

## NEWS ITEMS

**Argentina:** The Secretariat of Public Health announced on June 23, 1947, the initiation of a Sanitary Campaign, as part of the 6-year plan, to be carried out under the direction of the Bureau of Epidemiology and Endemias in those provinces and territories having sanitary convention with the central government. The first Sanitary Campaign will take place in the Territory of Formosa during the month of July.

The campaign will consist of anti-variola, anti-diphtheria, and anti-typhus vaccination, prophylaxis of trachoma, fight against the anquilostomiasis, prophylaxis of venereal disease, leishmaniasis, investigation of leprosy, prophylaxis of hydatid disease and rabies, and will be complemented by the disinfection of homes through the most modern methods of fighting insects and rodents. At the same time a sanitary census of the Indians in the zone will be taken in accordance with Decree Number 8766, of August 31, 1946.

In the campaign against hydatid disease, work will be carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture. Personnel carrying out the project will include 10 physicians, 5 veterinarians, 16 assistants for vaccination duties, and 10 additional aids. The group will have at its disposal 6 trucks with complete medical equipment and 3 jeeps.

**Argentina:** The "Jornadas Dermatologicas de Buenos-Aires" commemorating the 40th anniversary of the "Association Argentina de Dermatologia y Sifilologia," was held in Buenos Aires, August 20-24, 1947. The subjects discussed were: Charpy treatment; Boeck-Schaumann sarcoid; intensive treatment of syphilis; and prophylaxis and the treatment of leprosy.

**Belgian Congo:** Under the title "Fighting Leprosy in the Belgian Congo" Pierre Orts, President, Belgian Congo Red Cross, gives an account in the Red Cross Courier for July, 1947, of participation of the Red Cross in leprosy control activities.

Mr. Orts states that the role of the Congo Red Cross (a virtually autonomous section of the Belgian Red Cross) is that of an advance guard, and its character as a private association gives it elasticity and possibilities of initiative favorable to scientific research and social medicine.

In 1925 leprosy was found to be especially frequent in one part of the country, the district of Nepoko (northeast of the Congo). Pawa, a village, at that time became the post for giving medical aid to natives and is still the center of this activity. Located there are the administrative offices, the laboratory, the principal hospital, the maternity hospital, 9 dispensaries, and the agricultural village settlements.

"In 1946 the European staff consisted of 3 physicians, 2 health workers, a nurse-midwife, 2 nurses who are Roman Catholic missionary nuns, 1 health worker loaned by the Heart of Africa Mission, and 1 administrative worker. The native staff consisted of 1 medical assistant, 54 male nurses and nurse's aids, and 10 nurse-midwives and their aids." From the outset, the Congo Red Cross devoted its efforts to training native skilled staff. A school for male nurses and one for nurse-midwives have been established.

Chaulmoogra oil and chaulmoogra oil with creosote, promin, and pro-

mizole have been used. Isolation is being accomplished to some extent in the Nepoko district by constructing more and more agricultural villages where only patients may live. In these villages, which have now become popular, patients coming from the same place can enjoy similar social conditions. Wholesome and abundant food is grown by themselves and contributed by the healthy members of the tribe. The growth of these villages is considered the principal reason for the notable decrease in leprosy cases.

Under a new program, Pawa center will have a specialized staff and laboratory and will become a center for research in leprosy.

**Brazil:** Under the auspices of the National Department of Health (Ministry of Education and Health) the sixth annual post-graduate course of leprology was held from July 19th to October 19, 1947. Physicians from all parts of Brazil as well as from other South American countries attended. The subjects presented and the instructors, were as follows:

- (a) Essentials of dermatology — 24 hours  
Prof. Ramos e Silva and Demetrio Gonçalves
- (b) General pathology and etiology — 39 hours  
Prof. H. Portugal and Thiers Pinto
- (c) Clinic and diagnosis — 60 hours  
Prof. F. E. Rabelo and Glynne L. Rocha
- (d) Therapeutics — 48 hours  
Dr. Moura Costa and Oliveira Coutinho
- (e) Epidemiology and prophylaxis — 48 hours  
Dr. L. M. Bechelli and T. Pompeu Rossas
- (f) Organization and administration of leprosy service and hospital — 31 hours  
Dr. Ernani Agricola and João Batista Risi

**Brazil:** The fourth annual meeting of the Brazilian Society of Dermatology and Syphilology was held from August 14-16, 1947, in Porto Alegre (capital of Rio Grande do Sul). Among the subjects discussed was "Treatment of leprosy—end results."

