate glass doors of each of these rooms a pupil could be seen practising upon one of the new Evans Bros. or Karn pianos recently put in by Miller Bros. of the city, who are the sole agents. Their pianofortes are particularly fine in tone and are giving every satisfaction.

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By JAMES M. MACHAR, "Fideliis." A short poem of great beauty.

Fairly Caught.

By Mrs. S. A. CUNZON. A charming story, begun in this number and to be concluded in the March number.

Lines from Heine.

By A. A. MACDONALD. A very good translation in verse of one of Heine's exquisite lyrics.

Two Canadian Heroes.

By J. JONES BELL, M.A. An interesting chapter from Canadian history.

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By E. COLLINS. The scene of this weird tale is laid in Nova Scotia. Reprinted from the INDEPENDENT.

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By "JOHN AMOS." A quaint discourse in verse on the merits of several Canadian poets.

Scott of Lady's Lane.

By Geo. L. KILMER. Reprinted from an American magazine.

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By "DELANCY." A short poem.

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