Some of this material had been prepared for publication in the form of a paper on Air Navigation and sent to press early in October, following which his attention was eagerly concentrated on further problems. So the end came like a ship holding its course accurately, and passing out of sight with all sails set.

M. H. D.

Pittsburgh, Pa.
November 6, 1922

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

MORTALITY FROM CANCER

The Department of Commerce announces that the returns compiled by the Bureau of the Census show that over 76,000 deaths were due to cancer in the death registration area of the United States in 1921, and assuming that the rest of the United States had as many deaths from this cause in proportion to the population, the total number of deaths from cancer in the entire United States for 1921 was 93,000, while for 1920 the number is estimated as 89,000 or 4,000 less than for 1921.

The trend of the cancer death rate is upward, the rate for 1921 being higher than that for any earlier year in twenty-three of the thirty-four states. The cancer death rate in the registration area in 1921 was 86 per 100,000 population, against 83.4 for 1920. In comparing the death rate from cancer in one state with that in another, the bureau uses "adjusted" rates in order to make allowance for differences in the age and the sex distribution of the population, because, generally speaking, only persons in middle life and old age have cancer, so that a state with many old persons may be expected to have more deaths from cancer than a state with comparatively few old persons.

The highest "adjusted" cancer rate for 1921 is 99.6 per 100,000 population for the state of Massachusetts, and the lowest is 47.6 for the state of South Carolina. For a few states adjusted rates have been calculated separately for the white and colored population. In this group of states the highest adjusted cancer rate for the white population is 95.9 per 100,000 population for New York and the highest rate for the colored population is 90.6, also for New York. The lowest adjusted cancer rate for the white population is 51.5 for Tennessee and the lowest for the colored population is 36.4 for Florida.

The adjusted rates show that the northern states have comparatively high and the southern states comparatively low cancer mortality, while there is little difference between the adjusted cancer rates of the white and colored races of the same states.

COLORS FOR TRAFFIC SIGNALS

Thirty-nine men, representing as many administrative bodies, trade associations, scientific or technical societies, and government departments, make up the sectional committee on colors for traffic signals which was organized at a meeting in New York City on November 9 under the auspices of the American Engineering Standards Committee. In opening the meeting, P. G. Agnew, secretary of the American Engineering Standards Committee, said that this was unquestionably the most representative group that has ever come together anywhere in the world to discuss this subject.

The committee elected as its officers the following representatives of the three sponsors for the code: *Chairman*, Charles J. Bennett, state highway commissioner of Connecticut, representing the American Association of State Highway Officials; *vice-chairman*, Dr. M. G. Lloyd, representing the United States Bureau of Standards; *secretary*, Walter S. Paine, research engineer, Ætna Insurance Company, Hartford, Conn., representing the National Safety Council.

Because of the difficulty of bringing the entire sectional committee together at frequent intervals an executive committee was appointed with instructions to collect information on the subjects coming within the scope of the code, to digest this information, to appoint subcommittees, to arrange for the necessary research work, and to draft definite recommendations for the consideration of the sectional committee. The executive committee consists of the following: