

professional services and divisions of the Office of the Surgeon General; the air surgeon; the ground surgeon; the chairman of the Division of Medical Sciences of the National Research Council (by invitation); and the chairman of the Committee on Medical Research, Office of Scientific Research and Development (by invitation). The board has two operating divisions, the Research Division and the Development Division, to carry out its plans. It is the intent of the Surgeon General to carry on an active program of research and development during the postwar period and the new board should provide the means for maximum coordination of effort within the military service and cooperation with civilian and Federal research agencies. The immediate tasks facing the board are three in number. Essential research must be continued in the existing research and development laboratories of the Medical Department in spite of the personnel difficulties of the period of demobilization. Plans must be made and implemented for the continuation or actual expansion of research and development in the postwar period. The demobilization of the Office of Scientific Research and Development necessitated finding other sponsorship for those research contracts of the Committee on Medical Research which warrant continuation even though hostilities have terminated. A group of these contracts will be taken over by the Medical Department and administered by the board.

THE MOUNT PALOMAR TELESCOPE

CONSTRUCTION of the world's largest telescope—(200-inches) at the summit of Mount Palomar in California—is being resumed after a wartime interruption. Between one and two years will be required for its completion according to an announcement made by the Carnegie Institution of Washington, which cooperated with the California Institute of Technology in the design and operational plans. The uncompleted reflecting telescope is now at the observatory on Mount Palomar, sixty-six miles north of San Diego.

The 200-inch glass disc was poured on December 2, 1934, at Corning, N. Y., and was taken across the country to be placed in the observatory. With the outbreak of war both the optical and mechanical work had to be suspended.

Plans have been formulated by the Carnegie Institution, which operates Mount Wilson Observatory in California, for a cooperative research program between Mount Wilson and the Mount Palomar Observatory as soon as the equipment at the latter is completed. According to the announcement both institutions have approved a program whereby "the two observatories will be placed under a single administrative management, having a director who will

be chairman of an advisory management committee with representatives from both organizations."

THE ATOMIC ENERGY ACT

AN appeal for more complete consideration of the Atomic Energy Act, signed by one hundred and fifty-five scientists of the Boston area, was telegraphed to President Truman on the morning of October 23. Those signing the telegram—including Dr. Karl T. Compton, president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Dr. Leonard Carmichael, president of Tufts College—are members of the National Society of the Sigma Xi. The need for resumption of hearings on the bill is emphasized. The telegram follows:

The undersigned scientists of the Boston area, members of The National Scientific Research Society, feel deep concern over the very brief and inadequate discussion of the Atomic Energy Act of 1945. Widespread fears have been expressed regarding the sweeping nature of the powers delegated to the Atomic Energy Commission in the proposed bill, and without attempting to take a stand on this point, we feel it is imperative to give the fullest opportunity for discussion on this and other points both in Congress and by the public at large. Whatever the urgency of such legislation, the need for full and complete understanding of the momentous issues at stake is much greater. We urge strongly that hearings on the bill be resumed and that the fullest public consideration of the question be encouraged.

Copies of the telegram have been sent to John W. Snyder, director of War Mobilization and Reconversion; Representative Andrew J. May, chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee, sponsor of the bill; Representative Chet Holifield, member of the House Military Affairs Committee, and John W. McCormick, House of Representatives. Those signing the telegram from Harvard University included Professor Harlow Shapley, director of the Observatory; Dr. Lionel S. Marks, Gordon McKay professor of mechanical engineering, emeritus; Dr. Percy W. Bridgman, Hollis professor of mathematics and natural philosophy; Dr. John H. Van Vleck, professor of mathematical physics; Dr. Jabez C. Street, associate professor of physics, and Dr. Kirtley F. Mather, professor of geology.

NEWS FROM ABROAD

THE following is a translation of a letter from Professor J. Timmermans, president of the Bureau of Physico-chemical Standards, International Union of Chemistry; University of Brussels, Belgium, addressed to Dr. Marston T. Bogert, as president of the International Union of Chemistry:

August 29, 1945

Dear Colleague:

As Professor Dony-Henault will already have told you,

we are occupied in resurrecting our National Committee of Chemistry, decimated by the war, and I hope that it will be functioning again before the close of this year.

Meanwhile, permit me in a personal way to direct your attention to a question presenting great interest for all chemists and where your intervention as President of the Union appears to me distinctly desirable.

