

Guayaquil's Fight with Fever and Plague

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GUAYAQUIL, Ecuador—Guayaquil, the New York of Ecuador, is the chief port of the country, having an export and import trade of more than \$35,000,000 a year, and this will be quadrupled if it can be made healthy. It is important to us that it should be so for it is the first port south of Panama. It is not as far from Panama as is New York from Chicago, and when the canal is completed it will be nearer Boston than from Boston to Liverpool. The town lies about sixty miles from the ocean. It is on the wide and deep Guayas river, up which boats can go during the rainy season for 250 or 300 miles. The town lies almost on the equator. It is under the shadow of the snow peaks of Chimborazo and Cotopaxi, but it is surrounded by jungle. Just now it is afflicted with bubonic plague and yellow fever, and these conditions will have to be wiped out before Ecuador can be allowed the free use of the Panama canal.

Must Clean Up Ports.

The Ecuadorians have come to realize the seriousness of their situation. They know that their ports must be made clean or they will block the country's development. The government has been discussing the question for several years and foreign experts have been called in to make plans for the cleaning of Guayaquil. Dr. Gorgas has been here and given suggestions, and scheme after scheme has been proposed to remedy the evil. Just now a contract with J. G. White & Co. of New York and London is under way. That firm has had its engineers on the ground and it is ready to enter into a contract for a series of public improvements that will cost \$10,000,000. This sum will be enough to do the things immediately necessary. It will have the streets, put in sewers, increase the water supply and inaugurate a systematic upbuilding and renovation that will make the port safe for the traveler and trader.

Not a Healthy Place.

At present Guayaquil is so dangerous that no one stops here who can help it. The new cases of bubonic plague now number ten or more every day and there have been seventy new cases of yellow fever reported within the last two weeks. The officials have begun to vaccinate for the plague and the moment the traveler lands he is grabbed by the doctor and the plague serum is injected into his arm. He then gets a certificate proving that he has been vaccinated, and he has to show this before he is allowed to go into the interior. There are two kinds of vaccination given for the plague. The one used here is the Haffkine process. It consists in injecting the dead cultures of the plague bacilli. The needle hurts as it goes into your arm and you have at the end a little pouch of juice containing some millions of bacilli under the skin. The arm is sore a short while, but the vaccine does not make you sick. This is supposed to render one immune from the plague for several months. The other form of vaccination is by the yersin anti-toxin. It is given only to those who have caught the plague and is supposed to neutralize the poison in the system.

City Should Be Rebuilt.

During my stay at Panama I had a long chat with Dr. R. C. Perry, the chief health officer, who is in charge of the sanitary conditions at the isthmus with regard to the ports along the west coast. He has visited every port from Callao to Panama and has spent much time in studying conditions at Guayaquil. He tells me that the only way in which this city can be cleaned is by practically rebuilding it. The town of today is swarming with the rats, the fleas from which carry the plague. The most of its houses stand close to the ground and many of them have wooden floors under which rats can burrow. The walls have wooden posts upon which are nailed laths of split bamboo. The framework is covered with stucco on the outside and plaster or boards on the inside. It makes a beautiful wall to look at, but the rats can creep inside the walls and walk up the lathing.

Many of the poorer houses are built right on the ground. Dr. Perry says that they should be jacked up and placed on posts so high that the rats could not jump to the first floor. He says that the floors of the better class of houses should be of cement and that all houses should have cement foundations, as the rats will burrow under any ordinary floor.

Rats Are Everywhere.

As it is now, according to Dr. Perry, Guayaquil has rats everywhere, and all of its rats have fleas. The bubonic plague is transmitted by these fleas biting such rats as have the plague, and then going from them to men, women or children and biting them. A flea that has bitten a sick rat will carry the plague in its system for ten or twelve days, and if it bites you during that time the plague bacilli will go into your blood. They will multiply rapidly, and within five or six days the chances are that you will die in horrible pain.

