

its last great outburst in England in 1665,* the last outburst in Western Europe at Marseilles in 1721, and in Eastern Europe at Moscow in 1771, and until the closing years of the century in South-Eastern Europe alone—in Turkey—has the plague shown itself epidemically.

But at the present juncture it is right and reasonable to keep in mind that ours may be a false security. We ascribe our immunity to improved hygiene and superior cleanliness, together with (as it would seem from the relative mortality among those of different nationalities stricken of late years in Hong Kong and India) a superior power of resistance in the individual, this resistance or relative insusceptibility being possibly the outcome of better food and consequent more robust health. A more careful study of the facts in relation to the incidence of the Plague may well make us pause. If there is one feature in the history of the disease standing out more than any other, it is the remarkable diversity in the symptoms. In all epidemics there has been the one feature of bubonic enlargements, if not in every case, at least in a considerable proportion of those affected, and the mortality has varied greatly. Now, as in the Black Death, the disease has been of the most virulent septicæmic and hæmorrhagic type; now, as at Bombay in the present epidemic, pneumonic disturbances have been more prominent, and now, as in what the Germans call the "Schlundpest," laryngeal disturbances; indeed, as Cantlie states, a succession of outbreaks in the same city seldom preserves the same type. Bacteriological study of the germ shows us that we are dealing with a microbe peculiarly polymorphic and variable in all its properties. Hence, even if certain races are relatively refractory to the germ in one epidemic, it is well

W. J. Simpson. The Plague in India. *Brit. Med. Journ.*, Sept. 24th, 1898, p. 853.

Haffkine & Bannerman. The Testing of Haffkine's Plague Prophylactic in Plague-stricken Communities in India. *Ibid.*, p. 856.

L. F. Childe. The Pathology of Plague. *Ibid.*, p. 859.

Hankin. Note on the Relation of Insects and Rats to the Spread of Plague. *Ctbl. f. Bakt.* 22, 1897, p. 437.

Hankin & Leumann. A Method of Rapidly Identifying the Microbe of Bubonic Plague. *Ibid.*, p. 438.

Bennett & Bannerman. Inoculation of an Entire Community with Haffkine's Plague Vaccine. *Indian Medical Gazette*, Vol. 34, No. 6, June, 1899.

James Cantlie. The Plague, *The Practitioner*, November, 1899, p. 522. I did not come across this article, having mislaid the reference, until my article was practically complete. In a most clear manner Cantlie takes up the matter very much after the lines here followed and the article is well worth studying by those who wish to obtain a general idea of the nature of the condition written by one, who, in Hong Kong, had abundant opportunity of studying cases.

*As Simpson points out it is not correct to regard this as the last year of the Plague in England—for thirteen years after the great fire in 1666 cases of the disease continued to present themselves.