

# Interesting Events Foreseen in 1930

General Science

**S**OLUTION of problems of new diseases and also of some of the old, familiar ones are hoped for by medical scientists during 1930. The ever-widening extent of undulant fever, the threat of a meningitis outbreak, the increase in malaria and pellagra in the South will be subjects of study and investigation in laboratories and in the field during the coming year. Progress in the control of one or all of these is to be looked for, public health experts believe.

New and possibly radical methods of caring for children may be evolved by members of the various committees who will be making intensive studies of child welfare for report at the White House Conference on Child Health which will meet late in the year. The personnel of the committees includes outstanding leaders in every branch of the field, so that their concerted studies are expected to be of enormous value and significance.

Progress in pharmacy will be considerable, due to the decennial revision of the U. S. Pharmacopœia, which will take place during 1930. Marked and important changes in the character of modern pharmacy may also be expected.

In view of the earnest scientific effort being expended throughout the world in cancer research, progress will undoubtedly be made in this field, though it is perhaps too much to hope that the discovery of a "cure" will be made in the new year.

The Ransdell bill for the establishment of a National Health Institute will doubtless come up before Congress during 1930. Should this bill become a law, public health activities will take a big step with possibly far-reaching consequences.

Several interesting astronomical events are scheduled for the year opening this month. Chief of these are two eclipses of the sun. Two comets will almost certainly put in their appearance, while three others may possibly reappear. And, while comets are notoriously irregular, it is

most likely that two or three new comets will be found.

The first eclipse of 1930 comes on April 28, and is of a very peculiar kind, what is called a "central" eclipse. Usually eclipses are either total, when the moon completely obscures the sun, or annular, when the moon appears a little smaller than the sun, and a ring of light is seen around it. This eclipse will be both. The moon then will be at just such a distance that it will appear almost exactly the same diameter as the sun. Out in the middle of the Pacific, when the eclipse starts, it will be annular. A narrow ring of the sun will be seen around the dark moon. Then, as the shadow advances, the points on the earth over which it passes will be closer to the moon, because of the earth's rotundity. As the eclipse crosses California, north of San Francisco, the sun will be completely covered, and the eclipse will be total. But in no place will it last for more than a second or so. Farther on, it will again become annular, and will cross Hudson Bay, Labrador, and leave the earth in the Atlantic Ocean, several hours after it touched in the Pacific.

The year's second eclipse comes on October 22, and is much better astronomically, for the total phase lasts as long as a minute and a half. But it loses in inaccessibility what it makes up in other respects. Only Niuafoou Island, a tiny member of the Tonga group in the South Pacific, is in the path. The communication between the outside world and Niuafoou is ordinarily by means of mail sealed up in a tin can and thrown over by the monthly inter-island steamer. Then a native swims out and gets it. There are no harbors or docks, and so any astronomical equipment would have to be landed through the surf in small boats.

Two eclipses of the moon are also coming this year, only one of which, however, and that a partial one, will be seen in the United States. It will occur on April 13.

The two comets whose return is expected are D'Arrest's and Tempel II (indicating the second discovered by this astronomer). The former returns every 6.6 years, and has been seen seven times since it was discovered in 1851. The latter was discovered in 1873, and has been seen on six of its returns, which come at intervals of 5.2 years. Metcalf's comet, discovered in 1906 by the Rev. Joel H. Metcalf, a Unitarian clergyman of Massachusetts, was supposed to return at intervals of 7.7 years, but has not been seen since then. It is just about due again, and may be picked up this year, but as it has been missed several times, its path is not very accurately known. Daniels' comet is another expected during 1930, while Perrine's comet, last seen in 1909, and due in 1929, may possibly turn up yet, though it is not likely.

Some of the most important international meetings planned for 1930 are:

- World Power Conference, Berlin, June.
- Fifth Botanical Congress, Cambridge, England, August.
- Congress of Soil Science, Leningrad, June.
- Ninth Horticultural Congress, London, August.
- Seventh Congress of History of Medicine, Rome, September.
- Exposition of Hygiene, Dresden, May.
- First Congress of Mental Hygiene, Washington, May.
- Sixth Conference on Psychotechnics, Barcelona, April.

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## Youth and the Sea

Biology

"Captain Sylvia", aged six weeks, and her mother, Mrs. J. E. Williamson upon the cover of this week's issue look at a strange world full of fishes, corals, sharks, morays and other denizens of the deep. The youthful scientist, symbolic of science itself and its aspirations, was a member of the Field Museum-Williamson Undersea Expedition to the Bahama Islands, which brought back tons of corals collected after cruising many miles under the sea.

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