

"The people of Texas, satisfied with the system under which they have prospered for so many years, will be unwilling to take new departures, until the etiology of, yellow fever is more thoroughly comprehended, and science discovers more powerful agents for its destruction than we now possess. With due deference to the distinguished sanitarians who compose the Congress of Hygiene in our sister republic, we could not accept the ten days' period of detention 'as a base for any agreement that might be entered into.'" * * *

Since the date of the letter from which the foregoing extracts are made (September, 1884) the "appliances for purification" have been furnished at the Galveston station. But Dr. Swearingen remarks in a recent letter to me, "although we have (at Galveston) every facility for inaugurating a quarantine more in harmony with the views of sanitarians, our people are not yet prepared for experiments."

As to land quarantines, Dr. Swearingen says: "Railways in Mexico make it possible for persons, freight, etc., to be transported from Vera Cruz to any city in Texas within five days, via El Paso or Laredo. Quarantine stations for the first time were this year established at those points. I have not attempted even an inspection service against small-pox in Mexico. It would be purely ornamental if I did so. The Rio Grande is a shallow stream, and from El Paso to Brownsville, by the river bed, is probably two thousand miles. Smuggling is carried on extensively, and the United States Government cannot prevent it. A quarantine officer at any point, would only be a notice to these organized bands and to the travelers of both republics, that they would have to cross the river higher up or lower down, 'only this and nothing more.'

"I can enforce with some reason an embargo against persons from Vera Cruz when yellow fever prevails there, for that city is the only nidus of infection, but when small-pox is all over the country, the extreme folly of such a thing as an inspection at railway crossings, is too apparent to be discussed."

Should cholera be introduced into Mexico and become epidemic there, the same conditions would then obtain with reference to the exclusion of that contagion. Dr. Swearingen adds, however, that Texas "will coöperate with the authorities of other States, in any defensive action against cholera importation that may be indicated by the American Public Health Association."

National Refuge Stations:

There still remains to notice the Refuge Stations in Sapelo Sound—off the coast of Georgia—and on Ship Island in Mississippi sound. These were originally projected by the National Board of Health as part of a system intended for the protection of the minor ports, by providing fully-equipped establishments for the care and treatment of infected vessels. Only the Ship Island station was completed on an adequate scale, and its chief importance as a safeguard to the Mississippi river and the port of New Orleans has been largely superseded by the establishment of a refuge station in Pas a l'Otre by the Louisiana State Board of Health.

These stations, Sapelo Sound and Ship Island, are now in charge of the Marine Hospital service, together with those in Hampton Roads and at the Delaware Breakwater, already described.

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