I asked Dr. Perry what kind of rats carry the plague. He replied: "Almost any kind, but there are three which are especially dangerous. One is the big gray Norway rat, another is the gray tree rat, which has a white belly and the third is a little black rat. The black rat is most common in Guayaquil, and the plague existing there comes from it. The rats which catch the plague often die; they will give the plague to other rats, and it sometimes becomes epidemic among them, although they run from it. If a rat dies of the plague in a block or house, the uninfected rats of that block seem to know it, and they will desert the block and go somewhere else."

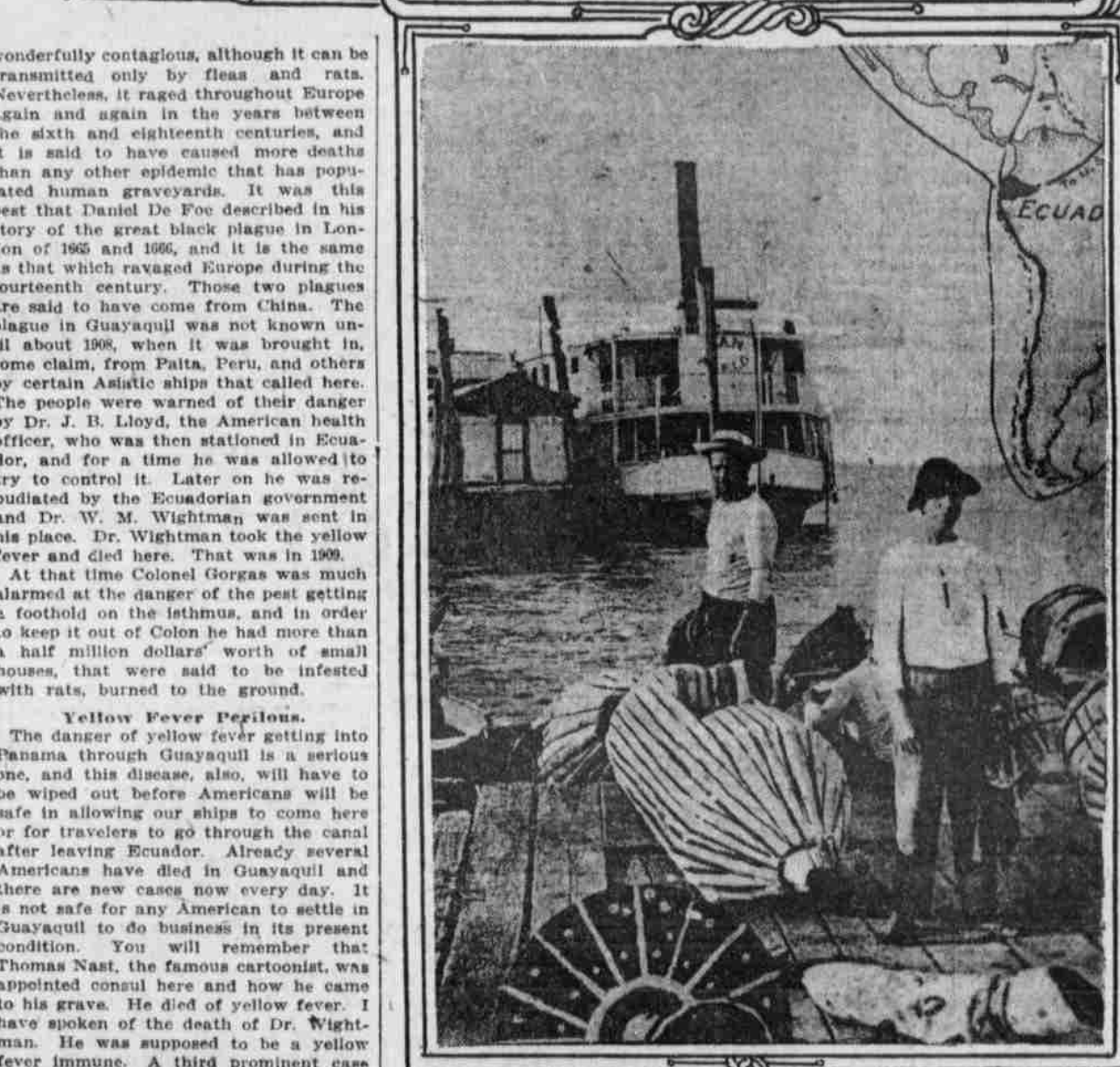
Afraid of the Plague.

