

a very large percentage of our people are not vaccinated. This is a veritable danger.

In Britain the deaths from smallpox runs from 600, and 700, and 800 a year to 2,545 in 1902, and this on a population of 44,000,000. In Germany for the past ten years the highest number of deaths in any year was 65, and this on a population of 62,000,000. In Germany there are no smallpox hospitals, as such patients are accommodated in the wards of any general hospital.

It does seem strange that Britain which gave the world the benefits of vaccination, still keeps smallpox. The plea for exemption under "conscience" is only another name for ignorance. We should do better in this country.

A MEDICO-LEGAL PUZZLE.

Mrs. Maybrick was found guilty on 7th August, 1889, after an eight days' trial, of having poisoned her husband by administering to him arsenic. Sir Charles Russell defended her and always maintained that she was innocent. He afterwards became Lord Chancellor of England, and was raised to the Peerage as Lord Killowen. After his elevation, he twice recommended her release.

She was made the subject of many petitions for her reprieve, and the day before that fixed for her execution the sentence was commuted into one of life imprisonment. The papers commuting the death sentence contained the words that the evidence did "not wholly exclude a reasonable doubt whether his death was in fact caused by the administration of arsenic." Sir Charles Russell (Lord Killowen) then Chief Justice, in 1895, urged her release and said "the foundation on which the whole case rested was rotten, that in fact there was no murder, that, on the contrary, the deceased had died of natural causes."

Here was doubt, indeed. The wording of the commutation from the death sentence to that of life imprisonment admitted this by saying, "not wholly exclude a reasonable doubt." She either murdered her husband or she did not. If the evidence did not entirely prove that she was guilty of murder, it failed entirely, and she should not have been kept in prison. It is just as wrong on evidence that did "not wholly exclude reasonable doubt" to imprison for life as it would be to hang any one.

As a medical journal dealing with matters of health, life, and medico-legal evidence, we believe that this case will ever stand on record as one where the doubt of guilt was very great, indeed; and, yet, the prisoner was, at the time of the trial and for long afterwards, denied the benefit of this "reasonable doubt."

The logic of the case seems unanswerable, that in this case British justice broke down and hopelessly failed.