

Prof. Boutry observes. The experiments of a mathematician are dangerous only to his paper supply. Those of a physicist or chemist may raise the roof of his laboratory and reduce him to small particles. Those of a biologist or pathologist may be fatal to thousands of people. Wars have shown that mistakes in the

science of ruling nations have led to the death of millions and the misery of generations. They may be dangerous to the spiritual qualities of mankind, about which we know next to nothing.

All of which are good reasons why careful and competent studies of social relations of science should be pursued.

Science News Letter, January 7, 1939

MENTAL HYGIENE

Must Work Fast To Beat Forces Returning Us To Middle Ages

Scientists Warned at Mental Health Symposium That Psychiatrists Should Unite With Social Scientists

SCIENTISTS studying the conduct and mind of man must push their work forward fast if they are to outdistance the "forces that now threaten to herd us back into the middle ages."

With this warning, Dr. Harry Stack Sullivan, President of the William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation, Washington, D. C., summarized the reports at a special session of the Symposium on Mental Health held in connection with the meeting of the American As-

sociation for the Advancement of Science in Richmond.

"We have come a long way indeed," said Dr. Sullivan, "from the days, now reappearing in Europe, when everyone had to subscribe to an official account of what is right to believe and proper to do."

"The spirit of free inquiry is especially profitable in terms of human happiness when it brings about the union of the psychiatric and the social sciences."

"Man is far more a product of culture, of the forces that make up civilization, than is he a creature of the natural science."

"We need to know all that we can learn about his heredity, physical make-up, nutrition, and physiology. But even more important in these days of alarm and excursion, of international misdemeanor and crime, we must hurry to an understanding of man living as a person among others."

Neither psychiatry alone, nor the social sciences alone can hope to solve current urgent problems, Dr. Sullivan said.

"By a pooling of techniques, however, and a redefinition of fields, a great deal can be accomplished quickly," he said.

Bodyguards To Be Obsolete

PROPHECY that political leaders armed with bodyguard and machine gun will some day be as obsolete as is now a physician loaded with ropes and manacles for restraint of disordered minds, was voiced by Dr. Harold D. Lasswell, of the University of Chicago and the White Psychiatric Foundation.

Manacles and ropes were discarded by the psychiatric pioneer, Dr. William Alanson White, when he saw that force was a substitute for thought.

This has now become a truism in the hospital. The attitude may become more general among leaders in business and party life, Dr. Lasswell said.

"Methods can be perfected of exploring the distribution of discontent among large numbers of persons, and of controlling such reactions," he declared. "Too often it is true that responsible leaders are stampeded by their personal anxieties, into costly and dangerous means of coping with collective insecurities."

Propagandists are useful to both leaders and followers, Dr. Lasswell said.

"When the Great Depression struck, millions of people were cast into the discard heap of the unemployed. These millions had been educated to have faith that the world would reward them if they worked. Propagandists diverted their aggressions away from themselves and supplied a new sense of self-esteem by absolving them from blame, and encouraging them to take a hand in the preparation of a better world."

"Isolated crimes against persons and property were reduced by enabling the masses to discharge their insecurities in parades, meetings, and discussions."

The propagandists, catering to the



THIAMIN

The chemical model of vitamin B₁ is here being shown by F. J. Ruland (left) and W. O. McCarthy to Miss Alys d'Avesne at the Merck and Company exhibit at the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Above may be seen part of a photomicrograph of the crystals themselves.