

which were partially destroyed by fire late in 1942 was one of the major events of the year, because it means the gradual resumption, starting within a few weeks, of the special floral displays which had been a leading attraction in the main conservatories every winter for a number of years. These displays, in a normal season when the plants could be grown and the people could reach the garden easily, have brought from five to fifteen thousand visitors to the conservatories on a single Sunday. The greenhouse which was damaged was the one in which the display material was being propagated and grown, and since the fire there has been no other place on the grounds where this extensive work could be carried on.

The opening of the new building will also enable the garden to re-establish experimental work and to resume the growing of a large collection of plants of scientific and economic value.

Explorations have been carried out in the tropical regions of the Americas during the year just closed. Dr. Bassett Maguire, curator, returned on November 1 from an eight months' exploring expedition in British Guiana and Surinam. E. J. Alexander, assistant curator, is now directing a six months' expedition for botanical and horticultural material in little known parts of southern Mexico. Dr. W. H. Camp, assistant curator, who is on leave of absence, is collecting specimens of plants in the mountains of Ecuador, while on a Government project in search of cinchona trees for quinine production.

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

It is stated in the annual report by Barry C. Smith, general director of the Commonwealth Fund, that in the year ending September 30, 1944, the fund appropriated \$1,254,988, chiefly for the relief of needs created or revealed by the war, for the long-range encouragement of health services, and for basic research and planning designed to improve health services after the war.

He reports that "In the field of health services conspicuous changes concerning medical practice seem to be in the making. These, although their exact form can not be foreseen, look primarily to the wider and more equitable distribution of medical care. If they are judiciously planned and intelligently administered, they may also help to better the quality of medical care. The fund has contributed toward the exploration of these questions through a subvention (voted in 1943) to the New York Academy of Medicine for a study of medicine and the changing order; during the coming year it will publish a series of monographs growing out of this study. The fund will continue to experiment, as it has done for years, with ways and means of bettering the quality of medical care.

"In medical education—obviously a dominant factor in setting the level of medical practice—the situation is confused by the violent adjustments of the accelerated program. Many medical educators feel the need for new teaching methods, new cross-connections between departments in the medical school, new ways of retraining men already in practice. The fund hopes to share in furthering such changes, some of which, on a small scale, it has already helped to initiate.

"In medical research the future is unpredictable. What is predictable is that the growing preoccupation of investigators with underlying physiological patterns—the patterns that may hold the key to understanding and perhaps control of the chronic diseases of middle age and senescence—will continue for many years to justify the wholehearted support of many inquiries that seem, on their face, recondite and even 'impractical.' It is clear, too, that there may be a strong trend toward coordinated research, so strikingly vindicated in the handling of some problems of war medicine and so hard to reconcile with long-established habits in scientific work."

GRANTS OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

THE following grants have been made by the Committee on Scientific Research of the American Medical Association:

George Ulett, University of Oregon Medical School, electroencephalograms in experimental focal brain lesions.

Hans Popper, Cook County Hospital, Chicago, liver structure in relation to function tests.

Wilbur Thomas, Bowman Gray School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, N. C., experimental cardiac rupture.

A. M. Lassek, Medical College of the State of South Carolina, effect of paralysis on human pyramidal system.

Archie R. Tunturi, University of Oregon Medical School, acoustic area in cortex of the dog.

Leo Hardt, Loyola University School of Medicine, Chicago, new gastroscope.

David Sandweiss and Thomas L. Patterson, Wayne University College of Medicine, Detroit, relation of the endocrine glands to urogastrone.

Israel Davidsohn, Mount Sinai Hospital, Chicago, problems of Rh factor.

Frederick M. Allen, New York, studies on refrigeration surgery and treatment.

J. LeRoy Conel, Harvard Medical School, postnatal development of the human cerebral cortex.

Herbert S. Kupperman, University of Georgia, pregnancy test.

Theodor E. Bratrud, University of Minnesota Medical School, colored illustrations for article on congenital adrenal hyperplasia.

