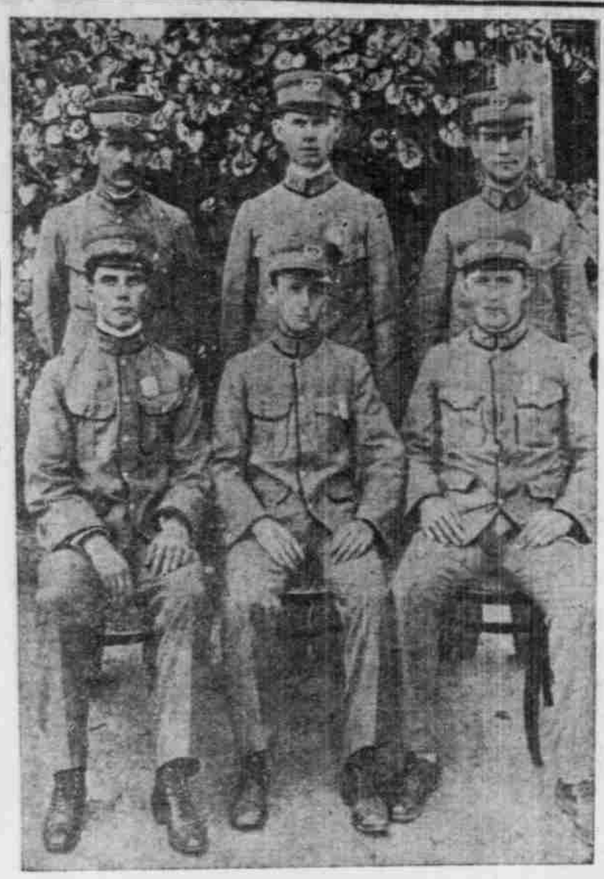
FIGHTING DISEASE IN THE PHILIPPINES

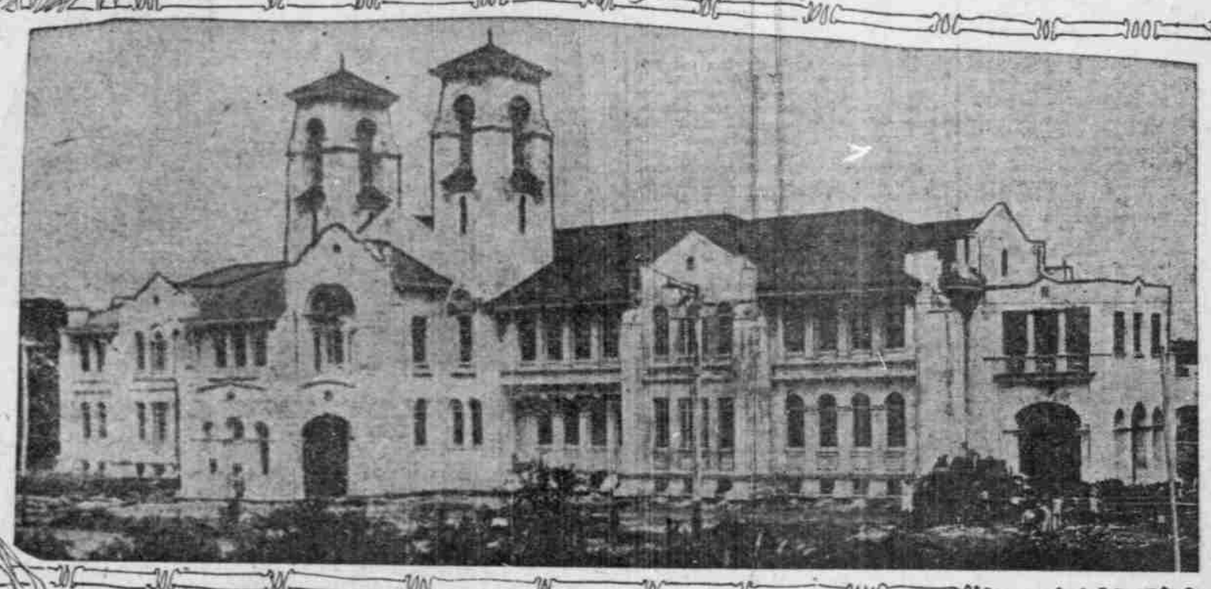
HALF THE PEOPLE WHO DIE IN MANILA HAVE NO MEDICAL ATTENTION



SQUAD OF AMERICAN SANITARY OFFICERS

BREEDING PLACE OF THE PLAGUE

TYPE OF AMERICAN HOUSE IN MANILA



THE GOVERNMENT LABORATORY

MANILA, August 1.—(Special Correspondence of The Sunday Oregonian.)—The Americans have fairly won the right to be called the champion house-cleaners of the world. Whatever may be said in criticism of our attempts at government in Spain's degenerate colonies, there can be no doubt concerning the success of our sanitary work. Although our disease fighters had much to overcome in Cuba and Porto Rico, it was not a marker to what they have encountered here.

Since the American occupation of the Philippines there has been a veritable plague of man, beast, and field. The cholera has claimed upwards of 200,000 victims, the rinderpest has destroyed fully eighty-five per cent of all the work animals in the islands, and the field crops have been ravaged by insect pests. Such a succession of calamities, although extremely disheartening, did not cause our officials to despair, and they have at last succeeded in stamping out the pestilence.

The Prey of Evil Spirits.

Their work was made much more difficult on account of the poverty and ignorance of the people. It has been found that in the City of Manila, the center of all the civilization the islands possess, over half the people die without medical attendance. They do not understand the use of medicines, believing that all their physical troubles are due to their being the prey of evil spirits. They explain cholera by saying that a black dog runs down the street and the plague follows after it, attacking all whom Providence has selected as victims.

When a sick native is found curled up in the corner of his hut, and questioned as to what ails him, he invariably answers one of three things—headache, stomach-ache or fever. That is about as far as his idea of the character of disease goes. He objects to taking medicine because he is a fatalist, believing that when his time comes there is no use for him to resist the summons. A substitute for medical treatment among the natives has been the ministrations of spirit doctors.

