

ery grounds" not far from the mouth of the Elbe.

Plaice is practically the only fish used by vendors of dried fish which is not gutted as a matter of course at sea, and Dr. Hamer says it is clearly desirable in the interest of the public health that no plaice which has not been gutted should be exposed for sale in the market.

#### Health Matters in British Guiana.

A Blue Book report of British Guiana for 1909-10, prepared by Mr. J. Hampden King, Assistant Government Secretary, has been received at the British Colonial Office and presented to both Houses of Parliament. The section devoted to vital statistics and public health gives the present estimated population of the Colony as 305,097 — 158,435 males and 146,662 females. The birth rate for 1909 was 29.3 per 1,000 of the population, the mean rate for the previous five years having been 30.4. Of the births registered 3,577, or 40 per cent., were legitimate, and 5,370, or 60 per cent., were illegitimate. The birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated population of each of the different races represented in the community was as follows: Europeans (other than Portuguese), 11.1; Portuguese, 23.8; East Indians, 27.6; Chinese, 32.2; Aborigines, 61.3; Blacks, 30.9; and Mixed Races, 27.5. The death rate was 30.0 per 1,000, as compared with a mean rate for the previous five years of 30.5. The mortality amongst children under one year continues to be high, and the mean rate for the past five years has been 210 per 1,000. The health of this province of the Empire showed no marked improvement over the previous year. There was no epidemic of any dangerous, infectious or contagious disease, though the existence of yellow fever and plague in neighboring places gave rise to considerable anxiety. Malarial fever continues to claim a large number of victims, and efforts are being made by legislative and other action to control the mosquito pest. Quinine is now sold at the district post offices all over the province at cost price, and its use is steadily increasing. In 1909-10 some 2,076 ounces were thus sold. Steps were taken to procure this drug put up in chocolate with a view of increasing its consumption among the children, but this method has

proved too expensive. The Medical Department continues to give attention to the question of ankylostomiasis, and the interest that has been aroused in this connection among the employers of labor on the sugar estates and among the laborers themselves is bearing fruit.

There were a few sporadic cases of enteric and blackwater fevers, but, as usual, the principal causes of death were malarial fevers, diarrhoeal diseases, and phthisis and other forms of tuberculosis. Professor Deycke's system of treatment of leprosy by "nastin" is being steadily followed at the leper asylums on the lines laid down by him. Several cases have so much improved that it is hoped they may shortly be discharged. There are five public hospitals in the principal centres of population, and the outlying districts are served by dispensary hospitals and dispensaries. The immigration law also requires the maintenance of hospitals on every plantation on which there are indentured East Indian laborers, and these institutions are available for the treatment of emergency and pauper cases from the general community. The daily average number of in-patients was 705. There were 1,890 deaths. Out door treatment was given to 74,646 persons.

An ordinance has been passed which gives power to take special measures of precaution in case the province is threatened with an invasion of a dangerous epidemic disease which the ordinary law is inadequate to deal with. The idea is to have the means of at once dealing with any dangerous disease which makes its appearance, instead of having to wait till the legislature can give the necessary special powers, and to avoid a delay during which the disease might make serious headway. It may be of interest to mention that an ordinance has also been passed withdrawing all protection from carrion crows and permitting them to be killed like vermin in any part of the province. Until lately they were thought to be useful as scavengers and were protected from destruction, it being an offence to kill them; but it is now agreed that they are dangerous as disseminators of disease by fouling water, and that any usefulness they possess is more than counterbalanced by the risk of spreading infection.