



Source 8

Task

- 8a.** What is the main reason for the outbreak of cholera suggested in this source?
- 8b.** What conditions in Newcastle upon Tyne and Gateshead caused cholera to spread so easily?
- 8c.** The end of the source says that some men are against efforts to improve living conditions in the worst parts of the city. Can you explain this?



Source 8

This is part of newspaper report from October 1853; this was at the time of the third outbreak of cholera.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST CHOLERA.

The advanced scientific information of the day shows that Cholera and Fever are as capable of being prevented as that once fatal malady the Small-pox. By the introduction of Vaccination, the latter complaint has been driven from amongst the higher and more intelligent classes of the community. Cholera (that new plague) can also be prevented by proper sanitary arrangements. This dreadful pestilence has for the third time visited our shores; on two former occasions, it has gone nearly over the same ground; it then seized on those places remarkable for their ill-judged position, or from the great neglect of means of cleanliness, adequate to extent and progress of the population.

Since the last visitation of Cholera, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Gateshead have made but little improvement in their condition, the numbers of persons have increased, particularly amongst the poor. The houses in many instances are so peculiarly placed that the one catches the refuse of the other. The river Tyne is even polluted with filth; and, without entering into distressing particulars, these towns were in 1853 the ready vehicle to convey this scourge once more to England. The pestilence has passed over its regular course. Who can say if Newcastle had been put into a proper state of defence to meet the enemy which will sweep away many thousands, this island might not have altogether escaped the visitation. The Plague, before the Fire of 1666, found constant harbour in London, and spread itself in different directions. After the Fire it only slightly attacked the metropolis and was speedily banished from the country.

We do not mean to state that the disease so fearfully known by the

them and their families in a wholesome manner, at a small yet remunerating cost.

A worse sanitary state of things could not well be than that in the neighbourhood of the Coal-yard, Drury-lane. Here are from sixteen to eighteen large families living in small, inconvenient apartments, above cow-sheds, donkey and horse stables, &c. Sometimes many cartloads of refuse are allowed to remain in the yard: the pavement is uneven, and filled here and there with stagnant water. It is shocking to see the squalid children attempting to play in such a place; and yet this place is within a stone's throw of the spot on which the Great Plague broke out, as may be seen by reference to the Parish-clerk's Reports, the Diaries of Evelyn and Pepys, and De Foe's Account of the Plague.

To the miserable condition of this filthy place, called "King's Arms-yard," attention has been lately called. The residences, in a sort of gallery, are ranged about what has been one immense retting dung-heap. Some efforts have been made to improve its condition; and there has been carted out of it a mass of decomposed filth, the stench of which was scarcely endurable. Close to this spot, the approach to which from Drury-lane has now, appropriately enough, a coffin-maker's shop on each side, the Great Plague of 1665 broke out; and here neglect, ignorance, and *laissez faire* prepare the way for a fresh pestilence. Most deeply is it to be regretted that at such a time as the present men should be found to lend the weight of an official position to obstruct endeavours to obtain improvement in the neglected portions of this two-sided metropolis, instead of giving their earnest aid, as they should do, in furtherance of them.