

means of preventing the ingress of diseases.

The fact was that the Boards of Health, by reason of their organization, were merely deliberative and consultative bodies, lacking in consequence the most important element — the executive element, provided with a proper technical personnel and with the authority necessary to enforce their regulations — and destitute also of special funds for their purposes.

But soon it became evident that the creation of a body which should combine all these conditions could no longer be delayed. The situation of the country did not permit of further postponement of the direct intervention of the Government in the administration of sanitary affairs, which should be in charge of a Governmental department represented by a competent scientific authority. The Legislative power, therefore, formed a new administrative entity, the Direction of Public Health, a dependency of the Ministry of Fomento, whose object was to organize upon a solid basis the sanitary defence of the country, and to establish amongst us the numerous and extensive applications of contemporaneous hygiene in its various forms, individual, collective, and social. The activity of this new institution, to which the Superior Council of Hygiene serves as a directive and consultative body, has rapidly made itself apparent, and the work which it has accomplished during its period of existence should be appreciated as an achievement of no common merit, and as one which has had many beneficial results. Through its agency it is now permissible to regard the defence of public health as established upon a sure foundation.

The organization of this new service was entrusted to the highly-esteemed Dr. Julian Arce, who from the outset has exercised his authority to the satisfaction of all concerned; and it may be said that in the field of international hygiene Peru can boast a complete service of preventive measures against exotic contagious diseases.

The Maritime Sanitation Regulation, which is its legal principle, is based upon regulations approved by the International Sanitary Convention held at Washington in 1906, to which Peru was a signatory.

As a result three sanitary stations, furnished with the necessary staff and material elements, were established and are maintained in efficient operation. The first of these, at the port of Paita, deals with all ingressions from the north; the second, at the port of Ilo, with those from the south; and the third, at the port of Callao, the central station, attends, besides, to those from the west. This last was established on the island of San Lorenzo, at the entrance of the bay, six miles from the city. The building, planned in England, has isolation halls for the sick, the infected, and the uninfected, in three different sections, for bubonic plague, cholera, and yellow fever, and also possesses disinfection huts, laboratories, and other adjuncts.

The Maritime Sanitary Service, moreover, maintains, among other dependencies, a corps of sanitary physicians in all Peruvian ports, and the medical inspectors of vessels which travel constantly up and down the coast of South America.

The efficacy of the services rendered by the maritime sanitary organization is appreciable from the fact that ships sailing from Peruvian ports are received in Panama without objection, and that all Peruvian ports, in spite of their being in constant communication with Guayaquil, notoriously a yellow fever focus, have up to the present been unaffected.

National or state preventive measures still remain, notwithstanding all the important work accomplished, matters of great difficulty, for even though, in the struggle with avoidable maladies, the triumphs achieved have been of the utmost value, the figures relating to sickness and mortality are still very high. The vast extent of the territory, its varied topographical conditions, and the diversity of climates in its three principal zones—coast, Cordillera, and *montana*—create the most complicated sanitary problems, requiring for their solution the employment of large sums of money.

Much has been done in this connection by the Director of Public Health. Censuses of the principal centres of population, plans and surveys for the sanitation of the chief towns, drainage, paving, and the establishment or improvement of drinking water supplies have been carried