The matter is the following: On returning* to Brussels, I found in our university laboratory library the new volumes of Gmelin-Kraut and of the second supplement of Beilstein, which appeared five years ago. These works are of such value for chemists of the entire world that it seems to me necessary to undertake as soon as possible (if not already too late) conservation measures to assure their continuation. Without attempting to predict the future, one can perfectly well conceive that the publication might be continued outside of Germany. There might be a chance, it seems to me, to save all that remains of the documentation collected in the Hofmann House at Berlin on the subject, as well as MSS in preparation, and eventually to assure the gathering of certain members of the specialized personnel who prepared these works. Could you not take up this question with the authorities of the American army of occupation in Berlin? Such is my wish and the purpose of this letter.

Please accept, my dear President, the assurances of my best regards.

(signed) J. TIMMERMANS.

Dr. and Mrs. Blakeslee have received the following letter, under date of September 6, from Dr. Otto Lous Mohr, of the Institute of Anatomy of the University of Oslo:

Sincere thanks for your kind card (of May 27). It was a great joy to hear from you—as a matter of fact it was one of the very first greetings we received after all these years of complete isolation.

Happily, we are all well, but it has been a terrible time. Mrs. Mohr was the first of us to be arrested, but that was in the spring of 1941 when conditions were not yet as bad as later on. And she was released the following day. I myself was imprisoned Sept. 1941 during an "Ausnahmestand" together with our university rector and two other professors. It was the day after the first two Norwegian civilians had been shot by the Gestapo, and if the students had not kept quiet we would probably have been shot too. After 7 months in jail and concentration camps I was released but strictly forbidden to live in or near Oslo and not to speak of entering the University. So when I was now again appointed professor, May, 1945, I had not been at the institute for 4 years. October, 1943 our son was arrested, brought in a concentration camp and somewhat later sent to Germany (Elsass, Buchenwald, Neuengamme) with two other Norwegian students. It is a mere wonder that he—thanks to the Bernadotte action—returned safely late in May after our liberation. In addition one of my sisters spent 2½ years in a concentration camp and my youngest brother 1 year

* From his refuge in England.—M.T.B.

in prison. You may from this very concentrated outline realize what the victory and liberation meant to us. We and all Norwegians can not express our profound gratefulness to the decisive part played by the Americans in this tremendous fight for liberty and decency!

Conditions out here are now gradually improving. Our University is luckily undamaged. I myself started teaching again August 1. Demerec has asked me to send him a brief record on our genetics laboratory to appear in D. I. S. so I am not going to enter upon that chapter here. We have of course considerable difficulties, but we are hopeful and eager to apply ourselves to the tasks that lie before us. Mrs. Mohr has been marvellous during all these ordeals, attended to her practice and kept things together in Oslo during my absence. She has now also regained her sleep—her nights were not good when we had our boy in Germany, neither were mine.

To live under terror for years is something not to be explained. Can you understand how so many people can be so utterly depraved and beastly? It is certainly not easy to believe in the progress of humanity.

Best greetings from all of us and renewed thanks for your card.

The following communication from D. Hille Ris Lambers, of Bilthoven, Holland, dated May 12, has been received by Professor E. O. Essig, of the University of California at Berkeley:

This is to inform you that I still live and still work on aphids. All during the German occupation I have worked on my books on European aphids, but nothing could be published because the Jerries did not like papers in English and they did not like me. In 1940 they caught me and put me in prison, but I was rather soon out of it. Several times my house was searched but without result. Then, this winter they ordered the whole population out of Wageningen and the neighboring village of Bennekom, and that was the worst blow because they pillaged to such an extent that we have not even beds or chairs left. All our clothes and shoes, crockery, in short everything disappeared eastwards or was wrecked. I had hidden my library and slides under the floors, but they tore these open and flooded the works. Everything which is not stolen is more or less completely destroyed by water. About 60% of the slides can be recovered but of the books a very great part is irreparably gone. I had buried my manuscripts and drawings in a steel box, but they found it and all the drawings are gone, but the box with the manuscripts in it was thrown in the garden where I found it. Fortunately, the lid had closed and so, seven months later, I found my manuscripts, about 2,000 pages both undamaged. My microscope still exists. I put it in a strong box of some acquaintance and that strong box is the only one in the area which was not opened. But I have no means to make new slides because the 20 boxes of coverslips were stolen as well and even the doctors have no coverslips in this totally exhausted country.

