

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST
GENERAL CONVENTION TO
CONSIDER THE QUESTIONS
INVOLVED IN MOSQUITO
EXTERMINATION**

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Proceedings of the First General Convention to Consider the Questions Involved in Mosquito
Extermination by Henry Clay Weeks

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HENRY CLAY WEEKS

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST
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MOSQUITO EXTERMINATION**

PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE FIRST GENERAL CONVENTION
TO CONSIDER THE QUESTIONS INVOLVED
IN
Mosquito Extermination

HELD BY INVITATION IN THE
ROOMS OF THE BOARD OF TRADE AND TRANSPORTATION
MAIL AND EXPRESS BUILDING
BROADWAY AND FULTON STREET, NEW YORK CITY

ON
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER SIXTEENTH, 1903
AT TWO-THIRTY O'CLOCK P. M.

SECOND EDITION

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HENRY CLAY WEEKS.

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PREFACE.

THE commodious rooms of the Board of Trade and Transportation, by courtesy, were opened to the convention, which begun with about one hundred persons present and was increased by others, so that including those who stayed only part of the time there were in all about 150 in attendance.

In the preparatory correspondence it was universally conceded that such a convention was desirable, but some thought it doubtful whether enough interest could be awakened to get any number together, considering the time of year, the hour of day, and all. The convention adjourned at 5 P. M.

Engineering News, one of the most progressive publications issued, had a long summary of the addresses and the following is taken from its editorial page :

From ridicule to respect has been the changing attitude of the public on the recent proposals to exterminate mosquitoes. Such tangible results have now been achieved and the hearty co-operation of such a large number of property owners, entomologists, engineers, sanitarians and public-spirited citizens generally has been secured as to make possible a well-attended conference of representative men, at which papers on various aspects of the mosquito problem were read and steps taken to form a permanent national organization to combat the mosquito nuisance and menace. As a conference the gathering was notable for its many brief and forceful addresses, and the character of the men who presented them. As a discussion of vital, economic and sanitary questions, affecting the comfort, prosperity and health of millions of people, the remarks were of a distinctly practical, rather than theoretical character. Prominent New York men of affairs told of the satisfaction they had derived from money and time expended in exterminating mosquitoes on their Long Island, Staten Island and New Jersey estates. Engineers and entomologists told of their part in the study of the problem and in its successful solution. No one questioned the possibility and feasibility of reclaiming any mosquito-infected section and of suppressing both malaria and yellow fever, if individuals and municipalities would co-operate, and, in case of large areas, if State and perhaps National governments would join in the work. Except for preliminary studies, however, local action alone will generally be sufficient. Once the biological side of the question has been determined, funds raised, and private and public co-operation secured, the work of mosquito extermination generally resolves itself into the engineering problems of drainage, filling, and, in some cases, the construction of dams or tide gates to control water levels. Quite aside from the advantages of mosquito extermination, great as they may be, are the possible commercial profits due to the reclamation of vast areas of rich swamp and marsh lands, now serving as breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

The walls of the room were placarded in large type with some appropriate sentences from workers, as follows:

"It is my firm opinion that, widespread as the interest in mosquito extermination seems to be at present, it is not a temporary interest but the beginning of a great and intelligent crusade."—*L. O. Howard in the Century, July, 1902.*

"Mosquitoes should not be tolerated in a community any more than smallpox."—*W. J. Matheson, 1900.*

"It is possible to practically rid our region of mosquitoes."—*North Shore Imp't. Ass'n., L. I. Report, 1901.*

Form the Anti-Mosquito Habit!

"One can positively assert that malaria annually costs Italy incalculable treasure."—*Calli.*

Let our Motto be: "No Stagnant Water."—*Worcester Board of Trade, March, 1903.*

"Newark marsh section has about 40,000 acres in all, worth say \$400,000. Manhattan Island has about 10,000 acres net on which the taxable valuation (1903) is \$3,483,000,000; real value probably five billions. Ratio, 1 to 50,000. Thus do mosquitoes and mosquito conditions affect other considerations besides public health."—*H. C. W.*

An illustrated article from the Mail and Express December 12, 1903, on "Reclaiming Waste Land in South Brooklyn," by H. C. W.

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