

great need for preparedness against the insidious foes (diseases) which are within our own borders and outlined a system for national health work which if carried out would save the lives of more good Americans each year than we would lose in the same length of time in warfare with any other nation on earth.

He began by referring to the present public interest in preparing the country to resist possible invasion or attack by foreign foes, and took occasion to pronounce a very eloquent eulogy upon the character and policy of President Wilson. He mentioned the fact that out of every single dollar now collected by the national government as revenue sixty-eight cents go to the support and equipment of the army and navy and for the payment of pensions, and that it was now proposed to annually add hundreds of millions of dollars to such expenditures.

His article does not oppose those measures, but uses them as a contrast to the meager sums appropriated to the saving of human life instead of to inventing machines for its wholesale destruction.

He proceeds to suggest some of the needs of a health department independent of all other departments, and effectually shows the absurdity of placing so many important details entirely foreign to the proper functions of the Treasury Department, under its control. He points to the necessity for a nation-wide organization to fight tuberculosis, which he says destroys every year more American lives than the number of men proposed for our enlarged standing army, and yet it is a preventable disease. He considers the threat of disaster greater and more imminent from preventable diseases than from attacks by hostile nations.

Also he would have a check placed on the multiplication of idiots, imbeciles and criminals, that are defiling the stream of civic life as the washings from polluted hills render turbid and poisonous the waters of the great Mississippi River. He believes there should be a correlation of all health organ-

izations, county, state, and national, united in one department which shall be independent of all others, and guided and controlled by a Secretary of Public Health. It will be seen that he proposes no new societies or bureaus, but an amplification of those existing and their harmonious interaction under the direction and authority of the Department of Public Health.

Disease recognizes no state or county lines, and neither should the regulations that deal with it, except for purposes of organization and convenience. When one realizes that every year the United States loses more people from preventable diseases than have been lost by any one nation in one year by the European war, he has the proper point of view from which to approach this important subject.

There are too many other important matters up before the present Congress to hope for legislation to be enacted creating a Department of Health with a cabinet officer at its head during the present session. It is not too soon, however, to discuss the subject, and Dr. McCormack's address contains much valuable information for use in explaining to Congressmen and Senators the need for such a department. The medical profession should be united in seeing to it that both the party platforms contain planks favoring such legislation, and that Senators and Congressmen are pledged before going to Washington in December, 1916, to support legislation to meet the nation's greatest need—an adequate Department of Health.

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#### SANITARY PREPAREDNESS.

The word "preparedness" conveys so completely the prevailing impulse of the American people that it has become a sort of fetic. No politician of any party dares deride it, though some would minimize what it stands for. But the people in general pin their faith to it as they do to the flag. There is one kind of preparedness, however,

to which all intelligent people consent, regardless of political affiliation, and that is the "Sanitary Preparedness" so ably advocated by Dr. Rupert Blue in an address before the Southern Medical Association at Dallas, last November.

Dr. Blue is amply qualified to speak upon the subject. As head of the U. S. Public Health Service his authority has for years been almost autocratic, so that though a large amount of credit is due to the many able assistants with whom he has surrounded himself, yet his is the master mind which has conceived, planned and directed their efforts.

Dr. Blue says, as an illustration of the necessity of preparedness, that twenty ships of the line in commission would have prevented the disastrous war of 1812, and on the other hand that the lack of sanitary education and precautions has been the cause of disasters and great suffering in many of our military expeditions. He suggests that calamities are not always unmixed evils, in that they may serve to fix public attention upon a civic weakness, as the plague in San Francisco in 1907 served to awaken the country to the urgent need of sanitary reform. He called attention to the remarkable growth and expansion of all the health forces of the country during the present decade, though he failed to mention the fact that to the aid and example of his service was due a great deal of that desirable improvement. He also mentioned the fact that many of the major pestilences have almost been relegated to oblivion.

He referred to the valuable work done by the American Medical Association, the Southern Medical Association, and many others. Municipal boards of health, he said, were cooperating to a degree hitherto unknown.

He believes that the first step in sanitary preparedness is to teach the citizens the value of a sound body, and the place to begin that teaching is in the public schools. "Child hygiene will result in practical eu-

genic betterment." He thinks sanitary administration should not be placed under the education bureau. "It should be coordinate, not subordinate, in the organization of governments." He believes that only by maintaining her sanitary defenses at all times will America be ready for the supreme trial when the hour of calamity comes.

Dr. Blue's article is thoughtful, and his ideas are expressed in moderate though forceful terms.

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#### PREPAREDNESS IN THE MEDICAL CORPS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY.

The subject of increasing our national armament on land and sea is now absorbing the attention of the people of the United States of America. There is some division of opinion and much discussion, in both of which the members of the medical profession participate.

The fact is, however, that without analyzing the cause the majority favor preparedness. Recent and ancient history show that only by being able to defend itself is any nation, however large, safe from imposition or subjection. Therefore, it is safest to be prepared for national defense against possible attack. That is "preparedness."

To this extent most of the people agree with President Wilson, but there is one element that should occupy a conspicuous place in the proposed preparation that seems in danger of being neglected or forgotten.

The United States has had two terrible demonstrations of the awful cost of medical insufficiency and inefficiency in the care of soldiers in the field when sick or wounded. The result of such a dearth of doctors and lack of medical and surgical equipment, in the civil war and in the war with Spain, even now causes a shudder of indignation and horror whenever one reads the gruesome record.

Thousands of men who could have been