My house got a full hit from an Allied 25-pounder which exploded just beside my working desk. About 100 yards from it a German V-I exploded, so that the house

is cracked and the tiles are mostly gone. All the windows are out too, but I have two panes now so that we will have light in two rooms if within a few weeks we go back. Friends and family gave us some beds, chairs, a table, cups, plates and a few others of the most essential things for living. You can buy nothing except food on coupons. All the shops are absolutely and completely empty. For weeks I have tried to get a tie, on coupons, but without any results. I wear a dyed Allied uniform, discarded boots and a shirt from the U. S. Army, which, fortunately, I got from the Red Cross. This winter hundreds died here from starvation but we survived because of my name being rather well known in agricultural circles. Still, it was dangerous to go out for food because the Jerries pinched everybody under 50 for work in Germany and I had several narrow escapes. 65% of the Dutch Jews, about 120,000 were murdered in Germany and nearly the same number of other men and women. On top of that many thousands died of starvation and many more by bombing and shellfire. We too, had six weeks of intermittent shellfire at Bennekom, but we got more or less accustomed to it, though they shot part of a house away in which we slept upstairs for a few weeks. We were so calm then, that we went to sleep and not till next morning did anybody find out that we were hit.

Before America got in the war you promised to send me some papers and some material of aphids. You could do me a very great pleasure with whatever you can lay hands on, but I am especially in a hurry to examine if possible fresh alcoholic material of the various *Micromyzus* species from *Allium* species which you described just before the war. In England a *Micromyzus* on shallot

has turned up, which is thought there to be new and for both the identification of their species and the purpose of including it in my monograph I should like, if possible, to compare it with material of your species.

The only things of interest which I published during the war were a short survey of fruit aphid in Dutch, of which I never received a reprint, but which will be reprinted eventually as a booklet, and an article on *Yesabura*, *Anuraphis* or whatever you want to call it, *crataegi* Theobald, from apple. The latter article is extensive and well illustrated, with an English summary, but though I got the last proof, it was not yet printed at the time of the Airborne landing near Arnheim and then the Jerries took all the better metal, but apparently the blocks still exist so that it should not be long until this is really published. Part 3 of my monograph got a permission from the Germans last summer to be printed in autumn, but after the landing all the printers' shops had to be closed. The manuscript is intact and the proofs may come in any moment. As soon as I have copies you will have them. Everything is still greatly disorganized here because so much is stolen. Everybody grows his own tobacco now but it stinks though it burns when lighted. The time that each small tobaccoist sold about 200 brands of cigarettes is history now.

Well, Professor Essig, if you would please inform me how you did during the war, and if you could send me some material, you'll oblige me very much, really. My address after the middle of September will be 24, Selterskampweg, Bennekom.

With best regards and congratulations on the work your country did for us during the war and is still doing.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

THE Nobel Prize for physiology and medicine has been awarded by the Karolinska Institute of Stockholm to Sir Alexander Fleming, of the University of London, the discoverer of penicillin, and two of his co-workers—Dr. Ernest Boris Chain, professor of chemical pathology at the William Dunn School of Pathology, Oxford, and Sir Howard Walter Florey, professor of pathology, also of the University of Oxford. The recipients will share equally in the prize, which amounts to about \$30,000.

THE Gorgas Medal, awarded annually since 1942 for outstanding work in preventive medicine for the armed forces, was presented in Washington on October 29, at a dinner of the Association of Military Surgeons, to Captain Lowell T. Coggeshall of the Marines "for distinguished service to our military forces in establishing new principles in the management of patients suffering from psychic disturbances as well as physical deterioration from the effects of malaria and filariasis." Frank F. Law, vice-president of Wyeth Incorporated, which sponsors the medal, made the presentation of the medal and a check for \$500.

THE eightieth birthday of Professor Charles Atwood Kofoid was celebrated on October 11 by the Department of Zoology of the University of California at Berkeley, by a reception in the Kofoid Library in the Life Sciences Building. Over three hundred friends and colleagues of Dr. Kofoid were invited. Many of those who were unable to be present sent congratulatory letters.

MEMBERS of the American delegation to the meeting of the Educational Conference of the United Nations, which opened on November 1 in London, include Dr. Arthur H. Compton, chancellor of Washington University, St. Louis, and Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of the Harvard College Observatory.

THE British Privy Council for Medical Research has appointed Dr. Patrick Alfred Buxton, F.R.S., professor of medical entomology in the University of London, and Sir Alexander Fleming, F.R.S., professor of bacteriology, members of the Medical Research Council.

DR. LOUIS B. SLICHTER, professor of geophysics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has been