

really a colossal task in itself to undertake the cleaning of the city of Panama, which had been for centuries a pest-house, and the mortality of which, even after the American occupation, reached one month as high as 71 per 1,000 living. There have been a great many brilliant illustrations of the practical application of science in preserving the health of a community and in saving life, but it is safe to say, considering the circumstances, the past history, and the extraordinary difficulties to be overcome, the work accomplished by the Isthmian Canal Commission is unique. 1905 largely dealt with organization, yellow fever was got rid of, and at the end of the year the total mortality among the whites had fallen to 8 per 1,000, but among the blacks it was still high, 44. For three years with a progressively increasing staff which had risen to above 40,000, of whom more than 12,000 were white, the death-rate progressively fell.

Of the six important tropical diseases, plague, which reached the Isthmus one year, was quickly held in check. Yellow fever, the most dreaded of them all, has not been present for three years. Beri-beri, which in 1906 caused 68 deaths, in 1908 caused only 38. The hook-worm disease, ankylostomiasis, has steadily decreased. From the very outset malaria has been taken as the measure of sanitary efficiency. Throughout the French occupation it was the chief enemy to be considered, not only because of its fatality, but on account of the prolonged incapacity following infection. In 1906 out of every 1,000 employees there were admitted to the hospital from malaria 821; in 1907, 424; and in 1908, 282. The mortality from the disease has fallen from 233 in 1906 to 154 in 1907, and 73 in 1908; that is to say, with a force more than a third larger in 1908 there were only a third the number of deaths that occurred in 1906. Dysentery, next to malaria the most serious of the tropical diseases in the zone, caused 69 deaths in 1906; 48 in 1907; and in 1908 with nearly 44,000 only 16 deaths. But it is when the general figures are taken