When one of them becomes ill, and a quack has been called in, he begins investigating by inquiring where the patient was when first afflicted and what he was doing at the time. He thereby pretends to determine the character of the spirit which infests the invalid as well as the nature of the ailment. Should the sufferer have been at work out-doors, an animal will be ordered killed and its uncooked head left on a plate in the middle of the field to appease the anger of the evil genius which provoked the trouble.

If such treatment fails of immediate cure the patient is often moved to the house of a relative in order to evade the supposed baneful influence that caused the affliction. This removal is always undertaken at night in the dark of the moon. The body of the invalid is surrounded by men with drawn weapons to ward off the attack of the spirit in case it should become aware of the removal or attempt to interfere. If a black butterfly flies into a dwelling it is taken as a certain omen of death, and if a member of that household becomes ill it is almost impossible to cure him on account of his obstinate belief that he is doomed.

Officers Killed by Rabble.

When the first cases of cholera appeared in Manila the officials understood that if they failed to keep the water supply pure there would be no hope of preventing the spread of the disease. The ignorant protests of the inhabitants against the measures used for their preservation threatened for a time to thwart the entire work. Two sanitary officers who were disinfecting a cistern were attacked by the rabble and killed because the latter thought the men were trying to poison them.

The cholera parasite lives in water and vegetables. In order to prevent the spread of the germs the river which affords the water supply of Manila was guarded by soldiers for miles. The people were prevented from bathing in the stream, from washing their clothing in it, or from driving their animals in. All vegetables and green things in the market were at once destroyed and no more were allowed to be brought inside the city limits, whereupon the Americans were charged with an attempt to starve the populace.

That cholera can be controlled is proved by the fact that 100 vessels having it on board were taken in charge by the sanitary officers, and not a single case occurred on any of them after the proper precautions had been taken. More convincing, however, was the fact that not a single case occurred at the Army and Navy Club or the Oriente Hotel, both of which were in the heart of the district where the disease was rampant. That the occupants of these establishments escaped can be explained in no way other than that they conformed strictly to the rules laid down for them by the Health Department.

