

some person known to you (about whom you were not anxious at the time), which dream you marked as an exceptionally vivid one, and of which the distressing impression lasted for at least an hour after you rose in the morning?

V. Have you, within the past year, when in good health, and completely awake, had a distinct impression of seeing or being touched by a human being, or of hearing a voice or sound which suggested a human presence, when no one was there?

VI. Have you, within the past three years but not within the past year, when in good health, and completely awake, had a distinct impression of seeing or being touched by a human being, or of hearing a voice or sound which suggested a human presence, when no one was there?

VII. Have you, within the past twelve years but not within the past three years, when in good health, and completely awake, had a distinct impression of seeing or being touched by a human being, or of hearing a voice or sound which suggested a human presence, when no one was there?

VIII. Have you, at any time during your life but not within the past twelve years, when in good health, and completely awake, had a distinct impression of seeing or being touched by a human being, or of hearing a voice or sound which suggested a human presence, when no one was there?

#### HEALTH MATTERS.

##### Cholera at Quarantine.

IT will, we imagine, be somewhat of a surprise to our readers to learn that there have been thirty-eight cases of cholera at the quarantine islands in the port of New York since Sept. 22; and yet from reputable sources this seems to be the fact. From the report just made to the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, and published in an extra issue of the *Medical News*, we learn that eight persons sick with cholera were removed from the steamship 'Alesia,' to which *Science* referred in its issue of Oct. 14, to Swinburne Island; five of these died: subsequently twenty-seven others were stricken with the disease, of whom nine died: of the passengers of the 'Britannia,' whose arrival from Italy was recorded in *Science* of Nov. 4, three have been attacked with cholera, at least one of whom has died,—a total of thirty-eight cases and fifteen deaths. So far as we know, no new case has developed since Oct. 24.

The report to which we allude is a most important one, and one which will attract the attention and thoughtful consideration of physicians and sanitarians, not only in the United States, but throughout the civilized world. On Oct. 5, the College of Physicians of Philadelphia appointed a committee to consider the present danger of the importation of cholera into this country, and to secure concerted action among the medical societies of the land in urging upon the State and National authorities the adoption of a uniform and efficient system of quarantine for all exposed ports. This committee consisted of Drs. James C. Wilson, E. O. Shakespeare, and R. A. Cleemann. It will be remembered that Dr. Shakespeare was selected by President Cleveland to investigate cholera in Europe and India. These gentlemen investigated the quarantine stations at New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and presented their report Oct. 28. The following day an extra issue of the *Medical News* of Philadelphia, one of the leading medical journals, was published with the following editorial comment: "The paramount importance to the public of preventing the importation of cholera into the United States calls for a special issue of the *Medical News*, giving in full the report of the commission appointed by the College of Physicians of Philadelphia . . . to investigate the condition of affairs in the quarantine of New York. It will be seen that the grave dangers which exist may render prompt action necessary with a view to establishing some national system of quarantine for the protection of the country."

The committee visited personally the quarantine stations at the three ports mentioned, and made a careful and thorough examination of every thing pertaining thereto. It will be impossible for us to do more than refer to their conclusion. In reference to the stations at Philadelphia and Baltimore, they say that it is evident that they fail in the most essential requisites of the necessary number of properly equipped buildings for the isolation and observation

of a large number of immigrants. In regard to the station at New York, they find the buildings to be sufficiently large and numerous, and to have adequate arrangements for heating and cooking, but that they are not divided into a sufficient number of small compartments to permit the strict isolation of the immigrants into small groups. The water-closets and bath-tubs are inadequate, the pumps by which sea-water is obtained for flushing the water-closets were out of order, and the soil-pipes from the water-closets had a number of right angles in their course to the sea, thus interfering with thorough scouring. There is no provision for the general washing of clothing, and the immigrants performed this work for themselves in such proximity to the underground cisterns of water as to render it possible for this water to become infected. The use of this cistern-water for drinking had been forbidden, and other water supplied for this purpose; but there were no means of enforcing the order, and access to the cistern could be had at all times. The lack of bedsteads, chairs, tables, and proper eating utensils, added to the hardships of the immigrants and to the dangers of infection.

The committee comment on the absence of a resident medical officer, and of an adequate force of watchmen, patrolmen, and attendants. The possibility of occasional clandestine communication between the detained immigrants and their friends by means of small boats, constituted a danger to the country difficult to estimate, and against which, so far as could be learned, there were no precautions. At Swinburne Island, where the hospital is situated, there were, at the time of the committee's visit, nine cases of cholera in the wards, and they noted with surprise the absence of a resident physician. It was also a reversal of modern ideas to find male nurses in charge of female patients. The clothing of patients is sent back to Hoffman Island to be disinfected, although there is a disinfecting-chamber in connection with the hospital; and the committee were informed that the convalescents were, as soon as they were strong enough to be about, returned to Hoffman Island without having been previously bathed and disinfected.

