

disease is not likely to spread, unless in proportion as it finds, locally open to it certain facilities for spreading by *indirect* infection. In order rightly to appreciate what these facilities must be, the following considerations have to be borne in mind:—*first*, that any choleraic discharges cast, without previous thorough disinfection, into any cesspool or drain, or other depository or conduit of filth, infects the excremental matters with which it there mingles; and probably to some extent the effluvia which these matters evoke; *secondly*, that the infective power of choleraic discharges attaches to whatever bedding, clothing, towels and like things, have been imbued with them, and renders these things, if not thoroughly disinfected, as capable of spreading the disease in places to which they are sent (for washing or other purposes) as, in like circumstances, the cholera patient himself would be; *thirdly*, that if, by soakage or leakage from cesspools or drains, or through casting out of slops and wash-water, any taint, however small, of the infective material gets access to wells or other sources of drinking water, it imparts to enormous volumes of water the power of imparting the disease. When due regard is had to these possibilities of indirect infection there will be no difficulty in understanding that even a single case of cholera, perhaps of the slightest degree, and perhaps quite unsuspected in its neighbourhood, may, *if local circumstances co-operate*, exert a terribly infective power on considerable masses of population."

Mr. Simon further stated that cholera derives all its epidemic destructiveness from filth, and especially from excremental uncleanness, and that the local conditions of safety are, above all, these two: (1) That by appropriate structural works all the excremental produce of the population shall be so promptly and so thoroughly removed that the inhabited place, in its air and soil, shall be absolutely without fecal impurities; and (2) that the water supply of the population shall be derived from such sources, and conveyed in such channels that its contamination by excrement is impossible. These views of Mr. Simon are still universally accepted and quoted.

FROM CHLOROFORM there were reported in England thirteen deaths during 1883 and from ether none. Yet ether was more extensively used than ever before.

#### INTERESTING ACCOUNT OF CHOLERA IN THE MASAI COUNTRY AND ZANZIBAR.

The experienced health officer of the city of Glasgow, Dr. Christie, in a paper read before the Philosophical Society, in January last, referred to elsewhere, gave the following interesting record in his own experience: A few years ago, while following out one branch of the track of the great cholera epidemic of 1865-70: viz., that through Central Africa, I ascertained that the disease was conveyed from the Galla Borani country, south of the river Jub, by the fighting men of the Masai tribe, who inhabit an immense area of country to the east of the Victoria Nyanza. At the time I obtained some curious details regarding the mode of life of the Masai people, and I was glad to learn from Mr. Joseph Thompson, who recently travelled through the Masai country, that these accounts were not exaggerated. The Masai are pastoral and nomadic, moving about where pasture for their flocks is to be found. Their tents are constructed of stakes fastened at the top with thongs, covered with bullock hides, and plastered over with cow dung. The community is divided into two classes—viz., the married men and women with their families, and the unmarried men and women. The young women at the age of twelve, and the young men at the age of fourteen, are moved out from the married kraal, and live in an entirely separate kraal. From the time that they enter on this stage of life, until they get married, which is usually many years afterwards, their sole diet is blood, milk, and beef. They partake of no vegetable food whatever, and they drink no water. They are practically go-naked, their dress being merely a skin over the shoulder, which they also use as a mat for sleeping on. During the rainy season their sole occupation consists in tending their flocks; and during the dry season in cattle lifting raids. Their arms consist of a spear with a head something like a shovel, and a large bullock hide shield. They set out on their raids at the close of the rainy season, and return before the rains set in, as otherwise their hide shields would be softened and rendered useless.

In 1868 cholera swept the Masai country; but I am unable to state anything as to its relative prevalence among the kraals of the married and the unmarried. It was, how-