

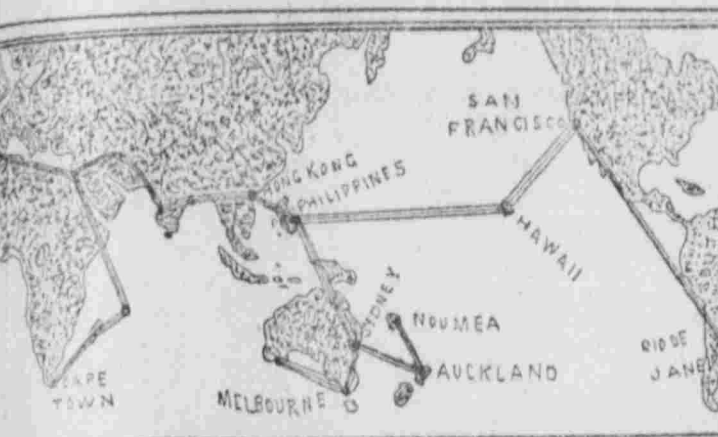
BUBONIC PLAGUE:

LIFE'S MOST AWFUL ENEMY.

It Has Ravaged Continents and Decimated Populations, Finally Securing a Foothold in the United States—Dr. George F. Shady, Editor of the Medical Record, and Dr. A. H. Doty, Health Officer of the Port of New York, Tell Why Cases in San Francisco Have Caused Great Alarm, Perhaps Not Justified.

Headlines announcing "Plague in San Francisco" caused an instinctive shudder among the newspaper readers of the country last week. Everybody has read of the ravages of the deadly disease in India, in China, in Java, in Lisbon, in Australia, in the Philippines and in Honolulu. But all these places, even to the last on the list, seem very far away according to our conventional habits of thought.

It is a well known fact that any of these is but a step from our front on the other side of the globe. The rats that carry the deadly virus are always trav-



MAP SHOWING COURSE OF BUBONIC PLAGUE FROM THE OLD WORLD TO THE NEW.

eling from one to another. Nevertheless, there is a feeling of security in the fact that distance, and most persons have come to associate the plague with Indian famines and Oriental leprosy as woes from which this country is free. But now the question arises, "Are we free?" Is there any assurance that tomorrow or a fortnight hence, in six months, the black death will not rear its awful shape within the borders of the country?

The answer returned to this question by medical science is not altogether reassuring. "No great epidemic of plague is likely," say the physicians, "but we cannot be certain that the disease may not rear its awful shape within the borders of the country." In the popular mind, the plague is a deadly disease, but to the medical profession it is a disease of the past, and one that is no longer a threat to the life of the community.

"While the medical information relating to the plague is still less definite and extensive than it should be," said Dr. Shady, "it is now well demonstrated that the disease depends upon a specific microbe. It may be communicated from one person to another by the blood, or by the secretions of the mouth of dying persons or through the excretions of the body."

"The most dangerous of the three forms of plague, so far as infection is concerned, seems to be the pneumonic type, or lung plague. In this form, at least, it is practically certain that the disease is communicated through the medium of the atmosphere by the inhalation of germs which have been in the system through little injuries of the skin and even by contact with the mucous membrane of the eye—a sufficient indication of its extreme virulence. Beyond all this, however, in addition to the plague, there is a feeling of security in the fact that distance, and most persons have come to associate the plague with Indian famines and Oriental leprosy as woes from which this country is free. But now the question arises, "Are we free?" Is there any assurance that tomorrow or a fortnight hence, in six months, the black death will not rear its awful shape within the borders of the country?

Dr. Shady's views.

The plague seems to be traveling about the world. It is continually crop-



William R. Merriam.

WILLIAM RUSH MERRIAM, whose representatives have just begun taking the twelfth census, is a native of New York state, but has been a Minn. resident since 1881. He is a St. Paul banker and a successful business man. In 1888 and 1890 he was elected governor of Minnesota. As director of the twelfth census he will command an army of over 45,000 enumerators—more than Oom Paul ever had in the field. His chief assistant is Frederick H. Jones, an expert statistician. The census will cost Uncle Sam about \$10,000,000.

ing the disease in a condition of receptivity in the exposed persons which encourages it and renders those whose physical condition is such as to be exhausted or who lack food especially liable to it.

"Consequently, in order to guard against its propagation, there should be a method of rapid disinfection of all bodily excreta as well as of clothing and sick chambers, entered wherever the disease appears. The period of incubation is four or five days, and a quarantine of eight days' duration will surely afford ample protection under ordinary circumstances. Those who attend persons stricken with the disease should use great care to see that there are no abrasions upon their skins, and to assure themselves that all instruments and appliances used are thoroughly disinfected."

"The germs of the disease are often transferred by means of articles of clothing and by the utensils used around a sick chamber."