In reference to the steamship 'Britannia,' it would appear that the committee believe that cholera appeared during the voyage from Italy, and that its existence was either not recognized by the ship's surgeon, or else concealed by the deliberate falsification of the ship's sanitary record. In either case the committee think that this has seriously increased the present danger of the ultimate introduction of cholera into the country through the port of New York. They state that the continuance of cholera among the passengers of the 'Alesia' so long after their removal to the station of observation, in itself demonstrates the inefficiency of the measures which have been adopted and enforced, and further add, that, although they have not heard of the development of the disease anywhere on the mainland, nevertheless, in view of the almost uncontrollable tendency of cholera to spread at times, and of the original insufficiency and the present faulty constitution of the police force on Hoffman Island, they feel impelled to believe that the immunity up to the present time has been owing to singular good fortune rather than to good management.

Having pointed out the defects of the quarantine stations, the committee turn their attention to the principal cause; namely, the cost of supplying these defects. Were it not for the question of money, there would have been physicians constantly in attendance at the New York station, and, consequently, better management and discipline would have been maintained; while at Philadelphia and Baltimore there would have been adequate establishments provided for the isolation and observation of large bodies of immigrants. The remedy suggested is to put quarantine into the hands of the national government. The committee recognize the difficulties in bringing this about, but at the same time they regard this as the only efficient remedy.

In reference to this report of the Philadelphia committee, we have little to say at this time. It certainly is a very serious indictment of the quarantine stations and methods of the three ports specifically mentioned, and of the other ports of entry upon the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, in reference to which the committee state, that, although they have not inspected them, there is no reason to believe that they are in any respect superior. It will not answer to say, as officials are reported in the daily press to have said, that this is an attack by a jealous city upon New York in order to divert

commerce from its port, nor are all the charges contained in the report to be met by the statement that the governor of the State of New York is responsible, by reason of having vetoed appropriations. The report is a serious reflection upon public officials in whom the public and sanitarians have placed implicit reliance, and should be met in the same official way that it has been issued. Unless it is so met, the quarantine authorities must not expect public confidence; and, whether they do or not, we fear they will not receive it. We shall be only too glad to open the columns of *Science* to them, and present their statements as fully as we have those of the committee of Philadelphia physicians.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION.—The American Association for the Advancement of Physical Education will hold its third annual meeting at the Adelphi Academy, Brooklyn, on Nov. 25. The following programme has been announced: paper by the retiring president, Prof. Edward Hitchcock, A.M., M.D., Amherst College; 'Physical Training in Elementary Schools in the United States' (extract from report of New Hampshire Board of Health for 1887), E. H. Fallows, Adelphi Academy; motion by C. G. Rathman, N. A. T. B., relative to physical training in elementary schools in the United States; discussion; report of work done by the N. A. T. B. the past year, H. M. Starkloff, M.D., president N. A. T. B.; 'Physical Measurements, their Use to the Individual,' Edward Hitchcock, jun., M.D., Cornell University; discussion opened by W. L. Savage, A.M., M.D., director Berkely Lyceum, New York City; general discussion; 'Military Training as an Exercise,' J. W. Seaver, M.D., Yale University; discussion opened by Gen. E. L. Molineux, Brooklyn, N.Y., and John White, Ph.D., head master Berkely School, New York City.

REMOVAL OF NEEDLES FROM THE BODY.—Dr. Littlewood describes in the *Lancet* a method which he has used successfully in seven cases for the removal of needles from the body. The part supposed to contain the needle is thoroughly rubbed over with an electro-magnet, so as to magnetize the metal, if present. A delicately balanced magnetic needle is held over the part. If the needle is present, its position can be ascertained by the attraction or repulsion of the poles of the magnetic needle. Having ascertained the presence of the needle, and rendered the part bloodless and painless, an incision is made over the needle; the electro-magnet is then inserted in the wound, and the needle felt for and withdrawn. If the needle is firmly embedded, the positive pole of a galvanic battery is placed on the surface of the body of the patient, and the negative pole in contact with the needle, which becomes loosened by electrolysis, and can then be easily removed by the electro-magnet.

