

marketable, just about pays the wages of the scavenger and under-gardener. I cannot help thinking that the combination of market gardening with cottage owning in country places, opens up the possibility of an industry which is at once profitable and advantageous to all concerned, and affords a good chance of solving a sanitary difficulty.

I am addressing myself to dwellers in the country, but I should like to say to town dwellers that complete sanitation is impossible, unless cultivated land be brought into tolerably close relationship with the dwelling. At present our sanitary arrangements are magnificently begun, and seldom completed, and while we always uniformly leave a most dangerous loose end to our sanitary measures, we shut our eyes to it, and blow the trumpet of self-satisfaction, as if the sanitary millenium had begun....

I have been reading the last volume of our transactions, and in it I find a very interesting paper by Dr. Sykes, who quotes Dr. Corfield, who, in his turn, is quoting Sir Henry Acland, to the effect that the disappearance of the great cities of antiquity was due to pestilence, rather than war. We must all admit the possibility of such an assumption, and certainly no one can ponder upon the disappearance of Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Greek and Roman civilization, without speculating upon the cause, and without applying the lesson to ourselves, and asking ourselves how much longer is our British civilization to continue.

If great nations are destroyed by neglect of sanitary laws, and if prolonged national life is indicative of sound sanitary measures, there is at least one race upon the globe which is worthy of profound study by all who concern themselves with public health. This race is the Chinese, who have seen all the great nations of antiquity in and out, who were probably a great people in the days of Moses and before, and whose thrifty myriads are even now successfully contending with the Anglo-Saxon race in America and Australasia. The Chinese, as is well known, have had

to contend with national calamities of a most stupendous kind. In our own days we hear of floods and famines which claim their millions of victims, and yet the race continues to increase in such a way, and to overflow its natural boundaries to such an extent, that it is certain, even without the exact returns of a Registrar-General, that the birth-rate must considerably exceed the death-rate, and must have done so in an average way during the three or four thousand years that the Chinese nation has existed.

I think there is no doubt that unless we mend our ways, the Chinese will see us out, as they have seen the other great nations of the world out, and the reason, I believe, is obvious. The Chinese are the most thrifty nation in the world. In China nothing is wasted, and all organic refuse is ultimately returned to the soil. Agriculture is in China a sacred duty, and the Chinese have got a firm grasp of the elementary principle that if the fertility of the earth is to be maintained, we must constantly replenish it. The nineteenth volume of the Health Exhibition literature contains a most interesting series of papers on China, by Surgeon-General Gordon. Mr. Hippisley and Dr. Dudgeon, of Peking. The papers by Dr. Dudgeon are especially worthy of study, for many years residence among the Chinese have impressed him with the fact that we have much to learn from them.

The question of our duty to the soil is fundamental in sanitary matters. If we starve the soil and turn our fertilizing materials into the sea, we may rid ourselves (though this is doubtful) of filth diseases for a time; but it is by no means doubtful that we shall ultimately replace filth diseases by those diseases that are bred of starvation. How soon this will happen no one can say, but that it will happen eventually seems to me as certain as is the axiom, "*ex nihilo nihil fit*." Do not let us commit the great blunder, when dealing with this national question, of forgetting that the life of a nation ought to be measured by centuries; do not let us make a suicidal use of a paltry 50 years