the age of four. At a large epileptic hospital it was found that about half of the patients began their convulsions before the age of four. Just what the relationship may be between this acute condition and the chronic epilepsy of adults is apt to be elicited. Such are a few of the problems presented; their importance is obvious; they are the more challenging to medical science because they are so baffling.

During the last few years advances in treatment have been made. Chief among them is the discovery that acidosis tends to stop convulsions. Many children have been completely relieved by the practical application through diet of this chemical knowledge; in adults the diet is seldom of avail. It is obvious that the processes underlying these phenomena are not completely understood, and it is hoped that if a more complete understanding of them is obtained dietary treatment may be more universally successful. Another important problem is the relationship of the oxygen supply of the nerve cell to convulsive seizures. Recent work indicates that this may be the crux of the question. Studies concerning toxins absorbed from bacteria in the bowels are being carried out; such auto-intoxications may be the exciting cause of convulsions. Psychological factors are also important, and have been studied, but not extensively enough.

For more than five years work along these lines has been carried on at the Harvard Medical School, at the Massachusetts General Hospital, the Children's Hospital and at the Boston City Hospital. The appointment of the Harvard Epilepsy Commission makes possible a coordination and continuity of the work. No valuable results can be expected from research of this kind unless it be carried on for years, so the promotion of a permanent commission is a most important advance. Funds must be raised to carry on the investigations. At present about $10,000 a year is needed, but if generous support is given the scope of the work can be enlarged greatly.

FOREIGN SCIENTIFIC MEN AT THE U. S. FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY

THE ranks of the foreign scientists working on American wood-utilization problems in the Forest Products Laboratory of the United States Department of Agriculture at Madison, Wisconsin, were augmented recently by the arrival of five men sent by government and private agencies in Australia, Finland, Poland and Sweden.

H. B. Somerset, Melbourne, Australia, will work as a member of the pulp and paper staff of the Forest Products Laboratory for a period of one year before returning to Australia to take a position in a paper mill operating on eucalyptus.

C. Ellis, forest economist to the Queensland Forest Service, Brisbane, Australia, will make his headquarters at the laboratory for the next twelve to eighteen months, studying its organization and methods, and using it as a point of departure for trips to various wood-using industries of the United States and Canada.

K. Kuoppamaki, mechanical engineer from Finland, has spent some time at the laboratory studying the manufacture of plywood.

Dr. J. Wiertelak, assistant in the institute of chemistry in the University of Poznan, Poland, is beginning a year of study at the Forest Products Laboratory on a scholarship of the Polish Ministry of Education. Dr. Wiertelak's studies will be principally on the chemistry of wood.

Carl Gustaf Strokirk, Harnosand, Sweden, is at the laboratory on a grant from the University of Commerce, Stockholm. Mr. Strokirk will remain at the Madison Laboratory until May studying the manufacture of plywood and other wood-utilization problems. During the summer of 1929 he will obtain employment in American woodworking plants to observe American methods. He will return to the laboratory next fall.

J. E. Cummins and H. E. Dadswell, Commonwealth (Australian) Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, are nearing the end of a two-years' study at the Forest Products Laboratory.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

OFFICERS of the Royal Society elected at the anniversary meeting on November 30 are: *President,* Sir Ernest Rutherford; *Treasurer,* Sir David Prain; *Secretaries,* Sir James Jeans and Dr. H. H. Dale; *Foreign Secretary,* Sir Henry Lyons; *Other Members of Council,* Dr. F. A. Bather, Dr. C. Bolton, Dr. C. G. Douglas, Mr. R. H. Fowler, Professor E. W. Hobson, Sir Frederick Hopkins, Professor A. Lapworth, Professor J. C. G. Ledingham, Professor F. A. Lindemann, Dr. P. C. Mitchell, Professor J. C. Philip, Professor A. C. Seward, Professor G. Elliot Smith, Sir Thomas Stanton, Mr. A. A. C. Swinton and Professor C. T. R. Wilson.

BRITISH scientific societies have elected presidents as follows: The London Mathematical Society, Dr. Edmund T. Whittaker, F.R.S., professor of mathematics in the University of Edinburgh; the Mineralogical Society, Dr. G. T. Prior, F.R.S., keeper of the department of minerals of the British Museum; the Cambridge Philosophical Society, Mr. G. Udny Yule, F.R.S., lecturer in statistics in the University of Cambridge, and the Philosophical Society of the University of Durham, Sir Charles A. Parsons, F.R.S., chairman of the engineering works of C. A. Parsons and Company.

DR. EDWARD FRANCIS, surgeon of the U. S. Public Health Service, who isolated the tularemia germ and