## ETHNOLOGY.

### Were the Toltecs an Historic Nationality?

DR. BRINTON has for a long time maintained that the Toltecs were no historic nationality, but an entirely legendary people. In a lecture delivered before the American Philosophical Society on Sept. 2, he takes up the question, and ably defends his standpoint which he first expressed in 1868 in his 'Myths of the New World.' The present paper was written to criticise the statements of Charnay and others who maintain the historical character of this people. The enthusiastic Frenchman Désirée Charnay considers the Toltec civilization the basis of all Central American culture, and traces their migrations from the northern boundary of Mexico to Copan; but the reasons which he brings forth to support his theory, and which are entirely founded on the character of Central American arts, are not at all conclusive. The Mexican and Central American styles are not sufficiently studied to draw any conclusions as to what is original in each tribe, and what is borrowed from the other; and Charnay's assertion of a connection between East Asian and Central American arts warns us from accepting his arguments without a thorough criticism. Brinton's opinion is that the emigration of the Toltecs from the north, the foundation of Tula in the sixth century, and the dispersion of the Toltecs all over Central America, are entirely fabulous. He compares the facts known

about Tula and the legends as told by the best authorities, and finds that Tula was nothing else than one of the stations the Aztecs occupied in their migrations. To explain the wide celebrity of the place, which extended to Guatemala and Yucatan, Brinton recurs to its etymology. As the meaning of the name, which is not of rare occurrence in Mexico, he gives 'the place of the sun,' and this, he thinks, brought it into connection with many a myth of light and of solar divinities. This process is one often occurring in the development of folk-lore. There can be no doubt that Brinton's opinion, that no immediate truth underlies the myth which makes Tula the birthplace and abode of gods, and its inhabitants the civilizers of Central America, is correct.

ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE AMERICAN AND BRITISH ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE.—It is of interest to compare the papers read in the Section of Anthropology of these two associations. While the section of the British Association devoted much of its time to considering theoretical questions, such as the probable existence of an Archaian white race, the origin of totemism, etc., such questions were hardly touched upon at the meeting of the American Association, which devoted most of its time to listening to the reports of results obtained by explorers in the ethnological and archaeological field. This may in part be due to the fact that the field of researches in America is so vast. The amount of unknown material is so large, that every year brings some new and unexpected discoveries. But there is another characteristic feature of the American Association. What little discussion of theories there was, referred principally to the discussion of classifications,—a subject which seems to have been entirely wanting among the papers of the British Association. If we consider that classifications are only a help, not an aim, of science, and that the great goal of ethnology and anthropology is to outline the early history of mankind and to work out the psychology of nations, we must concede that the work of the British Association is superior to ours. We do not mean to say that there are no vague theories held by British scientists, or that no eminent work is done by Americans; but the favorite studies of ethnologists as a whole, and as expressed in the subjects of papers presented to the English Association, seem to be of a more general and of a higher scientific character than they are here. We mention a few of the papers read at the Manchester meeting of the British Association according to the reports published in *Nature*. Mr. I. Taylor discussed the probable origin of the Aryans. He dwelled on the recent linguistic researches, which show that the primitive Aryans must have inhabited a forest-clad country in the neighborhood of the sea, covered during a prolonged winter with snow; the vegetation consisting largely of the fir, the beech, the oak, and similar trees, while the fauna comprised the bear, the fox, the hare, the deer, and the salmon. These conditions restrict it to a region north of the Alps and west of the Black Sea. The author attempted to show, both from the anthropological and the linguistic point of view, that the Aryans have evolved from a Finnic people. J. S. Stuart maintained the existence of an Archaian white stock, from which he is inclined to derive so widely different phenomena as the American and Chinese civilizations, as well as the origin of Hittites, Iberians, and Picts. C. Staniland Wake treated the problem of totemism from the point of view that the totem is the re-incarnated form of the legendary ancestor of the gens or family group allied to the totem,—a view which is undoubtedly correct in many cases. S. J. Hickson gave a few remarks on certain degenerations of design in Papuan art. It would have been more proper to speak about conventionalism in Papuan art,—a field that offers many interesting problems, and to which Dr. O. Uhle of Dresden recently made a valuable contribution in the publications of the Ethnological Museum of Dresden. Miss A. W. Buckland spoke about the custom of tattooing, which, although almost universally practised, varies so much in the mode of performing the operation; the various methods seeming to have such definite limits as to make them anthropologically valuable as showing either racial connection or some intercourse formerly existing between races long isolated. This paper belongs to a class of inquiries which have of late been carried on by a number of ethnologists, and which yield valuable results. We call to mind Prof. E. S. Morse's researches on the