BY the will of Mrs. James T. Pardee, of Midland, Mich., securities worth $1,000,000 are set aside for research on the control and cure of cancer. The value of the estate is estimated at $6,000,000.

DR. HARRY L. HOLLINGSWORTH, professor of psychology at Columbia University, has given $51,000 to establish a fellowship at the university in memory of his wife, Leta Stetter Hollingsworth, professor of education at Teachers College, who died in 1939. The fellowship will be awarded annually to a woman graduate of the University of Nebraska who "is most likely to emulate the character and career of the late Mrs. Hollingsworth."

THE herbarium of the late Dr. Oliver Atkins Farwell, containing some forty thousand Michigan plants, has been bequeathed to the Cranbrook Institute of Science at Bloomfield Hills, Mich.

THE Army Ordnance Distinguished Service Award was presented on October 12 to the American Society for Testing Materials, in recognition of "its contributions toward the development, manufacture and maintenance of ordnance materiel."

DISCUSSION

FUNDAMENTAL BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN WARTIME

"SCIENCE" often takes a long time to reach New Guinea. I recently received the April 7 issue, and was happy to read the results of Dr. Curt Stern's inquiry concerning the advisability of continuing fundamental biological research in wartime. Here is yet another "yes" for unqualified continuation.

I do not think any of us who favor continuation of fundamental research in wartime mean to imply that the relatively non-productive research worker, old or young, should be kept at his job when he could probably find himself a more suitable and more useful occupation in the armed services or in war work. We also do not mean to imply that a research worker of proved ability should stick to his fundamental, long-range research, if a very definite need exists for the solution of a practical problem for which he is exceptionally well suited by training and talent.

Many capable research workers will not find such an opportunity, and it is hard to see how they can do better than to continue with fundamental research. People capable of doing original, imaginative research are none too numerous. For individuals who have demonstrated such ability to do essentially laboratory technician's work in the Army or in some war research project is as much a waste as to use a six-wheeled truck to transport 20 pounds of equipment. Jeeps are usually available, and so are people who can do routine work but not original research.

Too many biologists have tended to worry too much about the "usefulness" of their research projects. The best research is generally done when the worker is doing it because he enjoys it and wants to find an answer to some question of interest to him. No one knows what findings in fundamental research will ultimately prove useful in one way or another. It is a fine thing when some discovery in fundamental research leads to an improvement in the health or general welfare of the community, or even merely to some handy gadget. But ultimate usefulness should not be held out as the sole reason for the carrying out of fundamental scientific research. Man wants to understand his environment for the sake of the mental satisfaction such understanding brings, as well as for the sake of the material benefit which often follows such understanding.

The discovery and description of natural phenomena and their interrelationships is a cultural activity of the highest order. There is in an understanding of natural science, a sense of beauty as definite and distinct as in the appreciation of a work of art. This value of science has been too long neglected. The popularizers of science harp upon its usefulness. Behold, they say, science gives us a better toothbrush! (and, say the opponents of science, also bigger and better bombs). A better toothbrush is nice to have, and the better bombs are coming in very handy, but science involves so much more than this. The general public should be made more thoroughly aware of these other values to be derived from scientific knowledge and education. Then workers in fundamental lines of research, which do not seem to be leading to better toothbrushes, will no longer need to feel apologetic about their activities.

WILLIAM TRAGER,
1st Lieutenant Sn.C.

COMMENTS ON COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN HUMAN BIOLOGY

IN his comments on Professor Herskovits's criticism[1] of Professor Dice's remarks[2] Professor Strandskov writes: "If primary human stocks (Mongoloid, Negroid and Caucasoid) and if subdivisions of these major groups ('races') have any validity at all, and the author believes that Professor Herskovits will admit that they do have some, it seems almost inevitable that both physiological and inherent response differences must exist."[3]

[1] SCIENCE, n.s., 100: 50–51, 1944.
[2] *Ibid.*, n.s., 99: 457–461.