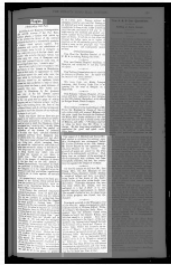




Home > Newspaper Catalogue > The Straits Echo (Mail Edition) > 1905 > February > 17 > Page 123 > Plague.



Plague.

The Straits Echo (Mail Edition), 17 February 1905, Page 123

Share

Save Citation

Microfilm: NL1528

<< Previous Article Next Article >>

Plague.





(Wednesday, 15th Feb.)

According to our Rangoon Correspondent that terrible scourge of the Far East, bubonic plague, a disease with which up to the present the flower of the medical profession has failed to successfully grapple, a disease which spreads rapidly, fills cemeteries, and causes the inhabitants of the stricken town to talk in whispers as they relate the story of the last death and wonder who is to be the next victim, has fallen upon the town of Rangoon—only three days' journey from us—and, has, as our correspondent says, "come to stay."

Most of our readers will be familiar with the history of the disease in Hongkong, where it first made its appearance in 1894 and thence spread far and wide over the East, while its birthplace has been, year after year, visited by an epidemic which science has been powerless to stay or check. In India there has been a great increase of mortality this year. The losses occasioned to Hongkong by the presence each year of the fell disease cannot be estimated. It has proved to that city to be the one great blot in a page of steady progress, and so it behoves us here in Penang to take warning from the fate of the northern Colony and do all that is humanly possible to avert the disaster of an outbreak of plague in our port.

People may argue that we have not got plague in our midst and so there is no neces-






sity for extra precaution or outcry, but it must be borne in mind that Rangoon, where the plague has "come to stay" is only three days by sea from us, that the period of incubation of the disease is believed to be some ten days, and that therefore passengers arriving from Rangoon may be infected with the disease but not show it. That every vessel arriving from Rangoon may bring rats, which, escaping here, may spread the infection far and wide and bring upon us untold misery is well known. That cargo may be similarly infected and on being landed may infect rats and so bring the scourge to our doors is equally true. That the Government is alive to the danger of infection is shown by the fact that on the 9th instant a Gazette Extraordinary was issued in which was published a notification setting forth that Rangoon is to be regarded as an infected port and that quarantine regulations would be put in force against all arrivals therefrom.

As a precautionary measure the deck passengers of the Taroba, which arrived here from the northern port yesterday, were removed to the Quarantine Station for the Health Officer's observation.


So far Penang has remained singularly immune from plague. True, we have had a few cases from time to time, but we believe that we are justified in saying that they have all been imported and that the disease has never gained a footing here. This being the case the very greatest precautions should now be taken as regards all arrivals from Rangoon. Once the dread disease gains a footing here it may take us years to stamp it out and the time-worn adage that "prevention is better than cure" should not be lost sight of. By care and the stringent enforcement of quarantine regulations we may perhaps inconvenience the few, but if by such action we manage to keep the port free from the dread scourge we shall certainly benefit the many. Hence we trust that no effort will be spared, either by the authorities or the public, to protect the place against the invasion of an enemy which, once having gained a foothold, it is all but impossible to defeat. Let everybody remember that the temporary inconvenience is much better to bear than a permanent one, and do all in his power to preserve

to us a clean port. Penang without its



snipping would be very hard hit. Penang as an infected port with vexatious quarantine regulations in force would suffer something very like ruin, and hence it will pay us to take time by the forelock and protect ourselves against the foe which is dangerously near our doors. It will be too late when the scourge has fallen upon us to repent of inaction, so let all reasonable precautions be taken at once, on the principle that "first loss is least loss" and consequently easiest to bear.


THE Hon. the Resident General of the F. M. S. is visiting Pahang this week.




THE new General Hospital buildings at Rangoon are estimated to cost 21½ lakhs of rupees.

THE Tailings Commission was to conclude its labours on Monday last. Its report will be awaited with much interest.

WE learn from our Kuala Lumpur contemp. that Towkay Loke Yew is reopening his tin mine at Setapak on a large scale.



THE Selangor Chinese Chamber of Commerce will duly celebrate its first birthday on the 18th instant (Saturday) at its offices in Rodger Street, Kuala Lumpur.



WITH reference to the 'pushfulness' of Mr. Fryer, the Engineer in charge of the railway works which will connect Malacca with the main trunk line through the Peninsula, the Malay Mail draws attention to the fact that rails are now laid to within seven miles of Malacca, and adds:—"Nothing surprises us when we know that Mr. Fryer is in charge. He has long since established his reputation for good and quick work." Hear, hear!

THE appeal of A. Mitchell and Dorine Mitchell against a conviction for enticing away Mrs. Goodenough was commenced before Mr. Justice Thornton on the 13th instant; Mr. Farrer Baynes for the appellants, the Attorney-General for the Crown. The grounds of appeal are stated by the Free Press to be substantially as follows: That there was no evidence of the marriage of the Goodenoughs, that evidence had been wrongfully admitted, and that the convic-

tion was against the weight of evidence.

On the 7th instant we told how Mr. Lim Cheng How, the Job Manager of the Criterion Press, detected a binder stealing a couple of ledgers and how, on a search being made of the house of the thief's father-in-law, nine other stolen books were discovered. Yesterday afternoon the man was tried before Mr. Ebdon, and was sentenced to a fine of \$150 or to two months' rigorous imprisonment in default. The accused's father-in-law, in whose house the stolen property was found, was discharged.

THE death occurred on the Whangpoo river on the 31st ult., under circumstances which indicate suicide, of William Gifford Fildes. According to the Shanghai Daily News, it appears that the deceased visited some friends on board the steamer Sishan, and left that vessel in a sampan. Soon after leaving, according to the report of the sampanman, the deceased shot himself through the forehead with a Smith and Wesson revolver. Capt. Fildes was formerly an employee of Messrs. Butterfield and Swire, whose service he entered as second officer in February, 1893. He became chief officer in August, 1895, and in September, 1900, captain of the C. N. S. Wenchow resigning in February of the following year. Since that date Capt. Fildes has held several remunerative appointments and only lately, so the Shanghai journal understands, safely ran the blockade into Port Arthur.