The last cholera epidemic in the Philippines was in 1882, and at that time nearly 1,000,000 people were lost. There is no reason to doubt that the consequences would have been equally as bad during the recent visitation had it not been for the precaution the natives were enforced to take by the American officials. When the people learn to obey the rules laid down by the Board of Health there will be little danger of future epidemics.

The difficulty of controlling contagious disease when the population arrayed itself against the officials is shown by one incident which occurred during the recent epidemic. One morning it was discovered that fresh water was bubbling up through the salty bay in a certain place. Some one circulated the story that Providence had wrought a miracle to rescue the people from the persecutions of the Americans. It was said that all who drank of this water need not fear the plague.

Before the officials heard of it dozens of people had become infected, because the "divine spring" was in reality nothing but the water escaping from a broken sewer, and it was literally alive with cholera germs. That the people are being persuaded to forsake their superstitious ideas, and avail themselves of the virtue of medicine, is shown by the fact that the free dispensaries in Manila are now filling upward of 30,000 prescriptions a month. For some time after these places were opened the natives would not go near them.

"The Great Black Death."

Although cases of bubonic plague are constantly occurring in the Philippines this dread disease does not spread here as rapidly as the cholera. But this does not signify that it is not equally as dangerous. In the Middle Ages this malady was called "The Great Black Death," and within three years it destroyed 25,000,000 people in Europe. Although it appears frequently in Manila it has never spread to the interior of the islands. This is accounted for by the theory that rats are the distributors of plague, and they do not have a chance to reach the outlying ports because the inter-island steamers take on and discharge their cargo in the harbors instead of using wharfs.

One unexplainable feature of the bubonic plague is that the Chinese are more susceptible to it than any other nationality here. The statistics show that there have been 14 Chinamen stricken by it for every Filipino, although the latter succumbs to it readily. Americans rarely become afflicted, those who do generally being negroes or mulattoes who expose themselves by frequenting the filthy districts where the disease flourishes.

In order to acquire a better knowledge of the plague the scientists are constantly studying it. It is suspected that the germs are communicated to people by fleas or other insects which first become contaminated by contact with infected rats. The result of a number of interesting experiments has rather weakened this theory. It has been found that ants will contract the disease but that they do not die of it. Emulsions made from crushed bodies of ants, fleas, flies and mosquitoes have been injected into rats, mice and guinea pigs, with only partially fatal results.

Inasmuch as these experiments did not establish with certainty whether plague was carried by insects, others were planned which more closely imitated the course of nature. A number of flies were imprisoned in a jar containing the bodies of rats which had died of plague. After sufficient time had elapsed to allow them to become infected they were transferred to a cage containing several guinea pigs. The latter had been shaved in places and smeared with syrup to attract the flies. Although this experiment was repeated a number of times the guinea pigs were not taken sick.

The same flies when crushed and injected into the bodies of the little patients caused them death. This would seem to prove that although the insects carry the germs they do not impart the same through ordinary contact. Another puzzling thing in connection with the investigations made in Manila is that the fleas found on rats are different from any specie which has heretofore been described. It was found that they would not bite human beings at all, and so could hardly have been instrumental in spreading the plague here.

The most universal malady in the Philippines is amebic dysentery. It is endemic and is responsible for more than fifty per cent of all the disability among government employes and civilians. It is caused by a parasite which lives in water and vegetables. It is said the only sure way of avoiding it is to take nothing into the stomach which has not been cooked. Distilled water is used generally by the white inhabitants of Manila, but this is easily contaminated if bottles or glasses are washed in hydrant water by careless servants.

Lettuce is almost a certain distributer of the germs. Recently some stalks grown at the agricultural experiment farm were examined. After these had been subjected to four washings, any one of which was more thorough than the usual cook would have given, there were enough parasites in the last water to infect a monkey into which it was injected. While there are foreign residents in Manila who have lived here safely for years without taking precautions against dysentery, thousands who have used every preventative within their power have contracted it.

