

THE LONDON INFLUENZA OF 1847.—Dr. Samuel Wilks, of Guy's Hospital, in a letter to the *Lancet*, December 28, 1889,—(New York Medical Journal)—gives some interesting recollections of the influenza epidemic of 1847, which resembled closely in its clinical characters that from which we are suffering to-day. He specially noted the absence of catarrh of the nasal and of the ocular mucous membrane. Particularly in cases which were fatal by inflammation of the chest organs there was no initial catarrh. The fatal cases were by bronchitis, pneumonia, pleurisy, and endocarditis. The occurrence of the latter was remarkable, as there was no rheumatism to account for it. There were several cases at Guy's Hospital of sudden fatal pleurisy. In none of the cases was there any catarrh. Although the increase in mortality was very great, the percentage of deaths in those attacked was small. The whole of the medical staff at Guy's were in turn attacked, although their illness lasted only a few days, and Dr. Wilks remembers that on one occasion not a single member came to the hospital to go round the wards or to lecture, so universal was the epidemic.

INTUITIVE WISDOM OF THE INDIAN.—A medical exchange says, the Indian is not such a fool as many think, and seldom has he more wisely displayed his native or intuitive wisdom than in the recent execution of a "medicine man," in Wyoming Territory, because he failed to keep the members of his tribe well. The Chinese and the Indians seem to have the true conception of the proper function of a doctor, for they look to him for the preservation of health; it is only the wise, civilized white man who waits until disease is on the warpath and then hurries for the doctor to combat it. The Indian and the Chinese believe in prevention; we believe in cure, if we can cure; which civilization, think you, seems the most civilized?

THE DEADLY OVERCOAT.—FROM THE LONDON LANCET.—We protest against the indiscriminate use of the thick and heavy overcoat. We would rather see men in fairly robust condition, especially if young, clad warmly next the skin, and wearing either a light top coat or none at all. There can be no doubt that the habitual use of great coats is indirectly accountable for the chills which they are intended to pre-

vent. The man of sedentary habits emerges daily from a warm breakfast room clothed in his ordinary winter garments, with probably woollen underwear, and over all the heavy ulster or top coat. After a short walk he finds that the sense of warmth he began with is more than maintained. He arrives at his office or place of business, and off goes the overcoat, though the air of the newly opened room is as cold as that without, and draughts in addition. During the day perhaps he travels to and from adjacent business houses wearing only his house clothing. The overcoat is laid aside till closing time reminds him of the journey home. The frequent result is that somehow, between the hours of his departure and return, he is chilled. No doubt he would run as great a risk if, lightly clad, he were to face the rigor of a winter day. In this case, however, exercise and habit might do much to develop the power of endurance, and there would, at all events, be less danger of sudden cold acting upon a freely perspiring surface.

CONVENTIONAL MOURNING OR HEALTH?—Which shall it be? The time has come to choose. The N.Y. Medical Journal says: A movement has been started in England to put an end, if possible, to the present irrational mourning costumes that exact of women great personal inconvenience, physical injury, and disastrous expense. The conventional costume of a well-bred widow, for instance, possesses every known quality of unhygienic, non-æsthetic, and costly dress. Proper exercise while she is wearing it is out of the question. The husband who loses his wife escapes such outward trappings, not being forced to adopt any special habiliments that can incommode or injure him. In this new crusade of common sense Lady Harborton takes the lead, setting forth in a recent article the reasons why existing mourning costumes should be abandoned by all sensible women. She suggests that persons should provide in their wills that no mourning should be worn for them. To the pang of leaving a family is added the thought that our loved ones will be suffering physical discomfort and perhaps disease by the fashion of mourning for us. The materials now in use are in themselves injurious, the dyes being often of a poisonous nature and frequently injuring the skin and ruining the complexion. The whole matter, like every other social and domestic question, rests entirely with op-