I am afraid of the bubonic plague, and I shall not stop in Ecuador on account of it. I have seen a great deal of the disease in China and India. About twenty years ago I visited Hongkong and Canton, when the people there were dying at the rate of hundreds a day, and where there were so many deaths that there were coffin associations by which coffins were given out in the way of charity. During that plague 60,000 coffins were furnished by such associations.

The plague in China came from the rats, and it raged in the densely built warrens of the Chinese at Hongkong, where it has since broken out again and again. The English government there is doing all that is possible to control it, but the city will have to be rebuilt to make it absolutely safe; and as Dr. Perry says, the same condition obtains here.

Should Guard Against Disease.

It would be terrible if the plague could be brought through the canal to New Orleans, New York or Boston. It is



wonderfully contagious, although it can be transmitted only by fleas and rats. Nevertheless, it raged throughout Europe again and again in the years between the sixth and eighteenth centuries, and it is said to have caused more deaths than any other epidemic that has populated human graveyards. It was this pest that Daniel De Foe described in his story of the great black plague in London of 1665 and 1666, and it is the same as that which ravaged Europe during the fourteenth century. Those two plagues are said to have come from China. The plague in Guayaquil was not known until about 1908, when it was brought in, some claim, from Paiza, Peru, and others by certain Asiatic ships that called here. The people were warned of their danger by Dr. J. B. Lloyd, the American health officer who was sent stationed in Ecuador, and for a time he was allowed to try to control it. Later on he was repudiated by the Ecuadorian government and Dr. W. M. Wightman was sent in his place. Dr. Wightman took the yellow fever and died here. That was in 1909.

At that time Colonel Gorgas was much alarmed at the danger of the pest getting a foothold on the isthmus, and in order to keep it out of Colon he had more than a half million dollars' worth of small houses, that were said to be infested with rats, burned to the ground.

Yellow Fever Perilous.

The danger of yellow fever getting into Panama through Guayaquil is a serious one, and this disease, also, will have to be wiped out before Americans will be safe in allowing our ships to come here or for travelers to go through the canal after leaving Ecuador. Already several Americans have died in Guayaquil and there are new cases now every day. It is not safe for any American to settle in Guayaquil to do business in its present condition. You will remember that Thomas Nast, the famous cartoonist, was appointed consul here and how he came to his grave. He died of yellow fever. I have spoken of the death of Dr. Wightman. He was supposed to be a yellow fever immune. A third prominent case is that of Major John A. Hartman, the engineer who built the railway over the Andes from Guayaquil to Quito, and a fourth is that of Commander Bertolotto of our gunboat Yorktown, who died only a short time ago.

Transmitted by Mosquitoes.

The yellow fever comes from a kind of a mosquito that can carry it only after biting a yellow fever patient. After the mosquito bites a human being afflicted with the fever it gets the yellow fever itself, and it can then inject the yellow fever bacilli into your system if it bites you. I had a good chance to study this disease during the great epidemic at Panama in 1907. That epidemic came from Guayaquil, and it killed some of the officials who were working on the canal. I was at Panama several weeks during its height, and I frequently sat down to dinner with a man, only to hear a few days later that he had been bitten and, perhaps a week later, that he was dead. One of the most pathetic cases was that of a young architect named Johnson, who had charge of all the building then going on in preparation for our army of workmen. Mr. Johnson was a young man of about 25, of great ability and of a very lovable nature. He was engaged to a girl in Chicago and wrote to her daily. During my stay we frequently went out riding on horseback together, along in the evening, through the region known as the savannas, and he told me how he expected to go home in May and bring back a young wife to the isthmus. That was in March. I left Panama in April, and before the end of the month I received the news of young Johnson's death.