Rinderpest, the animal plague, which is said to have destroyed eighty-five per cent of the cattle in the Philippines, is a highly deadly and contagious disease. Few animals seized with it recover. Some authorities assert that this dreadful malady is two thousand years old. It has appeared at different times in most all portions of the world. Its most frequent ravages have been in South Africa, India and Australia. It appeared in the Philippines in 1882. By the simplest definition it is an ulceration of the intestines.

The usual method of transmission is by means of infected ground, but it can also be conveyed by buckets and other objects which have been in contact with sick animals. It is supposed that men working where the disease is present carry the infection on their clothing or shoes. Experience has shown that when once an animal becomes sick with rinderpest the trouble cannot be arrested, so the efforts of the scientists have been directed mainly to preventive measures. They say that when an animal first shows symptoms, it should be isolated at once. If possible, it is best to fence it in where it is found, immediately removing the remainder of the herd to a safe distance. When the animal dies, as it likely will, the ground should be thoroughly disinfected and burned over. Now that the disease has been arrested in the Philippines, it is proposed to entirely abolish it by immunizing all animals by inoculation.

The Board of Health is using heroic measures to improve the sanitary condition here. There is an official slaughter-house, where all stock intended for the city market must be killed under the supervision of inspectors. All vegetables offered for sale must also pass examination. Having discovered that the plague was most frequent in filthy localities, the sanitary officers have persisted in their efforts to cleanse all such. Fully 10,000 houses are inspected every month, and about 500 dwellings which were hopelessly foul have been destroyed by fire.

A Government Menagerie.

In order to thoroughly study the cause of all disease, as well as measures for the prevention and cure of the same, the Government has built in Manila what is doubtless the finest laboratory ever constructed by any country in a colony or dependency. The building and all appliances are modern in every respect. From this laboratory every conceivable sort of investigation may be conducted. There is a whole menagerie, including horses cattle, monkeys, goats, rabbits, guinea pigs, pigeons, chickens, etc., which are used for experimental purposes. The sheds where the animals are kept are fly-proof and so clean that one could well spread his dinner on the spotless cement floors.

Aside from the researches in the interest of health the laboratory is equipped to undertake the chemical and mechanical investigation of the properties of all raw products, the assaying of mineral substances, and to further the cause of botanical, entomological and zoological study. Thus the commercial interests of the United States will be served by determining the value of everything found in the Archipelago. Although many thousands of dollars have been expended in constructing and equipping it, the results which have already been obtained in checking pestilence among man and beast are an ample return for the outlay.

FREDERIC J. HASKIN.

HOW FITZSIMMONS WAS ROBBED OF $20,000

He Tells of His First Fight With Sharkey, the Set-Up Job and Referee Earp's Treachery

ONE of the hardest things any pugilist has to battle against in this world is public opinion, and I'm not shooting wide of the mark when I say that I've had a bit more than my share of adverse criticism. In fact, I've been up against it good and hard a lot of times, and while I've tried to hold my temper in the face of unjust charges and still more bull-headed wrong opinion, sometimes I've let go when I couldn't hold out any longer—and I've been sorry for it.

Every man, woman and child has been misunderstood at one time or another, so maybe what I'm going to tell now may get me a little sympathy, though I'm not looking for it to any extent, because I've always found that I could take care of Bob Fitzsimmons pretty well without any outside interference. Still, a man sort of looks around the circle when he gets into a mean corner, and if there's a friendly look in the chap's eye in the corner, he feels that much better.

What I started with in my mind this week was that little affair that came off out in San Francisco about nine years ago. I mean the go I had with Tom Sharkey out there, when a bunch of pikers and a lot of sure-thing crooks jobbed it to give me the worst of it anyway it happened to go.

Salving a Sore Spot.

