

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

AN INTERNATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL CONFERENCE

THE Second International Conference on the Unification of Formulae of Heroic Medicaments will be held in Brussels, Belgium, during the week beginning September 21, 1925.

The first conference of this nature, also held in Brussels, was convened on September 15, 1902, the following countries being represented: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, India, Italy, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

The agreements reached were incorporated into a treaty which was signed by the countries represented November 29, 1906. This country signed with the following reservation: "The Government of the United States of America does not assume, by virtue of its signature to this treaty, any other obligation than that of exercising its influence to bring the next edition of the Pharmacopoeia of the United States into harmony with said agreement."

The progress which has been made as a result of the labors of the first conference is most gratifying. The pharmacopoeias which have been revised since the treaty of 1906 became effective show, without exception, that an earnest endeavor has been made to comply with the requirements laid down by the conference. It was to be expected, however, that the agreements reached by this initial conference would require, as further knowledge was gained, revision from time to time, both in the nature of modifications and additions. It is for the purpose of making such changes and additions that the second conference has been called.

The countries that have signified their intention of participating in the second conference are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Egypt, France, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Roumania, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States.

Dr. A. G. Dumez, of the Hygienic Laboratory at Washington, is the official delegate to this congress of the Army, Navy and the United States Public Health Service.

THE PROPOSED SANCTUARY FOR WILD ANIMALS IN SOUTH AFRICA

A BILL for the permanent establishment of a great national park and sanctuary for wild animals will come before the Union Government of South Africa. Hopes are entertained that a final obstacle, the presence of some privately owned land within the scheduled area, will be overcome and that the Union, by

passing the bill, will create an asset of the highest commercial, popular and scientific value.

The Transvaal, in which the proposed park is situated, has the credit of being the first state in Africa to realize the importance of protecting wild life. In March, 1898, two years before the Conference of African Powers called by the late Lord Salisbury led to the establishment of reserves and sanctuaries in many parts of Africa, the Transvaal government had set apart a district on the Sabi River, between the Drakensberg Mountains and the Lebombo Hills, adjoining Portuguese East Africa, as a sanctuary in which it was forbidden to "hunt, shoot, seek or in any way to intimidate, to chase or to drive, or in any way disturb any game or birds in the game reserve."

The country is known as low veld or bush veld. From east to west it rises in height gradually from about 400 feet above sea level to about 2,000 feet. It is subtropical climatically, and consists of a series of undulating ridges and steep-cut water courses forest clad except below the 1,200-foot level, where it becomes savannah country with rocky outcrops, the home of troops of baboons. There are a few large perennial rivers flowing from west to east and a multitude of tributary water courses, most of them now as a result of the gradual desiccation of South Africa dry except during the rains.

In 1923, under pressure from the companies, the government excised the whole western area of the reserve, amounting to about 1,500,000 acres, between the Olifants River on the north and the Crocodile River on the south.

There remain about seventy farms within the area which are still private property, and it is the acquisition of these at a fair price that is the final obstacle to be overcome. If these are purchased and the remaining area of the original reserve permanently established by the Union Government as a national park and sanctuary, as contemplated by the bill, South Africa will gain possession of one of the greatest reserves in the world.

THE GERMAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

AT the ninth annual general meeting of the Association of British Chemical Manufacturers recently held at the Chemical Society's Rooms, Burlington House, Piccadilly, W., D. Milne Watson, the chairman, said, according to a report in the *London Times*, that the chemical industry, though, fortunately, not to such a great degree as some other industries, was going through a serious time. He attributed the mitigation in their case to the organization which they had built up. During the year there had been closer cooperation between the dyestuffs industry and other branches

of the chemical industry. The fine chemical group seemed to have had a fairly quiet year. A very strenuous one awaited them. It was to the public, as represented by the House of Commons, that they must now appeal. The Safeguarding of Industries Act expired next year, and it seemed obvious that the government would require to know what progress had been made in the manufacture of fine chemicals and what effect the act had had. The council was expecting to receive a full report from the group in the autumn and would then review the whole situation.

Dr. E. F. Armstrong said that there was difficulty in finding suitable chemists with a broad outlook to initiate new problems. If the association could bring pressure to bear on the universities so to alter their course of training as to produce the better-class chemists they wanted, it would be much to the benefit of the industry. He thought that they all realized as much as he did the rocks ahead, because of German competition. It would be true to say that the penetration of the German into matters chemical was even wider, more rapid, and more serious to-day than it was in 1914. The fight was going to be an arduous one.

Mr. N. H. Graesser said that he had recently returned from Germany. He had been amazed to see what developments had occurred in the last year or two. Apparently there was now no home competition there at all. Everything was coordinated. They had their fine chemical convention, and that consisted of firms working to a common policy. But in the dye industry itself he understood that there was only one group. They had bought up all the smaller firms who used to be independent, or had obtained control over them, and they were working as a national industry, with no competition in their own country and with a national effort for all outside business. He was told that in this process of coordination they had recently made tremendous further steps. One of the directors of a large concern told him that since January they had stopped 4,000 men, simply in the transfer of processes to larger scale and power plants. Every plant that was not absolutely up-to-date was simply left, and on any plant that could be revised they were spending money freely. The one feature that seemed to be causing them any trouble was liquid capital and the competitive nature of the market. The reports on labor were uniformly good.

FEDERAL FUNDS FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURE

ACCORDING to information received from the Missouri College of Agriculture, one of the most important and far-reaching laws in the interests of agriculture prepared by the dean of the college, Dr. F. B. Mumford, was approved by President Coolidge on

February 24, 1925. This law provides for increased appropriations to the colleges of agriculture of the several states for scientific research in the interest of agriculture. The bill provides for an initial appropriation of \$20,000 for the first year and \$10,000 additional each year thereafter until the total appropriation shall have reached \$50,000 annually. The provisions of the bill limiting the use of these funds are indicated by the following quotation from the bill:

The funds appropriated pursuant to this act shall be applied only to paying the necessary expenses of conducting investigations or making experiments bearing indirectly on the production, manufacture, preparation, use, distribution and marketing of agricultural products and including such scientific researches as have for their purpose the establishment and maintenance of a permanent agricultural industry; and such economic and sociological investigations as have for their purpose the development and improvement of the rural home and rural life; and for printing and disseminating the results of such researches.

The administrative features of this bill are similar to those of the Hatch and Adams Acts providing funds for agricultural experiment stations, but the uses for which these funds may be expended are broader and place emphasis upon certain phases of agricultural research in agricultural economics, home economics and rural sociology. This increased emphasis upon the business side of farming is a recognition of the importance of world economic conditions in the development of agriculture. The prosperity of the farmer is not alone dependent upon efficient production methods, but is determined by economical methods of distribution and marketing. Investigations in distribution and marketing of farm products will therefore be undertaken by all the stations benefiting from this act. The bill also recognizes that the solution of the rural problem involves rural conditions. It therefore provides for investigations of the rural home and rural living.

This endowment for agricultural research, added to amounts already available, will represent a major endowment of approximately \$250,000,000 and an annual income of more than \$10,000,000 for the state experiment stations.

RAMSAY MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIPS

THE Ramsay Memorial Fellowship trustees have made the following awards of new fellowships for the session 1925-26:

A British fellowship of £300, tenable for two years, to Mr. G. A. Elliott, B.Sc., for work at University College, London.

A British fellowship of £300, tenable for one year, to Mr. H. R. Ing, M.A., D.Phil., for work in the University of Manchester.