

can doubt that had its advent been in the middle instead of at the end of the last century, civilization might have had to face again the prospect of destruction. With slow deliberation since in 1894 it started in Hong-Kong it has reached fifty-two countries in every district of the world (J. M. Eager).

The outbreak in India, which began in 1896, has shown that under suitable conditions the disease has lost none of its old malignancy. With the exception of a slight decrease in the years 1900 and 1906, there has been a constant annual increase in the number of deaths, the total amounting now to between 6,000,000 and 7,000,000. On the whole, in other countries it has been held in check, and for so pandemic a prevalence during fifteen years the total mortality cannot be said to be excessive. The two serious features relate to the difficulty of enforcing successful measures in India, and the extraordinary tenacity it has displayed in spite of the most vigorous measures for its total suppression. It is not without significance that at Glasgow, where there were small outbreaks in 1900 and 1901, two cases occurred in 1907 which could not be traced directly to shipping. As Lucretius says, in describing the great plague in Athens, 'Appalled and doubtful mused the healing Art'; but we have made a great step in our knowledge of the means of its dissemination, and though we may well be appalled at the virulence of the disease in India, we have no cause to doubt the efficacy of the machinery which is keeping it in check all over the world. As an offset to the dark picture, India is the very country above all others in which the health of the European has progressively improved. The army statistics show an extraordinary reduction in the death-rate from typhoid fever, dysentery, and from malaria. Lord Kitchener remarked the other day that the improvement of the English troops in India in the past ten years was equivalent to adding 2,000 men to the strength of the army.