As I said before, I'm not looking for sympathy, but when a fellow has had it handed to him in the rawest kind of a way, it salves the sore spot a whole lot to get a chance to tell just how it happened. Maybe some of you folks who read this can remember how you felt when a sneak thief belted you on the nose as you walked down the street and took your week's salary out of your right-hand pocket just as you were going home to hand it over to the wife. Perhaps you can remember how you felt when some fellow you thought was all the cards, handed you the double cross and set you back hustling for the break-fast money, and you never got a chance to tell even the sergeant at the police station how it happened. Well, that's just the way I feel about it, and the more I think it over, the sorer I get. I'd been working pretty hard to get on a match with Sharkey for some time, and it was pretty hard sledding to get a wallop like that for all my pains. If I'd been whipped, I'd never have said a word, not a peep from yours truly, but to be sandbagged, and by a gun fighter at that was all the worse. Of course, it all happened a good while ago, but it's like an old gun shot wound—it aches on rainy days.

Raising Fitzsimmons Stock.

But I've been guessing about my feelings long enough. As I say, I hadn't been over here so long, anyway. When I first showed up in this country the Fitzsimmons punch was selling a long way below par, and I guess a good many of the public had an idea it was watered stock at that. That stacked me up against the Black Pearl first as a sort of trial horse, and when I put him away in four rounds, it looked easy. Sharkey was coming along then as the champion of the navy, and he had his eye out for Jim Corbett's scalp. I worked quite a while to get a line on Sharkey, but I had to whip Jack Dempsey first and then Abe Congle. After him they trotted out Pete Maher, and he tossed up his arms in 12 rounds. Jim Farrel was just seven minutes, all told. I thought Sharkey was in line, but I had to make a chopping block of Joe Godfrey for one round. I argued with Jerry Slattery for a couple more, and they shoved a dead one named Millerd Zender over the table at me and I ate him in a round. So it went for four more years, and then came the time when I got Sharkey into a corner, and he couldn't get away. There was a neat little purse of $20,000 up for that mill, and I thought it was mighty useful money. Anyway I counted it as good as mine, and the wake-up was all the worse when it came.

We drifted into the ring that night out in 'Frisco, and the house looked mighty good to me. I saw a lot of men I knew, and some of them wagged the finger at me to show they had a bet on, and counted it already spent. That made me feel a little better, and I commenced to wonder about this referee they had selected. I never was much of a sticker for referees. Any man that looked right to me was plenty good enough, and though I'd heard something about this chap, Wyatt Earp, I didn't take much account of what they said about him. One fellow leaned over the ring as I loafed in the corner, and said:

"There's a job out to do you, Bob, if they have to kill you to get away with it. Watch out for the gun—"

And then some one dragged him off the ropes, and I didn't get the rest, any, way, because I never believed I was going to be shaken down like a come-on, and the tip the chap handed me faded away. When Sharkey came into the ring and we walked over to this boy Earp, I took a good look at him. He didn't look crooked to me, though he had a sort of a set eye that read like it wouldn't stand for any argument. When he talked, he made it pretty plain that what he said had to go, and I guess both Sharkey and myself felt we'd be as good as a pair of Sunday school lads.

Earp's Barefaced Robbery.

Well, nearly everyone knows how the fight went. I had the sailor gassing about for seven rounds, and I was getting ready to hand him the wallop that would put him down in dreamland. That solar plexus punch was coming along towards my way of thinking, and when the eighth was going along well, I just stepped in and handed it to Tom. He went down as if he'd been hit with a pile-driver, and then he began to act. It wasn't so much real acting though as a lot of folks think. That punch hurt him, because he got it where and when he wasn't looking for it, and then I got the jolt of my life. Tom's seconds hopped into the ring and claimed the foul, and I was laughing at the way they were going to get fooled when this lad Earp stood up and handed me mine. He allowed the foul and gave the fight to Sharkey. I'm not a quick mover, as far as the brain is concerned, and perhaps I didn't think it was as bad as it was. Anyhow, by the time I got it into my head that I'd been trimmed, there was a gang in the ring and all around it putting up the biggest kind of a howl. The police broke in, too, and then the fur began to fly in good shape. Earp pulled a gun and backed his say-so against anything that the rest could put up, and the police chased the mob out of the building.

