

ment. The commission is constituted as follows: Viscount D'Abernon, *chairman*; J. B. Beresford, of the treasury, *secretary*; Evan E. Charteris; Sir Richard Tetley Glazebrook; Lord Hanworth, the Earl of Harewood; Sir George MacDonald; Sir Henry A. Miers; Charles Reed Peers, and Sir Philip Sassoon, M.P. The functions of the commission are: (1) To advise generally on questions relative to the most effective development of the national institutions as a whole, and on any specific questions which may be referred to them from time to time; (2) to promote cooperation between the national institutions themselves, and between the national and provincial institutions; (3) to stimulate the generosity and direct the efforts of those who aspire to become public benefactors.

THE Board of Control of Mental Health Services, with the approval of the British Minister of Health, has, according to a report in the *London Times*, appointed the following to advise the board upon questions arising in connection with scientific and ancillary mental health services: Mr. L. G. Brock, *chairman*; Sir Hubert Bond, Mr. Robert Bruford, Mr. W. E. Lovsey, Mr. T. S. Good, Dr. Adeline Roberts, Mr. J. C. Grime, Professor J. Shaw Bolton and Mr. P. Barter, *secretary*. The mental treatment act, which came into operation on January 1, confers upon local authorities powers to provide for outpatient treatment and for the after-care of mental patients, and, subject to the approval of the Board of Con-

trol, to undertake or to contribute to research in regard to mental illness. The Board of Control has appointed the advisory committee to assist them in the consideration of schemes of research submitted for the board's approval, and in regard to such questions as the organization of social services in connection with outpatient treatment and after-care, on which local authorities may seek the board's guidance. On technical questions relating to research the advisory committee will have the expert advice of members of the Medical Research Council's committee on mental disorders.

THE personnel of the new Bureau of Agricultural Engineering of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, which was established about a month ago, includes many members of the former division of agricultural engineering. S. H. McCrory is chief of the bureau, H. H. Barrows is assistant chief, and K. McSorley is secretary. The new divisions are: Irrigation, W. W. McLaughlin, chief; drainage and soil-erosion control, L. A. Jones, chief; mechanical equipment, R. B. Gray, acting chief; structure, Wallace Ashby, chief, and plans and service, M. C. Betts, chief. As special assignments in the bureau, C. A. Bennett is in charge of cotton-ginning investigations and G. R. Boyd, of farm-land development. The editorial and information division is under R. D. Marsden, and the division of administration under G. P. Wolf. S. P. Lyle has been appointed in charge of extension activities and Mrs. Dorothy Wilks, librarian.

DISCUSSION

THE "RICKETTSIAE" AND THE INTRACELLULAR "SYMBIONTS"

KLIGLER and Aschner,¹ in an article on the "Rickettsiae" from certain blood-sucking pupipara, misunderstood my interpretation² of the intracellular bacteria found within the American and German roach. These authors, in discussing my work on these diphtheroids (p. 113) state, "The mere fact that they are found in the insect cells is in our opinion no justification for classing them with the *entirely distinctive* group of Rickettsia." This, notwithstanding the fact that in their first sentence they state, "Rickettsia or rickettsia-like organisms have been studied extensively during the last decade; but there is as yet *no clarity as to the nature and precise definition* of this group of microbes." It will be noted in my work that both the terms "Rickettsia" and "Sym-

bionts" were printed in quotes, and that much trouble was taken to demonstrate that the microorganisms discussed were indeed bacteria.

Kligler and Aschner's point of view was anticipated, and for this reason, in 1930,³ I discussed the whole question of the intracellular "Symbionts" and the "Rickettsiae" at length. I still maintain that size and tinctorial properties alone do not constitute valid taxonomic characters and that a natural classification is based upon general biological relationships. Creating new orders, families, genera and species without sufficient evidence is termed "splitting" by biologists and is considered extremely unconservative. The most conservative workers always attempt to place new organisms within established systems.

R. W. GLASER

DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL PATHOLOGY,
THE ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE FOR
MEDICAL RESEARCH,
PRINCETON, N. J.

¹ *J. Bacteriology*, 22: 103-114, 1931.

² *J. Exp. Med.*, 51: 59-82, 1930; *ibid.*, 51: 903-907, 1930.

³ *Archives of Pathology*, 9: 71-96, 1930; *ibid.*, 9: 557-576, 1930.