cess is not a foregone conclusion. To supply deficiencies in knowledge the board would doubtless have to undertake much research through its own staff or through other agencies. But after doing its best to lay a scientific foundation for its plans, the board would often have to advise proceeding in an experimental fashion on the basis of probabilities. It would be doing pioneer work; for it would be trying to better the social organization of one of the most advanced countries in the world—to do things which have not yet been done. Hence it could not expect to achieve as brilliant a record as did the elder statesmen of Japan, who were seeking to pull abreast of other nations and so had models to imitate. And of course the usefulness of the board could be wrecked by the appointment of men chosen for partisan reasons. Or a board of men possessing technical competence but lacking in other qualities might antagonize the Executive, Congress and the public, and so lose its influence. Perhaps the idea of trying to mobilize the intelligence of the country for systematic and continuous study of social problems will be rejected by public opinion. But it would seem that we have had enough experience with reforms that produce almost as much harm as they remove to be willing to try a more scientific method of dealing with social problems.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE AGRICULTURAL PROBLEMS OF MEXICO

THE special correspondent of *The Christian Science Monitor* writes from Mexico City that the 35,829,500 acres of arable land can not be cultivated until the population has reached at least 30,000,000 inhabitants. This statement, made in a recent study by A. Lozcano, agricultural engineer, and regarded as an argument that Mexico should let down its immigration bars, followed closely upon the recent publication of a symposium by a group of Mexican technicians, of which Señor Lozcano was one.

The symposium, entitled "The Agricultural Problem of Mexico," according to the correspondent, was issued at a time when other effects of Mexico's preoccupation over problems of population and their relation to more organized and efficient production were beginning to show themselves.

One instance was the announcement of plans for the founding of ten new cities on different irrigation systems, and another the continued pace at which commonland-grants are being parceled by the government, a total number of 7,141 peasants having been provided with such parcels during the month of September.

The problem of improving means and methods of better cultivation are said to have been greatly exaggerated in Mexico. That phase of the question is secondary compared with that of increasing the agricultural and national population.

The ten cities to be constructed by the National Irrigation Commission on as many national irrigation systems in different parts of the country will represent a total outlay of about 5,000,000 pesos, or an average of 500,000 pesos each.

The new centers will be modeled after the agricultural city, Anahuac, built last year on National Irrigation System No. 4 in the northern part of the country, and which now has a total population of about 5,000. They will include complete water, drainage and light systems, well laid out streets, office buildings, shops, warehouses, post office and telegraph service, branches of agricultural banks for colonists and common land-grant owners and hotels.

The purpose of the new cities is to provide a more comfortable way of living for the thousands of colonists and to give them the benefit of more modern social and educational advantages.

When work now being carried on at different systems is concluded, 728,945 acres of land will be under cultivation. Every system has its chain of highways and roads connecting it with important distribution centers. According to the report, the efficiency with which this work has been carried on and the systems put to practical use are superior to those shown by similar services in other countries.

Plots are obtained by immediate payment in full, or by promise-of-sale contracts of two types, short and long-term—the latter covering a period of from 24 to 25 years.

THE LINDBERGH COLLECTION OF SPORES IN ARCTIC AREAS

COLLECTIONS of micro-organisms which Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh made on his flight through the Arctic areas in the summer of 1933 are described in the January issue of *The Scientific Monthly,* by Fred C. Meier, senior agriculturist, U. S. Department of Agriculture, with field notes and material by Colonel Lindbergh. Mr. Meier has been studying air-borne organisms for several years—particularly those that drive northward over the plains each year to spread rust in the wheat fields. He interested Colonel Lindbergh in making this contribution to the scientific work of the department, and together they worked out new and improved apparatus for taking samples of the micro-flora of the Arctic air.

Colonel Lindbergh devised a spore trap which he