

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC
HEALTH. COVERING THE PERIOD
FROM SEPTEMBER 1, 1903, TO
AUGUST 31, 1904**

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PHILIPPINES BUREAU OF HEALTH

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC
HEALTH. COVERING THE PERIOD
FROM SEPTEMBER 1, 1903, TO
AUGUST 31, 1904**

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GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF PUBLIC HEALTH

ANNUAL REPORT OF
THE COMMISSIONER OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

COVERING THE
PERIOD FROM SEPTEMBER 1, 1903, TO
AUGUST 31, 1904

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC
HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1903.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
BUREAU OF PUBLIC HEALTH,

Manila, P. I., September 15, 1904.

SIR: Pursuant to the requirements of Act No. 157, providing for the establishment of a Board of Health for the Philippine Islands, and in accordance with special instructions received from the Secretary of the Interior, I have the honor to submit my second annual report which, unless otherwise stated, covers the operations of this Bureau for the year ended August 31, 1904:

The law prescribes that the Insular Board of Health shall have general supervision over all the interests of the public health in the Philippine Islands and shall especially study their vital statistics and shall make inquiry and investigation into the causes, pathology, and means of preventing diseases, especially epidemic diseases, including those of domestic animals, together with the sources of mortality and the effects of localities, employments, conditions, habits, foods, beverages, and medicines on the health of the people, and into the chemical composition and medicinal properties of the minero-medicinal waters of the Archipelago; disseminate useful information upon these and other kindred subjects among the people; draft and recommend to the central legislative body suitable sanitary laws to control offensive and dangerous industries and occupations, and laws for the extension of the service of the Insular Board of Health in the several departments, provinces, and municipalities of the Philippines; cause to be prosecuted all violations of sanitary laws; make and enforce regulations for the prevention and suppression of contagious or epidemic diseases of man or animals; abate nuisances endangering the public health; remove the cause of any special disease or mortality, and serve as the local board of health for the city of Manila. The Board has endeavored to cover the field as completely as possible, but the matter of the prevention and suppression of diseases, especially those of an epidemic character, have been given preference. In my report for last year I said:

The matter of the prevention of disease should be viewed from two standpoints—the humanitarian and the economic. Too often the inseparable relation between good health and business prosperity is overlooked. Sentiments of human-

ity and practical business interests are equally concerned in averting preventable disease and should unite for the proper sanitary laws with respect to the willful, the indifferent, or the ignorant. Not only do the sanitary authorities require full moral support in carrying out their work but ample legal authority to enforce necessary orders and sufficient funds to pay for securing the desired improvements are essential. Modern sanitary requirements unquestionably cost money—but any expenditure that prevents disease and improves public welfare should be regarded as an investment yielding the largest returns, not only in respect to improved health and happiness but also as an insurance of industrial prosperity which is directly measurable by dollars and cents.

For the above reasons, the fact should be emphasized that in any community, and especially in these Islands, the governmental economy should begin elsewhere than in the sanitary department, and improved sanitary conditions should not be an occasion for decreased appropriations. Improvement in health conditions is permanent only while proper sanitary measures are being applied. While the tremendous money loss directly depending upon preventable disease in these Islands during the past two years is beyond calculation, it is safe to say that it would have supported a most thoroughly organized and completely equipped sanitary organization for the Philippine Archipelago for an entire generation. Sanitary efficiency is the key to the prosperity of these Islands, and thus to the success of their administration; in its absence every walk in life will be unfavorably affected and the work of every other department of the Government will be curtailed for lack of revenue. The interests of humanity, industry, and commerce thus unite to bespeak of the authorities a most liberal financial and moral support for the sanitary department.

The efficiency of a board of health depends to a great extent upon its financial resources. A board of health operating in the Philippine Islands with only advisory functions, possessed of no mandatory powers, would be of very little practical value, and, as a working organization, very defective. Municipal boards of health, as contemplated and established under Act No. 308, have demonstrated the wisdom of the law whenever and wherever they have received proper support, which may, under existing laws, be supplied or denied by municipal councils, which in many cases look with distrust, if not with disdain, upon the efforts of other authority-exercising boards. Work that is wholly in the interest of the municipality in which it is needed should be paid for by the residents of such municipality and not by the provincial or Central Government, and the law should be sufficiently mandatory in its character to compel the employment of a certain number of sanitary officials in every municipality in the Philippine Islands. If the financial condition of a municipality will not permit this to be done, funds should be supplied by the province or by the Central Government.

The whole matter of public hygiene in the Philippines as elsewhere involves a conflict of interests, and, when a municipality or the Central Government takes effective measures to prevent or suppress a disease, dissatisfaction and opposition on the part of some person or persons who are interfered with or inconvenienced by the measures employed will soon find active expression. The public interests are vague, far-away