

Selections, Abstracts, Etc.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT ON THE PHYSICIAN.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S address before the Associated Physicians of Long Island will bear more detailed comment than we gave to it last week. What he said of the medical profession is a decided tribute. He said that "the condition precedent on success in digging the Panama canal is having the proper type of medical work as a preliminary. He spoke of the physician's character in a most appreciative way. He said, among other things: "The doctor has, on the one hand, to be the most thoroughly educated man in applied science that there is in the country, and on the other hand the doctor gradually becomes the closest friend to more different people than would be possible in any other profession." At considerable length, the President showed that he appreciates the duties, difficulties and opportunities of the scientific physician.

Referring to the task at Panama, he indicated the dependence that must be placed on medical science to make the conditions of work such that the engineers can accomplish their task. We echo his confidence that the conditions hostile to health are going to be controlled by the sanitary authorities. The alarmist stories brought by a few panic-stricken individuals must be received at their true value. The fact is that the rainy season is never a favorable one for sanitary work in the tropics, and, further, we are still suffering to some extent, it is probable, from the dilatory and red tape methods which were denounced by Dr. Reed. If Dr. Gorgas could have had full swing from the first we may safely assume that matters would be better now, as we feel sure they will be soon. There will be difficulty, especially on the Atlantic side of the isthmus, in controlling the mosquito pest, but what has been done in other tropical countries, the confederated Malay states, for example, can be accomplished even there. We feel satisfied that the sanitary authorities on the isthmus will do their full duty if untrammelled, and that the health results will be commensurate.

In expressing his confidence in the ultimate results at Panama, the President recalled the splendid example of Cuba, and paid a well-earned tribute to the effective work there of Leonard Wood. In this connection his words of resentment at the criticism to which Wood has been subjected were keen.