

# Geographic Congress at Mexico City

*Geography*

The Mexican government is calling together all American countries to an international geographical congress to be opened in Mexico City on September 16 of this year.

One of the results of the sixth Pan-American Conference held at Havana in February, 1928, was the resolution to establish an inter-American institute of geographical sciences. The general outlines of such an institution, as formulated by the Mexican delegates to the Havana Conference, were adopted as the basis of the preliminary organization, and Mexico City was chosen as its permanent seat.

The government of the country elected as the permanent seat is obliged to house the new scientific institution, and for this purpose the Mexican government is providing the building which is now the Direction of Geographical and Climatological Studies of the Mexican Department of Agriculture. The building is in the historical suburb of Tacubaya, on a hill overlooking Mexico City from the west, and it overlooks from its balconies the beautiful gardens of the National Astronomical Observatory.

Pedro C. Sanchez, chief of the Direction of Geographical and Climatological Studies, is directly in charge of the organization of the new bureau which will be officially known as the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History. The building is now being remodeled under the direction of Senor Sanchez. The modern printing and map-making es-

tablishment under his charge will be at the disposal of the new institute, he says.

The aim of this new inter-American scientific organization is the coordination, distribution, and popularization of geographical knowledge of the Americas, and the fomentation of better mutual understanding. It will serve as a bond between the geographical institutes already existing in various countries of the American continent and will initiate and facilitate cooperative research in geographical sciences. It will publish the work of member-countries and intervene in the delineation of boundaries. It will form archives and a library containing maps, documents and books relative to the geography of American countries.

The purpose of the September meeting is to complete the organization of the institution, to select its governing personnel, to fix the quotas each country must pay, and to determine the date of its first technical meeting. The meeting will be opened by Marte Gomez, Mexican Minister of Agriculture, and Senor Sanchez will preside at the business sessions. Because the permanent home of the organization in Tacubaya will not be ready, the meetings will be held in the Pan-American sala of the National Palace at Mexico City. The congress will be officially dissolved at Chapultepec Castle by President Portes Gil.

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## Clearing Insane Minds

*Psychiatry*

Inhaling carbon dioxide gas temporarily restored the sanity of mentally deranged patients at the University of California Medical School.

The experiments were conducted at the request of Dr. A. S. Loevenhart and Dr. Ralph M. Waters of Madison, Wisconsin, the former of whom has since died. The tests were made by Dr. Chauncey D. Leake and Dr. Mary E. Botsford, of the University, with the help of Dr. Arthur E. Guedel, of Beverly Hills, and some six other physicians.

Eight trials of the treatment were made on five cases of the type of insanity known as dementia praecox catatonica. In all but one trial there was a fleeting return of intelligence which enabled the patients to answer questions rationally, or to exhibit recognition of their surroundings.

These periods of rationality lasted from ten to fifteen minutes.

In the case of a young man 25 years of age, who has lain in bed in a stupor for several months, inhalation of the gas clarified his mind sufficiently to answer a number of questions, to volunteer a few rational statements concerning himself, and to laugh. After about nine minutes he relapsed into his former state of muscular rigidity, paleness and fright.

In a report of their findings, the experimenters state that the results are interesting enough to warrant further experimentation on the effects of continued treatments with carbon dioxide in such cases.

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