Malaria Is Another Danger.

Another danger at Guayaquil is from malarial fever, similar to that which caused so many deaths on the isthmus at the time of the building of the Panama railroad. This, the Ecuadorians call pernicious and it is known to the Panamanians as the Chagras fever. I had a severe attack of it when I last visited Guayaquil. Pernicious comes from the bite of the anopheles mosquito, which is very different from that of the stegomyia, which carries the yellow fever, and the stegomyia does not carry malaria. The former will breed in almost any wet

place, but the latter is fond of rain barrels and it does not like dirty water. The anopheles has its chief feeding time at night, and for the most part it lives out of doors. The stegomyia usually bites in the daytime, although it likes to keep out of the sun.

Neither of these mosquitoes is as big as the New Jersey variety, nor half as ferocious. Dr. Gorgas once told me that there were about 200 different kinds of mosquitoes in the world and that they cause many other diseases than those I have mentioned. There is one that infects the elephantiasis. This is a little devil with a yellowish body and six white bands around its abdomen. It carries a kind of bacilli that forms worms in your blood. They make your legs swell and sometimes cause death.

Way to Eliminate It.

Dr. Perry says the only way that yellow fever can be permanently wiped out of Guayaquil is by cutting down the vegetation, cleaning up the garbage, covering the rain barrels, putting oil upon the ditches and enlarging the water supply. The city now has good water, but the volume is not sufficient, and the water is allowed to be drawn only a certain part of each day. For this reason many families have storage tanks, which they fill while the water is running. The tanks are often uncovered, and are great mosquito breeders. Moreover, much of the water is kept in open barrels, and the garbage is left in uncovered cans or in open boxes until taken away. Later it is loaded upon a street car made for the purpose, and thus carried out to the crematory or incinerator. The covering of the garbage cans would take away a great deal of the rat food, and the elimination of the rain barrels and tanks will do much to wipe out the mosquitoes.

Guayaquil Now a City.

I first visited Guayaquil fifteen years ago. It was then a town of 40,000 inhabitants. It has now from 30,000 to 100,000, and has greatly improved. The streets have been widened, and many of the new buildings are fine. They are of two stories, covered with stucco and painted all the colors of the rainbow.

Business Controlled by a Few.

It is also said that the business here is in the hands of a few wealthy traders who would prefer to keep Guayaquil as it is, rather than to have it made habitable to foreigners who may compete with them. I doubt this, although I have heard the charge made many times. Politics also enters into the question, and

likewise the rivalry between Quito and Guayaquil as to who shall have charge of the funds to be used in improving the city and country.

At present most of the exports of Ecuador come from the lowlands. They consist of tropical products, but there are great pasture fields in the Andes and on the slopes toward the Amazon are other vast tracts that are fitted for coffee, sugar cane and cacao. Just now a road is being built to connect the town of Ambato, which lies on the plateau, with the Cotacachi river. This new road will run for about 120 miles through the Ambato river valley, and will then be joined to one of the navigable tributaries of the Amazon system. It will open up a rich mining country, and a farming region so rich that it is said that it will support millions of people. The streams of the country are those which gave much of the gold of the Incas; and I am told that the Indians are still washing gold out of their sands. This region is known as the Oriente of Ecuador. It is inhabited almost altogether by savages, but white men can live in it, and it will soon be thrown open to immigrants.

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I know of no other plan which accomplishes such beneficial results and strongly commend it to other concerns employing any considerable force.

Thanking you for your courteous and very prompt attention, I remain, sincerely yours,

W. H. Bucholz
 Vice President.

The Doctor's Advice

By Dr. Lewis Baker

The questions answered below are general in character, the symptoms or diseases are given and the answers should apply to any case of similar nature.

Those wishing further advice, free, may address Dr. Lewis Baker, College Street, Collette-Elwood Sts., Dayton, O., enclosing self-addressed stamped envelope for reply. Full name and address must be given, but only initials or fictitious name will be used in my answers. The prescriptions can be filled at any well-stocked drug store. Any druggist can order of wholesaler.

will grow plump and have plenty of red blood, with color in your complexion, bright and sparkling eyes of health.