**South America:** Pursuant to the recent signing of a Sanitary Agreement by the Governments of Peru and Ecuador, a Permanent Frontier Medical Committee has been set up which held its first meeting at Piura, Peru, on July 15, 1947. The Directors of Public Health of Peru and Ecuador, as well as representatives of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, attended the installation ceremony and subsequent meetings held to discuss the work of the Committee.

The Committee is composed of two representatives from each country, as follows:

- Peru — Dr. Benjamin Mostajo, President and  
Dr. Cesar Navarro
- Ecuador — Dr. Cornelio Saenz Zera, and  
Dr. Egberto Garcia

The two principal decisions reached by the Committee were: (1) to undertake immediately a campaign against sylvatic (bubonic plague), and (2) to conduct a census of leprosy on both sides of the border and adopt measures to control the disease.

—J. A. DOULL

**United States:** The *Star* for July, 1947, reports that the coveted silver medal, given for originality and excellency of presentation of an exhibit in the scientific section of the recent American Medical Association's Convention at Atlantic City, has been received by the United States Marine Hospital. The silver medal which is emblematic of second place in the approximately 1,000 entries was awarded in the division of individual investigation and is a tribute to the pioneering done by the medical staff under Dr. G. H. Faget on the use of the new drugs, promin, diasone, and promizole in the treatment of Hansen's disease.

A lion's share of the credit for winning goes to Dr. P. T. Erickson, Sister Hilary Ross whose clinical photography is dramatic, and to Roland Roberts of the *Star* who did the charts and graphs. Dr. Erickson, who was in charge of the exhibit at the convention and received the award for the hospital, reported that over fifteen thousand physicians from all over the country, Canada, England, South America, the Philippines, Cuba, etc., attended and showed an encouraging interest in the subject of Hansen's disease. The great interest shown in the Carville exhibit and the constant flow of new "customers" caused Dr. Erickson to spend most of his time with the exhibit.

Dr. Erickson's paper "The Chemotherapy of Leprosy" read before the section on Dermatology and Syphilology, was extremely well received. It precipitated a lively discussion by Dr. Harold M. Johnson of Hawaii, and Dr. M. T. Van Studdiford of New Orleans, a consultant of the local staff. A request has been made for the exhibit to be repeated at the Convention of the American Public Health Association to be held in Atlantic City in October and at the American Dermatological Society's meeting in Cleveland in December.

**United States:** A Sub-Committee on Hansen's Disease has recently been formed by the Medical Advisory Board of the American Legion. The Chairman of this Sub-Committee is Rear Admiral Herbert C. Pugh, Medical Corps, USN, Deputy Surgeon General. Admiral Pugh has had considerable experience with Hansen's Disease while on duty on the Island of Guam. Other members of the Committee are Dr. Joseph E. Malcomson and Dr. Esmond R. Long, Director of the Phipps Institute, University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Malcomson was in charge of the leprosarium at St. Croix, Virgin Islands, when it was operated by the United States Navy, and Dr. Long is Chief Consultant on Tuberculosis, Office of the Surgeon General, and is a member of the Medical Advisory Board of the Leonard Wood Memorial.

—J. A. DOULL

**United States:** During the first six months of 1947, 47 patients were admitted to the U. S. Marine Hospital (National Leprosarium), Carville, Louisiana. In the same period 11 patients were discharged and 10 patients died.

**United States:** The following data taken from the office of the Marine Hospital American Legion Post 188, according to an article in the *Star*, August, 1947, were prepared in collaboration with Oscar Medina, the Post Adjutant. The figures given are as of August, 1947.

There are at present in the National Leprosarium at Carville, 2 veterans from the Spanish-American War: one a native of Louisiana; the other from a non-endemic state, but who was a permanent resident of the Philippines, returning to the United States only recently.

There are 17 veterans of World War I; 6 of these men came from Texas; 5 from Louisiana; one each from Florida, New Mexico, Philippines, and Panama. Two men are natives of Europe. There are 21 veterans of World War II, 6 of these came from Louisiana; 5 from Texas; 3 from Florida; 2 from California; one from Hawaii; 3 from the Philippines, and one from Mexico.

According to data in the American Legion office the total admissions to the hospital of World War II veterans as of August 1, 1947, were 32, all from endemic areas. Of this number 8 have been discharged and left the hospital and 3 left without permission.

It should be noted that the World War II veterans, who have been hospitalized here, like the World War I veterans, practically all came from endemic areas. In some of these cases there were manifestations of leprosy prior to enlistment which might have been detected by an alert physician.

There is one peace-time service connected veteran from Louisiana who had done naval duty in Hawaii.