

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE SHORTAGE OF PHYSICIANS IN THE UNITED STATES

THE acute shortage of physicians in the United States, which has become critical in certain areas due to the added requirements of the Army and Navy and defense industries, is discussed in a report by the National Committee for Resettlement of Foreign Physicians, published in the *Journal* of the American Medical Association. For almost three years this committee, of which Dr. David L. Edsall is chairman and Dr. Tracy J. Putnam, vice-chairman, has been assisting qualified emigré physicians to adapt themselves to American standards and resettling them in those medically under-manned areas of the country where they can be most useful.

Fifteen hundred qualified emigré physicians are available for placement in rural districts or in hospitals which are in serious need of internes. The committee already has a record of more than twelve hundred successful placements, seven hundred in hospitals and five hundred in rural practice. Four thousand physicians have registered with the committee out of the total of fifty-five hundred foreign physicians who have come to the United States in the past eight years.

American medical authorities may well follow the plan which the British have adopted to take advantage of the services of emigré physicians. Our own needs are no less urgent. The Office of Production Management and other agencies estimate that within the next six months there will be a ten per cent. decrease in the number of physicians available for civil wants. Certain states will be more seriously affected than others. The steady shift of American physicians from rural to urban areas in the past fifteen years has resulted in a serious disproportion in the ratio of physicians to the population. Only twenty per cent. of the medical graduates of 1920 to 1925 have settled in communities of 5,000 or less, even though such communities contain nearly half the population of the country. The general proportion of physicians in cities of 100,000 or over increased from 37.9 per cent. in 1923 to 46.2 per cent. in 1931.

The committee urges that serious consideration be given immediately to the problem of speeding up the resettlement of emigré physicians. The House of Delegates of the American Medical Association has officially recommended the use of these physicians. Federal Public Health authorities have recorded similar opinions. Under the present circumstances, it would be unwise to overlook any opportunity to supply medical services to those areas which need them most.

The American Medical Association and the Public Health authorities should take up this task, in the opinion of the committee. The successful records of the men and women placed by the committee are proof of their adaptability to our national needs. Proper resettlement and the acceptance of some qualified emigrés for Army and Navy needs, the Indian Service and other public agencies will protect native Americans against permanent loss of practice, if called to military service. This will also avoid overcrowding and undue competition in many cities.

THE NATIONAL MALARIA COMMITTEE

At the twenty-fourth annual meeting of the National Malaria Committee, held at St. Louis, Mo., from November 11 to 13, held conjointly with the Southern Medical Association, an amendment to the constitution was adopted whereby the name of the organization was changed to the National Malaria Society. Plans were developed for the publication of a periodical, to appear initially as an annual, which will be known as the *Journal* of the National Malaria Society. Publication will be in charge of an editorial board appointed for staggered three-year terms. The initial board includes Colonel Charles F. Craig, M.C., U.S.A., Ret., Dr. Justin Andrews and Nelson H. Rector. The officers elected include:

Honorary President, Dr. L. O. Howard, Washington, D. C.

President, J. H. O'Neill, New Orleans, La.

President-elect, Colonel J. S. Simmons, Washington, D. C.

Vice-president, Dr. H. W. Brown, Chapel Hill, N. C.

Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. Mark F. Boyd, P. O. Box 997, Tallahassee, Florida.

The president appointed Dr. H. C. Clark, Panama City, representative from the society to the council of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The unexpected death of Dr. J. N. Baker, Montgomery, Ala., the chairman, three days before the meeting, was deeply felt by all in attendance.

RESIGNATION OF DR. RAPPEYE AS COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALS OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

THE following resolution has been passed by the council of the New York Academy of Medicine:

When Dr. Willard C. Rappleye agreed to assume the duties of Commissioner of the Department of Hospitals of the City of New York, it was with the understanding that it would be for a year and three months, that is, to

the end of the second term of the mayor's incumbency in office, so that he might return to his duties as Dean of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University on January 1, 1942.