"Sick M. G." writes: "I have been affected for some months with rheumatism and have taken much medicine in vain. Please give prescription that will cure."

Answer: The most efficient prescription I have given for rheumatism is: Iodide of potassium 2 drams, sodium salicylate 4 drams, wine of colchicum 10 cc, compound tincture of cardui 10 cc, compound fluid extract of sassafras 10 cc, compound balsam of capivi 10 cc. Mix and take a teaspoonful at meal time and at bed time.

"Farmville" writes: "You once recommended a home-made cough syrup. I tried it and found it very effective. It cured my cough and I ever heard of it. It was so prompt in relieving the severest coughs and colds and a pint bottle for each child lasted so long that I have forgotten the ingredients. Kindly publish again."

Answer: The splendid laxative home-made cough syrup is made by mixing a 2 1/2 oz. bottle of concentrated, essential mentho-laxene with a home-made sugar syrup. Directions on the bottle tell you to make and use. It is a fine, cheap remedy.

"Mrs. A. D." writes: "Incontinence of urine can be controlled by using the following: Tincture cubebae, 4 drams; tincture rhubarb, 2 drams and compound fluid extract of sassafras 10 cc. Give from 10 to 15 drops in water one hour before meals."

"OMA W." writes: "I have suffered with catarrh of the head for many years. This has become so bad that it has affected my blood, also my stomach and bowels to a very great extent. I shall appreciate an immediate answer as I suffer greatly."

Answer: I would advise you to purchase a 3-oz. package of Vaseline powder; take a teaspoonful of the powder and add to this a pint of warm water, sniff the water from the palm of the hand through the nostrils several times a day. Make a catarrh balm by mixing one teaspoonful of powder with one ounce of vaseline, or lard will do, and apply as far up the nostrils as possible. For the stomach, bowels and blood I would recommend the following tonic: Syrup sarsaparilla comp., 4 oz.; comp. fluid extract of sassafras 10 cc, and 1 oz. of fluid extract of buchu. Mix by shaking well in a bottle and take one teaspoonful after each meal and at bed time.

"Gloria" writes: "I would like you to prescribe a good hair and scalp treatment. I am bothered with itching scalp and dandruff. My hair is faded and falling and none of the remedies I have tried have done any permanent good."

Answer: Go to your druggist and obtain a 4 oz. jar of plain yellow Mayol. Apply as per directions. This treatment is better from all and I have actually seen the astonishing transformations which result from its use. The dandruff and itching are conquered with two or three applications, while it makes the hair glossy, wavy and full of intense natural color.

"Myrtle" writes: "Owing to my extreme thinness I am frequently embarrassed by slightest remarks of young people. Can you prescribe a safe remedy to increase my weight?"

Answer: I have so many gratifying reports from the users of three grain Hypocistane tablets, that I have become to regard these valuable little tablets as a specific and prescribe them to all who are anemic, thin, wasting, nervous and debilitated. I recommend that you begin their use at once and continue regularly until your system is able to assimilate the fatty elements of your food; then you

ERUPTION ON HAND COULD NOT SLEEP

Looked Like Boils, Inflamed, Itched and Hurt. Used Cuticura Soap and Ointment. Hand Well.

R. R. No. 17, Thornton, Ind.—"My husband while working sustained a little place on his hand and it made a running sore and others broke out all around it. They looked like boils. The skin all around them was red and inflamed. It would itch and hurt so badly that he could not sleep at night."

"We tried several kinds of medicines but nothing helped it until I saw the advertisement of Cuticura Soap and Ointment. I sent and got a sample of Cuticura Soap and Ointment and after the first two or three days using it began to heal. He would bathe the sores with the Cuticura Soap and then use the Cuticura Ointment night and morning. He used one cake of Cuticura Soap and one box of Cuticura Ointment. In a week's time his hand was well." (Signed) Mrs. Bertha Gleason, June 16, 1913.

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