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THE Christmas of 1904, says Black and White, will long be memorable for the terrible visitation of fog by which it was signalized. Day after day London lay under an impenetrable pall, that converted it into a "city of dreadful night," while its citizens were compelled to live in a darkness that not only could be felt, but that had to be breathed. Happily the plague—as grievous almost as any inflicted on Egypt—was removed on Christmas Day, when glimpses of the sky and even the sun were vouchsafed to suffering eyes. But the inconvenience and injury sustained before the welcome relief came are not easily to be exaggerated. The direct pecuniary loss to trade from the interruption of Christmas shopping just at the time when it should become most brisk, was enormous, but hardly greater than the indirect loss caused by the complete dislocation of the social and commercial economy at a time of the highest pressure. It is small comfort, too, to know that on the other side of the account are to be set the enormous earnings of the gas and electric light companies, to whom a week of fog is a princely revenue. To anyone compelled by unhappy fate to go about the City and West End last week, it must seem wonderful indeed that so few serious accidents have been recorded. With heavy traffic groping its way blindly along crowded thoroughfares, disaster must have been imminent in a thousand forms; while for a pedestrian to cross the main thoroughfares was an exploit as perilous as a forlorn hope. At the Marble Arch, for example, many persons wishing to pass from the north to the south side of Oxford street deliberately chose to journey in the Tube from the Marble Arch to the Bond Street station, rather than attempt a direct crossing. Not less remarkable than the avoidance of serious accident has been the ab-

sence of that crime which might be expected to flourish in circumstances which deprived property and the person of their best safeguard. It is not very pleasant to reflect how very much London lay at the mercy of lawlessness during a great part of that week. Scientific investigation has just determined that fog is for London not one of the preventable ills; but at least one of the most distressing qualities of that fog—its sulphurous impurities, the inhalation of which produce such smarting eyes and aching heads—is preventable, as soon as London has realized the folly of allowing a million domestic chimneys to discharge the unconsumed smoke into the air.

ENGLISH journals think they can read the Tokyo mind as affected by the present juncture of affairs on land and sea. The London Statist, one of the competent students of the subject, thinks "there will have to be another campaign," and that "the Japanese Government will be able largely to reinforce Marshal Oyama." Oyama will therefore be numerically superior by this time. He can move his forces freely because the theatre of war is frozen over. Should Kuropatkin find his communications threatened, he will retreat, "possibly as far as Harbin." "In any event, we may reasonably conclude that the Russians will not acknowledge themselves utterly defeated until General Kuropatkin has been compelled to evacuate the most fertile portions of Manchuria." Then and not before, as this authority discerns the facts, "it would clearly be the wise course for the Russian Government to make peace."

SEVERAL correspondents have written to Southern newspapers advising the farmers to burn a part of their cotton in order to raise the market price, and a circular making the same proposal is said to have been widely distributed. During the past month the Charleston News and Courier printed a letter calling upon the men of the South to "rise up and on the first of January burn one million bales of cotton. If that doesn't remedy the matter," con-