"It has been pretty well established that rats form one of the most frequent means of communicating the plague. They are especially liable to the disease, and as they frequently disgorge the contents of their bowels, the composition of their bodies releases the germs, which are free to do their deadly work out of sight and unsuspected. In appreciation of the danger from this cause the San Francisco authorities have taken measures for destroying as many as possible of the rats that infest that city."

"While the disease appears in three forms—as affecting the glands, skin or lungs—the most frequent of its manifestations is in the standard bubonic form which ordinarily attacks the inguinal or neighboring glands. This is the earliest form of the disease to diagnose, the others presenting many difficulties in being correctly identified with other diseases. The Department of Health of Berlin recently issued a circular giving a large amount of practical information on this subject, and this circular has been translated into English and is being widely distributed in other countries. The Department of Health of Berlin recently issued a circular giving a large amount of practical information on this subject, and this circular has been translated into English and is being widely distributed in other countries."

"From this report it appears that usually the patient when first attacked is subject to general depression, chills, aches, dizziness and loss of appetite, such as ordinarily indicate fever. There are also severe chills alternating with fever, as in ague. The fever does not last more than a few days, but it is never, before the glands begin swelling and a loss of power in the limbs ensues."

TERROR OF THE PLAGUE.

"There is probably no other disease which inspires such extreme terror as the plague, and this feeling, while fully justified by the virulence of the disease, is apt to be exaggerated in the popular mind. The skin of the trunk is intensely hot, while the limbs are cold and covered with a clammy perspiration. The speech becomes incoherent and the patient's gaze is fixed and staring. In a brief time delirium supervenes, alternating with a drowsy condition. Sometimes the swellings disappear, but more often they degenerate into abscesses and carbuncles and the appearance of the victim in the last stages of the disease is terrible to the extreme. Sometimes enlarged glands occur in the neck and suffocate the afflicted person, while many patients die of blood poisoning, a situation likely to arise from the varied conditions of the disease."

"Hiccups is one of the precursors of death. The manner in which the victim is affected and the extent of the diseased processes are calculated to strike terror into those who witness it, and this feeling of terror is the probable cause of the exaggerated and excessive fear of the disease, and to make those exposed to the scourge susceptible to its attacks."

"Records of the disease itself indicate that the fear which its approach inspires is well grounded, for the majority of the cases of severe epidemics are only about ten per cent, while in milder cases the mortality is over fifty per cent. Thus, of the 128 cases reported from Manila between January 20 and March 5 of the present year, 112 resulted fatally."

"Of recent years a considerable amount of study has been devoted to the various phases of the plague by physicians in Europe and the East especially, and a number of these men have given their lives to the cause of medical science in attempts to find some method of successfully combating it. It is needless to say that no specific has as yet been discovered, and treatment, and that ordinary curative measures have but little effect on its course."

"The therapeutic value of anti-plague serum has been by no means decidedly proven. The British Plague commission, in its report on the subject of Haffkine's serum treatment, decided that inoculation diminished the incidence of plague attacks, but did not afford absolute protection. The use of the serum in several cases, however, lead us to hope that, as we obtain more information concerning the disease itself, some successful method of checking it may be discovered."

"Such detailed and statistical information as we possess in this country is largely due to the work of Surgeon General Wyman and his assistants in the United States Marine service. The energetic measures adopted by these same federal authorities, in conjunction with the local authorities, in dealing with the situation in San Francisco, encourage the hope that the spread of the disease in this country may be quickly and effectually stopped."

WHAT DR. DOTY SAYS.

"The history of the world has shown that three formidable fevers—typhus, bubonic and smallpox—travel in cycles," said Dr. Alvah H. Doty, health officer of the port of New York. "The march of the disease is often to the countries in which they were never known. When they begin their march, there is nothing that can arrest them, save the stoppage of commerce. The most rigid quarantine will not do it."

"About seven thousand vessels come into New York from foreign ports every year, but the majority, of course, are from countries in which there is no bubonic plague. If a vessel arrives here with a clean bill of health, it must be passed, while it may be that she has come from a port in which the plague is in an incubative condition, and her passengers or crew might have come aboard her with the fever not developed."

"Is there no way in which commerce may be freely conducted and yet leave no doubt that it may not bring infection?"

"There is a way. Our consul do not wish to restrict commerce. When a ship asks for a bill of health in a southern port, the consul goes to the officials of the city and inquires as to its health. These, through ignorance or design, report that it is good. The consul is not always in a position to know whether or not there are hidden cases of the fever in town. The disease may be in its incubative period, and the goods which have gone into the ship may have been exposed to it. There is no way of detecting that fact in the examination of her when she arrives at this port."

"The only safe way to keep the disease out of this country, is for the government to put medical representatives with good sanitary training in all southern and suspected ports, whose duty would be to inspect the city and commerce of their respective stations and keep informed as to its general health. Their duties should be to visit all bills of health, describing at length all suspicious circumstances. The United States now has medical representatives in Rio Janeiro and Santos, Brazil, who have been of great assist-

ance to the health officers in this country. In spite of the most rigid quarantine here there are bound to be leaks if there is no help from the shipping ports. When we know from our medical officers abroad that there is fever in the port from which the vessel sailed we have no safe harbor."

