

ly low, are largely inhabited by Russian and Polish Jews, who are a hardy race and proverbially long lived. On the other hand, the wards having the highest death rates, or nearly the highest, are occupied largely by Italians, among whom, in the United States at least, the death rate is exceedingly high.

The sanitary problems presented in a city like New York are unusually difficult, on account of the diversity and cosmopolitan character of the population. The presence of large numbers of foreign born inhabitants of many different nationalities, grouped often in restricted localities and retaining their native customs and modes of life, and the great density of the population, constitute factors which largely complicate the situation.

The physical conformation of Manhattan Island is, in some respects, exceedingly unfavourable. The island is long and very narrow, and as a result certain parts of the city, and in fact the island as a whole, is over-crowded. Fully three-fourths of the population live in tenement houses, which are five, six or more stories in height, and contain from two to four or more families on each floor. Each house is placed on a lot not more than 25×100 feet, and frequently 20 families, numbering more than 100 persons, live on an area of this size.

The average density of population in New York city below the Harlem River, *i.e.*, on Manhattan Island, is greater than that of any of the other great cities of the world. The only localities approaching in density of population certain wards in New York are a small area in Paris, where the population is 430 to the acre; one district in Prague, where the population is 485 to the acre; the White-chapel district in London, which has a population of about 300 to the acre in Spitalfields, Mile End and Newtown, and 365 in Bethnel Green. In New York city, Sanitary District A. of Ward XI. has a population of more than 800 to the acre; Ward X., over 640 to the acre; Ward XIII., 540; Ward XVII., 430; Ward VII., 360; and Ward XIV., 295.

These facts must be kept in mind in considering the mortality statistics of New York, as compared with those of the large cities of Great Britain and the Continent. With these before us, the diminution in the death rates, and the present death rate, are most significant.

A comparison of the mean total death rate for decennial periods in New York City since 1834 shows that there was an increase during the first three periods ending in 1863, and that since that date there has been a continuous and very heavy decline in the rate, especially marked in the most recent years. The mortality in New York arose to such a high point that the inhabitants became alarmed, and in 1866 the Health Department as now constituted was organized. In