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# The Ellicott City Times.

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IS EUROPE THREATENED?

A Question Suggested by the Bubonic Plague in Vienna.

The terror in Vienna which has followed the outbreak of bubonic plague there and the deaths of five persons in addition to that of Hier Barlech, who first contracted the disease from the careless handling of germs under cultivation in Professor Notting's bacteriological laboratory, is not without foundation in the possibility of bubonic plague in this country. In a highly civilized community of modern methods of isolation and antiseptic treatment. For the bubonic plague, which still devastates India and other oriental countries, is the same disease which for centuries periodically devastated Europe, appearing in England as late as 1995 and recurring there from time to time in the century. The earliest historical record of what is believed to have been the bubonic plague is that of a pestilence in 430 A. D. It invaded England, hardly leaving enough living to bury the dead, according to old records, and in the fourteenth century there was a pestilence which by the worst devastation that has ever afflicted mankind, the black death, which in its main features resembled the modern bubonic plague, not only in the symptoms, but in the mode of its propagation, and it is believed to have been the same disease. In Europe 23,000,000 persons died of it between 1347 and 1353, and in Asia 25,000,000. Its last visitation in England, the "great plague" of London, in 1665, carried off 68,600 persons. In the seventeenth century it continued with a certain degree of violence in the epidemic form in Europe. In general it is held that civilized conditions and the modern methods of care for public health prevent such a pestilence from occurring. The bubonic plague is a contagious fever, chiefly characterized by swellings, usually confined to the hands and feet, and in acute cases it is attended by violent cases occurring all over the body, which after death are often of a dark color, thus giving the disease the name of black plague. In some of its epidemics, in some cases it begins with swellings, followed by a mild fever, with possible recovery from the work. It is considered to be a contagious disease, followed by a mild fever, preceded by a vomit of blood and without the occurrence of the characteristic swellings. Of its origin, and mode of propagation, and cure little is known. It is believed to arise in easily crowded communities, in cities where a large number of persons are crowded together in a confined space. It is not believed to be transmissible. In its epidemic form it follows close association with the infected individuals, or with persons affected by their exhalation, and handling their clothing. The disease is known to have been carried by rats, an epidemic outbreak in Constantinople in 1829, by a plague among men. This is said to have been the case in the recent epidemic of the bubonic plague in India—New York Sun.

ELASTIC ENGLISH.

How the Meaning of Some Common Words Has Been Changed.

Professor Whitney says there has been less deterioration of the English language in the second half of the nineteenth century than in any other 50 year period of its existence. The vocabulary has been enormously enriched, but the skeleton of our speech has been only a little developed. It is with the vocabulary that Brander Mathews deals in his essay. He quotes Professor Louisell's remark: "The purest of speakers use every day with perfect propriety words and forms which, looked at from the point of view of the past, are improper, if not scandalous." This is a fitting preface to a discussion of the changes in the vocabulary taking place at the present time, some of which are noted by Mr. Mathews in these words: "Once upon a time to 'aggravate' meant to increase an offense. Now it is often used as though it meant to irritate. Formerly 'calculate' was in the sentence 'It was calculated to do harm,' 'I applied a delicate touch to a finger.' 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