

PUBLIC HEALTH

Malaria Greatest Problem Facing Chinese on Burma Road

American Experts on Mission Find That Disease Damages Hundreds of Thousands of Lives Annually

CONTROL of malaria is "the greatest problem confronting the Chinese," Dr. L. L. Williams, Jr., U. S. Public Health Service, declared after six months spent inaugurating malaria control work on China's life-line, the China-Burma Highway.

This health problem, which militated against the building of the road and slowed up the carrying in of war supplies, is now being solved by measures for protection of labor camps and headquarters towns inaugurated by Dr. Williams and associates, Dr. Bruce Mayne and Surgeon H. J. Bush, of the U. S. Public Health Service.

The American experts were sent on this malaria control mission at the request of the Chinese government when epidemics began appearing along the Burma road.

"It is now thought," Dr. Williams told a conference at the National Insti-

tute of Health, "that malaria is responsible for more deaths than all other infectious diseases in the province (Yunnan Province) and that hundreds of thousands of young adult lives are damaged annually."

Malaria control was begun at Chefang and also at the airplane factory of Loiwing, the "two worst places" of danger from the disease. Chinese physicians were taught malaria control methods, ranging from the use of oil and pyrethrum to kill malaria mosquito larvae to making screen doors to protect the people in their houses. Most of these physicians now have been appointed by the Chinese National Health Administration, Wei Shang Shu, as the first malaria control unit for the China Burma Highway, with headquarters at the Chefang laboratory set up by Dr. Williams and associates.

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E. Phillips, Illinois; Dr. Kingsley Roberts, New York City; and George Soule, economist, New York City.

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CHEMISTRY

Nylon Manufacture Details Are Now Made Public

FIRST announcement of technical details concerning nylon, synthetic fiber now used for hosiery, has been given by Dr. G. P. Hoff, du Pont director of nylon research.

As with a vast number of chemical products, nylon is made by a process of polymerization, that is, of linking together smaller molecular units into ones that are relatively large—of the order of ten-millionths of an inch in length. These he likened to a chain of paper clips, the individual clips corresponding to the original smaller molecules.

When the filaments are first formed, these molecules are in a random arrangement, like straws in a pile.

"Visualize these long-chain molecules within the filaments lying in all directions, twisted and coiled and wrinkled," Dr. Hoff invited his audience. "In this form the fibers have relatively little practical use and it is necessary to bring about orientation through stretching of the filaments. Relatively little force is required to accomplish a four-fold increase in length. This new length and proportionately reduced diameter are the permanent attributes of the stretched or drawn yarn."

When dresses, or perhaps even men's suits, are made from nylon and related materials, pressing will be much less of a problem than today, for hot water or steam gives nylon a nearly permanent set. If a piece of yarn is straight or folded when it is treated, it tends to remain that way. This, he explained, is why nylon stockings retain their shape after repeated wearing and washing.

"This phenomenon," Dr. Hoff pointed out, "is really an exaggeration of a similar phenomenon which takes place in the pressing of cotton, wool or silk garments. To crease a pair of trousers or remove the wrinkles from a dress, it is customary to iron through a wet cloth, or to use a press supplying steam pressure and moisture.

"These operations on the natural fibers are much more easily reversible than with nylon. A brief shower or even body heat and moisture will remove creases from the best of suiting materials."

Nylon, in contrast, will hold its shape virtually as originally imparted.

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MEDICINE

New Journal, "Medical Care", Will Start Publication Soon

THE much-discussed costs of medical care and what to do about them now have a special journal devoted to them which will appear early in 1941.

Announcement of the new journal, to be called *Medical Care*, is made by The Williams and Wilkins Company who will publish it for the Committee on Research in Medical Economics, Inc. