

Koch, is only lately dead. He cites the conquest of yellow fever in Cuba and Brazil as other notable achievements of modern medical science in dealing with epidemics caused by disease germs. The crowning victory, however, he assigns to the sanitary officials who have done such notable work on the Panama canal, which has been admitted to be a problem of health rather than of excavation. During the French control the death rate of white workers reached the tremendous percentage of 170 per 1,000, while it has been reduced by American sanitary methods to fewer than nine per 1,000, a rate considerably less than that in any city in the United States.

Malaria has been robbed of its terrors just as typhoid fever, cholera, pneumonia, diphtheria, smallpox and other germ diseases have been brought under control. Even tuberculosis is in the process of subjugation and Dr. Osler sees with the natural and not merely prophetic eye the time when this dread disease will be wholly subdued. All these achievements have been made possible by study of disease germs and by effective application of the information secured from such research.

It seems almost like a disparagement of this splendid work when one turns from Dr. Osler's article to the editorial in *American Medicine* decrying in vigorous terms what the writer calls "bacteriophobia," and the numerous "alarms" created by sensationalists who discover that cigars and postage stamps and clothing and paper money and many other things with which the people come in daily contact are reeking and teeming with untold billions of deadly germs. It is both sensible and timely to read these words:

"Bacteriophobia seems to be at the root of the present dread of things we must handle daily. Common sense as well as decency and good taste dictate that we should avoid as many sources of infection as possible—even the least of them—and we must insist upon having clean clerks with clean hands, clean stamps, clean money, clean bread, clean clothes, clean barber shops and clean restaurants, but the point to enlarge upon is this—we get diseases from diseased people as a rule, and not from infected things. Bacteriophobia is blinding us to the real dangers—the living carriers. We know of many serious

dusty day in a city fills the mouths of people with virulent organisms. In these directions it is necessary to continue the crusade, for there we find vital defects. The other dangers mentioned, though real and in need of remedy, are greatly exaggerated."

skin infections transmitted from face to face by barbers, and it is certain that a

Building By-laws and Sanitary Dwellings.

In a paper read before the North-Western Sanitary Inspectors' Association at Liverpool, England, recently, Tom Robinson, M.R.S.I., dwelt on the following as being pre-eminently essential in sanitary house construction:—

1. The prevention of dampness.
2. The sufficiency of air space around dwellings.
3. Size and height of rooms, window area, ventilation, floors.
4. Compulsory provision of (1) coal place, (2) wash-house, (3) pantry or larder, and (4) bathroom.
5. Drainage, water closets, etc., dustbins.
6. Street planning, density per acre.

"It must be readily conceded, said Mr. Robinson, that dryness of house and site is of primary importance. Dampness, we are told, favors the development of consumption, diphtheria, rheumatism, and other serious diseases, and the precautions to be observed require very close supervision.

"As regards the site, and especially the low-lying sites more or less necessarily damp, I think the provisions of the Local Government Board's new Model By-laws are excellent—i.e., the raising of the site to a definite height as regards any particular area above Ordnance Datum. The only provisions in the usual by-laws in most districts affecting the height of the floor level are: (1) That the dampcourse must be below lowest timbers and 6 inches above ground level. (2) That the lowest storey must be of such level as will allow effectual drainage. While these two clauses are very necessary and useful, yet they do not in any average case fix any definite height of floor level. We are now asking the Local Government Board for a by-law which fixes the minimum height for floor above the kerb level at 18 inches. The exact position of the dampcourse in relation to outside ground level is of much importance, and my observation in various