To the difficult task of Commissioner of Hospitals, Dr. Rappleye brought his recognized administrative ability, vigor, persuasive powers and a high civic spirit. These qualifications blended very well with the pattern which had been developed by his predecessor and as a result the work of the Department of Hospitals has continued on a high plane to the benefit of the sick, of medical education and of community relationships.

In view of the pending resignation of Dr. Rappleye, the New York Academy of Medicine wishes to go on record as urging him to continue as Commissioner of Hospitals, particularly in view of the exceptionally heavy responsibilities which the Department of Hospitals is to face during this period of national peril.

Copies of the resolution were addressed to President Butler, of Columbia University, and to the mayor, Fiorello La Guardia.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERS

THE American Society of Mechanical Engineers at its annual dinner on December 3 conferred five honorary memberships, which were presented by William A. Hanley, the retiring president. These were Clarence Decatur Howe, minister of munitions and supplies for Canada; Rear Admiral Samuel M. Robinson, chief of the Bureau of Ships, U. S. Navy; Major General Charles M. Wesson, chief of ordnance, U. S. Army; Leon Pratt Alford, chairman of the department of administrative engineering, New York University, and Aurel Stodola, formerly professor of mechanical engineering, Technical University, Zurich, Switzerland.

James W. Parker, vice-president in charge of engineering of the Detroit Edison Company, took office as president on December 5. He succeeds William A. Hanley as president of the society.

Four newly elected vice-presidents and three new managers of the society also took office as members of the council. The vice-presidents, who will serve until December, 1943, are Clarke F. Freeman, of Providence, R. I., senior vice-president and engineer of the Manufacturers Mutual Fire Insurance Company; Clair B. Peck, managing editor of *Railway Mechanical Engineering*; W. H. Winterrowd, vice-president in charge of operations, Baldwin Locomotive Works, Eddystone, Pa., and W. R. Woolrich, dean of the College of Engineering of the University of Texas.

The new managers, elected until December, 1944, are; William G. Christy, smoke abatement engineer of Hudson County, N. J.; Herbert L. Eggleston, manager of gas and refining departments, Gilmore Oil

Company, Los Angeles, and Thomas S. McEwan, consulting management engineer of Chicago.

AWARD TO THE DOW CHEMICAL COMPANY

THE 1941 Award for Chemical Engineering Achievement was presented on December 2 at a dinner at the University Club, New York City, to the Dow Chemical Company, Midland, Mich., for its pioneering research in the recovery of metallic magnesium from sea water. The presentation was made by Colonel Alfred H. White, chairman of the award committee and head of the department of chemical and metallurgical engineering of the University of Michigan. The award is presented biennially by the McGraw-Hill magazine, *Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering*, to the company which in the opinion of the Committee of Award has contributed the most meritorious advance to the industry and profession. In presenting the award to Dr. Dow, Colonel White said:

The company which receives this award has a wonderful record of past achievement in development of processes and also in development of men. The award is made for a very recent specific achievement, but this achievement would not have been possible without the organization built up through many years.

Since 1940 this company has built on the coast of Texas a huge plant constructed primarily to extract metallic magnesium from the ocean water, but also to manufacture bromine, ethylene bromide and a number of other chemicals. This is the first plant in the world to extract metal commercially from ocean water. It is for this specific achievement that the 1940 Award for Chemical Engineering Achievement is conferred.

Dr. Willard H. Dow, president and chairman of the board of the company, accepted the bronze plaque symbolizing the award in behalf of his company. S. D. Kirkpatrick, editor of *Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering* and president-elect of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, acted as toastmaster and introduced the speakers. The dinner was held in connection with the eighteenth National Exposition of the Chemical Industries, at Grand Central Palace.

The award was established in 1933 and is presented biennially in recognition to group effort and accomplishment of a company rather than to an individual. Previous recipients of the award are:

1933, Carbide and Carbon Chemicals Corporation for the development of synthetic organic chemicals from petroleum and natural gas. 1935, Organic Chemicals Department of the du Pont Company, for the development of synthetic rubber from acetylene and synthetic camphor from American turpentine. 1937, Standard Oil Development Company for synthetic aviation fuels and related products from petroleum. 1941, the Dow Chemical