

bombardment will come from certain sectors of the proprietary medicine trade. They have already trained their guns on Assistant Secretary Tugwell, taking full advantage of the opportunity for sarcasm offered by the fact that he is a professor.

The crux of the fight will turn largely on the "misrepresentation" question. At present, misrepresentations are forbidden on the actual labels of the products, but makers can make any claims they wish over the radio, on billboards, in direct-by-mail or printed advertising. The new bill would forbid all that, with stiff penalties for violations.

Inadequate Legal Means

The proprietary-remedy opponents of the new bill claim that such additional precautions are unnecessary, that there are legal means at present adequate to punish makers of false claims. There are legal means, but they are hardly adequate, for the courts have ruled that to prove fraud in a claim for curative powers in a preparation offered as a remedy, it must be proved not only that the stuff is not a remedy, but that the maker knows that it is not, and that he has made his claims with the deliberate intention to deceive and defraud. In practice, it has often taken years of watchful waiting and tedious litigation to make a case against the baldest kind of fake "cures" for tuberculosis, cancer, diabetes and other incurable diseases. The record hardly bears out the claims of the bill's opponents as to the adequacy of present legal redress.

There are many teeth both sharp and long a-bristle on the jaws of the bill, to snap up predatory medicine-men who fatten on the pathetic faith of sick folk, but perhaps the neatest row is one clause that simply classifies as automatically false "any advertisement of a drug representing it directly or by ambiguity or inference to have any effect in the treatment" of a long list of diseases, including such favorites of drug-vending quacks as: blood poison, cancer, diabetes, dropsy, paralysis, "sex weakness," tuberculosis and tumors. If the supporters of the bill can get that section through the gauntlet it will undoubtedly have to run, a lot of fake medicine men will find their occupation gone!

The bill also provides that if a preparation is merely a palliative for a disease, it must be so mentioned, plainly, in the advertising. Furthermore, if a preparation contains any habit-forming drug, a warning to that effect must appear on the label. Finally, names of in-

gredients used in all preparations must be given, and they must be given in plain English. The great American privilege of self-medication will be preserved, but you are going to get a chance to know what you are swallowing.

Science News Letter, December 2, 1933

AERONAUTICS

Stratosphere Flight Successful for Science

THE STRATOSPHERE flight of Lieutenant-Commander T. G. W. Settle and Major Chester L. Fordney was a complete success from the scientific standpoint, a preliminary examination of the data indicates. In a statement to Science Service, Prof. Arthur H. Compton of the University of Chicago, gives high credit to their efforts and skill, and also to the painstaking preparation of the cosmic ray apparatus by Dr. R. J. Stephenson. Definite results are not yet ready for announcement, Prof. Compton said. Considerable time will have to be devoted to the study and analysis of the data before their full significance can be put into form for publication.

The altitude reached on the Settle-Fordney flight is about 8,000 feet more than that of the August, 1932, Piccard ascension and about 1,000 feet less than that reported recently from Russia. (*SNL*, Oct 14, '33, p. 245). The latter figure, however, has not been approved under international requirements, while the other two have been approved.

Science News Letter, November 18, 1933

SEISMOLOGY

Earth Shakes Severely In Region Usually Quiet

THE EARTHQUAKE that kept seismographs throughout the country trembling Monday evening, Nov. 20, was centered under water in Baffin Bay between Baffin Island and Greenland, an unusual location for so severe a shock which would have been very destructive had it occurred on populated land. History does not record previous severe quakes in that area.

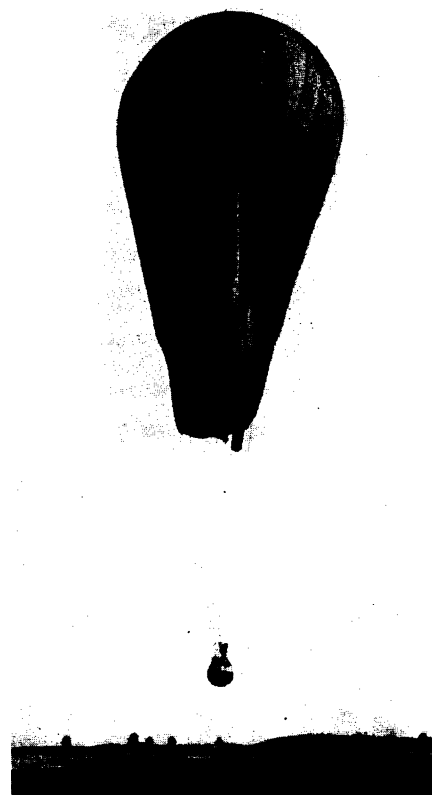
Location was determined by the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, using reports wired Science Service from seismological observatories in this country, Canada, England and India. The epi-

center was at about 73 degrees north latitude and 69 degrees west longitude and the time of origin was 6 hours 21.5 minutes p. m., Eastern Standard Time.

The shock was so severe that it was recorded on sensitive magnetic instruments at the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey Observatory, Cheltenham, Md., even though these instruments are not designed for recording earthquakes.

Earthquake experts at Kew Observatory, London, suggest that there must have been an immense slippage of submarine rock to cause the disturbance.

Science News Letter, December 2, 1933



Acme

GOING UP AT AKRON

The Century of Progress stratosphere balloon is shown taking off from the Akron airport Monday morning, Nov. 20, on its successful flight. The first flight, attempted Aug. 5 in Chicago, resulted in an unexpected landing a few minutes after the take-off when a valve failed to work. After leaving Akron, the balloon reached an official height of 61,327 feet and returned to earth near Bridgeton, N. J., in the late afternoon on the same day of the take-off.