

pyæmia, dysentery, enteric fever, ague, tuberculosis, pneumonia, diphtheria, erysipelas, cholera, tetanus, syphilis, plague may be enumerated, the organism specific to each of them having in the sense employed by Jenner been discovered. This exactness of knowledge of the *materies morbi* of these maladies must ultimately give greater precision and effectiveness in treatment, and especially in prophylactic treatment. The report of a Committee of this Society on the periods of incubation and contagion of specific fevers is of standard value and authority, and the further inquiry as to the duration of infectiousness in convalescence, which must be based upon bacteriological observations, is now possible, and might properly be undertaken by the Society. Already some fruits have been gathered in therapeutics. The triumphs of surgery that have ensued upon increasingly exact recognition of the organisms responsible for suppuration so fill the mind's eye that it can scarcely penetrate to the Dark Ages that ended less than a generation ago. The great terror of the early days of diphtheria has been almost removed by antitoxin treatment; the prophylactic treatment of tuberculosis has been greatly stimulated. A measure of success, encouraging for the future, has at least been attained in tetanus, septicæmic conditions, plague, cholera, anthrax, and we hope, this session, to receive some valuable contributions presenting for discussion and comparison the experience of those who have in the African war and in India watched the results of the preventive inoculations against enteric fever devised by Professor Wright. Important, however, as are these increased powers of prophylaxis and treatment, the direct fruits of recent combined laboratory and clinical labours, encouraging, too, as they are for further work, we must yet admit disappointment that they have failed to help us in some of our more homely diseases—diseases which in so great a degree account for the discomforts and death-rates of large communities.

The death-rate from pneumonia has remained unaltered for fifty years; the influenza bacillus thwarts our best efforts and carries on its guerilla warfare year after year, with a gay elusiveness worthy of a DeWet, nor can we yet cure a common cold.

PROCLIVITY, HEREDITY AND IMMUNITY.

In the light of recent combined laboratory and clinical work the ideas of proclivity, heredity, immunity and epidemic influence have acquired a more definite and practical shape—nay, have been resuscitated from an oblivion threat-