

and the creation of child hygiene divisions in city and State departments of health. Within five years of the close of the first World War, 43 States had public, tax-supported divisions of child hygiene.

The special efforts in behalf of babies and children were only a part of the huge ground swell of public health action which has steadily been gaining force and volume during the interval between the two wars. From year to year physicians and public health officials have been able to say: "We know more and are in a position to do more than at any period in the past."

Vigorous and increasingly successful attacks have been made on communicable diseases, particularly the acute childhood infections, the venereal diseases, tuberculosis, and pneumonia. Of the "four grim horsemen of contagion," diphtheria, measles, scarlet fever, and whooping cough, one—diphtheria—has been conquered in some localities by immunization, and could be conquered everywhere. The other three are far better controlled than formerly by preventive and therapeutic measures and consequently take fewer lives and leave fewer serious aftereffects. The incidence of rheumatic fever, which is responsible for most of the heart disease in early adult life, has appreciably declined during the past two decades, with a consequent reduction in the heart defects caused by it. With the advent of the "sulfa drugs", puerperal fever, pneumonia, gonorrhea, wound infections, and a number of other acute diseases and conditions are losing ground as causes of death.

Tuberculosis, the first disease to be called the "Foe of Youth" and the "Captain of the Men of Death," has had directed against it an educational campaign unparalleled in public-health history. Partly, at least, as a result of this effort there has been a steady decline in the tuberculosis death rate. In the interval between the two drafts, this decline for white males at all ages has been 80 percent and for men at the selective service ages nearly 90 percent.

The so-called water-borne and milk-borne diseases including typhoid fever, dysentery, and the intestinal diseases of infancy, referred to variously as infant diarrhea, summer complaint, and cholera morbus, are on the way to practical extinction. Except in certain rural areas, experts in public health engineering have been able to accomplish this feat by measures taken to improve the healthfulness of the environment, including the protection of water supplies, the safeguarding of milk and other perishable foods, the inspection of food-handling establishments, the control of insects, and the sanitary disposal of sewage.

Furthermore, in the fields of public health action concerned with the improvement of living and working conditions, extraordinary progress has been made. Housing, one of the knottiest of all public health problems, has at last been given special attention. Revolutionary improvements have been made in working conditions in industrial plants, and sound health and safety conservation programs for workers have been inaugurated. Research in nutrition has gone on at a rapid pace, and serious attempts have been made to educate the public con-