The rest of the story is history. Everyone knows how I brought suit to get that money back, but they also know how it was decided against me. I want to say right here that I was robbed just as much as if that gang had broken into my house, plugged me with a .44 and taken the dough out of the safe. They call me an old man a whole lot, but those that do would have figured me a pretty small kid if they could have seen me that night. I don't know for sure if I cried or not, but I know I felt like it. It's pretty rough for a man to be trimmed out of a small fortune by some measley gang of crooks, and that's a fact. Of course, I found out all about it, but the worst of all was the charge that I'd deliberately sold the fight.

The Thing Fixed Early.

I've been misquoted a whole lot, and I've been roasted a whole lot, and some of the newspaper boys shoved it to me good and hard before I got a chance to show up my side. As a rule, the boys are good boys, and they made it right when they found they had got it wrong; but it didn't cure the hurt. There was an organized gang that put up that job. I don't know what they cleaned up, but I've been told since that they cinched close to half a million, all told. They put Wyatt Earp there for that purpose, because they knew there'd be a scream, and they knew that the average man would weaken when the roar came, and they also knew he wouldn't.

The thing was fixed a week after the match was made and the job came from the East, I want to say that. Of course, a good bunch of the West was in on the play, but the job came from the East. When I get it handed to me I want to know how it was done, and I went around asking questions when it was all over. I wanted to know about this fellow, Wyatt Earp, and when I heard his history, I didn't wonder he was able to bluff that gang that night.

History of the Earps.

Maybe some of you haven't heard about the Earp boys, so I'm going to tell you what I learned about them. There were three of them originally, and they were born in Illinois. They went West, and took up with any good, steady job. There was Wyatt—my friend—Virgil and Morgan. Wyatt was Town Marshal down in New Mexico once—Albuquerque I think it was, and his brothers were handy around. A gang of cowpunchers had been holding up stages around there a whole lot, and they did the job just once too often. They showed up in Albuquerque, and were having a whole lot of fun, when Wyatt collected his two brothers and a chap named 'Doc' Holliday, and went after them. The outlaws got the worst of it, but one of them got away, and two weeks later he shot Virgil Earp at a railroad station, and 'Doc' Holliday got him later, and come near getting lynched for it. Morgan was, I think, shuffled off some time later, but our good Wyatt is still living in California and taking life easily. I don't know what he got for his job, but it was enough to make him pull the trick. As far as I could find out, there was never anything illegal about the Earp gang, but they were looked on as handy men to have around and worth watching when the game was going round. I don't mean they were dishonest, but—few people turned their backs when they played poker with them.

As far as Sharkey himself is concerned, I don't believe he was in on it to any extent. Maybe he knew there was something coming off, but what he got out of it was cigarette money to the big haul; and, besides, Tom isn't big enough in the brain pan to dope out a hot one like that. I got mine, and I know it, but you can make a little easy money if anyone thinks they get me again with a crooked referee.

No more Wyatt Earps in mine. I'll take a second-rate fighter before I accept any more "bad men" or "terrors of the plains" for the job of referee. Now I have that out of my system, I feel better; but if any of the youngsters who read this ever figure on going into the fighting game, it's a good plan to tuck away a gun in your tights when you pull it off in Frisco, if they have a referee with a mustache and a steely eye.

John Hay's Sense of Humor.

Leslie's Weekly.

We have received from a source of undoubted authenticity a copy of the following little rhyme by the late John Hay, written about 30 years ago, when he was acting as editor of the New York Tribune, being entitled, in that capacity, to the courtesy of a telegraph frank. The occasion of his writing this poem was in connection with a request for renewal of his annual pass that had expired with the old year. We believe this effusion has not before seen the light of print, and we offer it to our readers as additional evidence, if any were needed, of the natural humor in Mr. Hay's disposition, that had already found expression in "Jim Bludso" and "Little Breeches," and that was ready at all times to find vent for the interest or amusement of his friends.

I'd rather ride a balky ass,
Or lose my hook to a big black bass,
Or stand a she-book-agent's gass,
Or dine on nothing but blue mass,
Or share King Nebuchadnezzar's grass,
Than carry around a last year's pass.
Them's my sentiments.

THE BARD OF THE MAUMEE.