Wilhelm Raab, University of Vermont College of Medi-

cine, protective effect of thiouracil against the toxic cardiovascular action of epinephrine and sympathin.

W. E. Garrey, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, innervation of the heart of vertebrates.

Helen Ingleby, Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, problems of cystic disease and carcinoma of the breast.

O. Boyd Houchin, Loyola University School of Medicine, Chicago, vitamin E deficiency in relation to cardiac function.

Rachmiel Levine, Michael Reese Hospital, Chicago, secretion and metabolism of progesterone in threatened abortion.

Daniel J. Glomset, Des Moines, Iowa, cardiac conduction.

H. M. Weaver, Wayne University College of Medicine, Detroit, production and treatment of alloxan diabetic coma in rats.

GRANTS OF THE ELLA SACHS PLOTZ FOUNDATION

THE twenty-first annual report for 1944 of the Ella Sachs Plotz Foundation for the Advancement of Scientific Education has been made public. This includes a list of those who received grants during the year together with the subjects of their research.

The following is an outline of the policy that has been adopted in making these awards.

Researches are favored that are directed towards the solution of problems in medicine and surgery or in branches of science bearing on medicine and surgery.

As a rule, preference is given to researches on a single problem or on closely allied problems; it is hoped that investigators in this and in other countries may be found, whose work on similar or related problems may be assisted so that more rapid progress may be made possible.

Grants may be used for the purchase of apparatus and supplies that are needed for special investigations, and for the payment of unusual expenses incident to such investigations, including technical assistance, but not for providing apparatus or materials which are ordinarily a part of laboratory equipment. Stipends for the support of investigators will be granted only under exceptional circumstances.

In the past few years the policy outlined in paragraph 2 has been neglected and grants will be given in the sciences closely related to medicine without reference to special fields. The maximum size of grants is usually less than \$500.

Applications for grants to be held during the year 1945-46 must be in the hands of the executive committee before April, 1945. They should be sent to Dr. Joseph C. Aub, The Massachusetts General Hospital, Fruit Street, Boston 14. There are no formal application blanks but letters asking for aid must state definitely the qualifications of the investigator, give an accurate description of the research, the size of the

grant requested and the specific use of the money to be expended. In their requests for aid applicants should state whether or not they have approached other foundations for financial assistance. It is highly desirable to include letters of recommendation from the directors of the departments in which the work is to be done. Only applications complying with the above conditions will be considered.

Members of the executive committee are Drs. George B. Wislocki, *Chairman*, Charles Janeway, A. Baird Hastings, Harry Plotz, Ernest Sachs, Paul J. Sachs and Joseph C. Aub, *Secretary*.

THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

At a meeting of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, held on January 12, 1945, as already reported in *SCIENCE*, Dr. Alexander Wetmore was elected to the post of secretary. This place was left vacant by the resignation on June 30, 1944, of Dr. Charles G. Abbot, who asked to be relieved of administrative duties in order that he might devote himself to his researches. Dr. Wetmore, who has served as assistant secretary of the institution since 1925, has accepted the post with the understanding that at some later time he will be permitted to return to research work.

Among the regents present at the meeting were Chief Justice Harlan F. Stone, chancellor of the board; Representative Clarence Cannon, and citizen regents Harvey N. Davis, Arthur H. Compton, Vannevar Bush and Frederic C. Walcott.

Reports presented covered the activities of the institution during another year of war. Much of its normal program of research and exploration continued in abeyance, with the scientific staff devoting much time to technical information needed by the Army and Navy and other war agencies. The questions coming to the institution cover a wide variety of topics, including native peoples; geography; disease-bearing insects; parasites; poisonous and edible plants, animals and fishes; shipworms; properties of foreign woods; and many others. In many instances the requests involve extensive research.

Seven more papers were issued in the series of "Smithsonian War Background Studies." These deal with Alaska, the East Indies, Micronesia and Melanesia, Burma, India, French Indo-China and China. Special editions of several of these papers have been used by the Army and Navy in training and orientation work.

In the field of Latin American cooperation, the "Handbook of South American Indians," a coopera-