

They then separated from Karlsefui, and sailed along the Marvel Strands; but a storm carried them out into the Atlantic toward Ireland, where Thorhall lost his life.

Thorhall's two verses are the first recorded poetry composed on American soil. Though they were not written down for several centuries after they were spoken, there is no reason to doubt their genuineness, or the fidelity of the tradition which transmitted them. They are curiosities of literature rather than valuable elements, but both for their age and their connections deservedly lay claim to recognition.—*Atlantic Monthly* for August.

CHOLERA.

Origin of the Frightful Malady and its Tour of the World.

ADVENT OF THE PLAGUE.

Cholera's peculiarities were first recognized at Batavia, the principal Dutch city in Java, in 1829. Whether it originated there or the seeds of it were transported from India no one seems to know. India is, however, supposed to be its place of origin and its home. Its actual place of birth is said to be the lowlands near the mouth of the Ganges, and its great means of dissemination the twelve-year pilgrimages made to the great shrine near the head-waters of that stream. At the last place more than a million of the native Indian population are said to gather, most of them poor, miserable and inexpressibly filthy. The conditions under which they live when assembled, their bad food, the impurity of the water they drink, the accumulation of all things offensive to sight and smell, the absolute absence of all sanitary arrangements are inconceivable to the Western mind. That the disease originates here is possible. At any rate, it is here developed; hence it is spread to all parts of India by the home-returning pilgrims, and so it finds its way from Indian ports to the rest of the civilized world. In 1781 a British army of 5,000 men found the cholera near the great temple of Jugernaut. Three thousand were at once affected, of whom a large proportion died. In 1817 a great army of 90,000 was decimated, and by the time general routes to all parts of Europe and Asia had been established it started out on its first great career of devastation.

ITS FIRST TOUR OF THE WORLD.

It soon traversed India and in succeeding seasons spread over other countries. In 1818 it visited the Indian peninsula. In 1819 it reached Sumatra, Singapore and the islands in the neighbourhood. In 1820 it had arrived at Tonquin, Southern China and the Philippines. In 1821 it was in Java and neighbouring islands, and in the next six years it spread all over China and Chinese Tartary. In 1821 it reached Muscat in Arabia, and during the same season appeared in Persia. In 1822 it prevailed among the Tartar tribes of Central Asia and even reached the river Ural and the Volga, where it for a while disap-

peared. But in June, 1830, it broke out again with such virulence at Astrachan on the Volga that in that small city 4,000 died during the summer and 21,000 in the province. The winter did not seem to check its progress. In February 9,000 persons were attacked in Moscow, of whom more than half died. In 1831, Poland being in rebellion, it was taken there by the Russian armies and proved more destructive than war or famine. Then it went all over Europe. In the same year it was taken by pilgrims from Mecca to Cairo, when 10,400 Mohammedans died, besides Jews and Christians. British colliers took it from Western Russia to Sunderland, Eng. It then spread with great fatality through all the northern cities of the British islands, delaying its appearance in London till 1832. Irish immigrants took the disease to Montreal, whence it was carried by way of the Hudson to New York and by way of Chicago and the western military posts to the Mississippi and New Orleans. It was not seriously fatal in New Orleans till 1833, but in that and the following year it prevailed in nearly all the cities and villages of all the Eastern and South-western States. From the time it started in India till it ended its career in America it was of a most malignant type. In New York there were 5,814 cases and 2,935 deaths; in Philadelphia 2,314 cases and 935 deaths. In New Orleans the deaths were more than one in ten in a population of 55,000. In many of the rural districts of the South and West the mortality was still greater.

THE CHOLERA IN CALIFORNIA.

In 1841 the cholera again visited America on its grand tour of the world, travelling slowly over a portion of its course. It went up the Persian Gulf to Teheran, the Caspian, Russia and to the Mediterranean. It devastated all the great cities of Europe, and found its way by France to New Orleans, whence it was carried up the Mississippi to all the cities of the West. From the cities it spread to the country districts, some of which were almost depopulated. It made its appearance in America in 1849, just when the emigration to California was most active. Those making the overland trip had no means of resisting the attack of the disease, and during 1849 and 1850 no less than 1,000 died on the plains. The population of Sacramento was at that time 10,000 or 12,000. Of these 1,000 died of the cholera during the summer of 1850.

After the cholera left the Indies in 1817 it was fifteen years in completing the tour of America; in 1847 it took two years to pass over the same route, and in 1864 it was about the same length of time in making the same circuit. Its last visit which was fortunately not made till after the war of the rebellion, was less fatal than either of the others. In St. Louis and other Southern cities it resulted in a few deaths, while in Cincinnati the daily death rate during its prevalence did not exceed forty or fifty and was generally less. Cincinnati then had a population not much exceeding 200,000, and the deaths were almost invariably among the poor, who could not very well regulate their diet, or were too reckless to care about preventive measures. There were no cases in the cities on the lakes or the smaller towns of the Northwest. It did not reach California. The localities in the United States that have suffered most have been the hot and fertile regions of the South and West.