"However, careful inspection at quarantine and the powerful germicidal agents that we now have will kill any infection, provided we are able to detect it or know of it in advance. But the quarantine for everything. The municipal officers must be on their guard, and if a case occurs in it must be found quickly and treated heroically. Health authorities do not so much fear infectious diseases as they fear the propagation of them through filth and unsanitary surroundings."

"Are you taking any special precautions at quarantine to prevent the introduction of the bubonic plague?" "We are taking no extra precautions. We are always looking out for it. Of course public safety is the first consideration, then comes commercial interests. When public safety is at stake nothing is left undone to detect bubonic plague or the mere possibility of its introduction."

"What about the danger of infection conveyed by rats?" "The possibility of infection conveyed by rats does exist. I do not endorse it to the extent that some medical men have done, but it is a danger that cannot be overlooked."

"Is there any possibility, should the bubonic plague reach New York, of its ravaging the city as it has the cities of India?"

"It is beyond reason to compare the effect of the plague in New York with that in the cities of India or China. There is not the same density of population, the same sanitary arrangements, population and climate. Bubonic plague is a filth disease, and thrives on filth. Where there is filth, decomposition and an atmosphere rich with the germs, the plague will spread rapidly and become most virulent; but when it chances into a clean town with people to combat it it will make no progress. No city in the world is better able to cope with it than New York. We have a fine sewer system, competent board of health, disinfecting stations, clean streets and plenty of money with which to fight the disease."

"The only menace is the 'quarters' full of crowded, filthy, and insanitary, and the cheap lodging houses, in which there is no regard for cleanliness, isolation and ventilation. Should the disease get into such a neighborhood, it would be very difficult to handle. The 'quarters' would be the danger zone, and the plague would spread rapidly and become most virulent; but when it chances into a clean town with people to combat it it will make no progress. No city in the world is better able to cope with it than New York. We have a fine sewer system, competent board of health, disinfecting stations, clean streets and plenty of money with which to fight the disease."

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"If the bubonic plague should get into New York it could be easily confined. There might be one case and a few others from infection, but it would be stamped out. In 1893 and 1894 we had an outbreak of typhus, which was brought in by immigrants. It made considerable headway before it was recognized. There were thirty or forty cases in the Polish quarter, and it extended to the cheap lodging houses in the vicinity. As soon as the board of health discovered it, the disease was promptly stamped out. Outside of the tenement district there occurred only two cases. All the clothing and bedding of the infected persons were burned, and the premises thoroughly disinfected, and there has been no recurrence of the disease."

"Bubonic plague does not travel half as fast as typhus, which is an advantage in handling it. The plague really travels slowly. One can take smallpox or typhus by contact, but no bubonic plague. An agent of mine in Bombay recently reported to me a case that came under his observation. In a tenement every one of one side of a hall had the plague, while on the other side of the hall there was constant communication between the tenants on both sides."

"The fear of bubonic plague has dominated the feelings of a great many people, but it is not as formidable as New York. It would seem, because New York is a clean city and the germ of the plague cannot live in cleanliness. If a bubonic plague germ is placed on a clean piece of paper and set in fresh air and sunlight, it does not live. It must be fussed over like an infant to keep it alive. The only way to destroy it is to keep clean and turn plenty of fresh air and sunlight on it."

"With the opposite conditions it assumes its most virulent and destructive form. Should the plague come to New York, and it is not impossible or unlikely, the chief aim should be to prevent the propagation of a great many clean, rigid inspection and disinfection. New York is in better condition to stand a visitation of it than any city in the world."

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For Garfield Beach, Tooele and Terminal.	7:45 a. m.
For Tooele, Mercur and Panguitch.	8:30 a. m.
For Ogden, Butte, Portland and intermediate points.	9:00 a. m.
For Ogden, Omaha, Chicago, Denver, Kansas City, St. Louis, and San Francisco.	12:30 p. m.
For Ogden, Denver, Kansas City, Omaha, St. Louis, Chicago, and intermediate points.	6:40 p. m.
For Provo, Sappelo, Milford and intermediate points.	7:00 p. m.
For Ogden, Butte, Portland and intermediate points.	10:00 p. m.

ARRIVE:

From Ogden, Chicago, Omaha, St. Louis, Kansas City and Denver.	5:30 a. m.
From Ogden, Portland, Spokane, Butte, Helena and San Francisco.	9:05 a. m.
From Milford, Sappelo, Provo, intermediate points.	9:35 a. m.
From Ogden, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Omaha, Denver and San Francisco.	10:00 p. m.
From Garfield Beach, Tooele and Terminal.	10:30 p. m.
From Ogden, Butte, Portland and intermediate points.	11:00 p. m.
From Provo, Logan, Brigham, San Francisco, Ogden and intermediate points.	12:00 p. m.

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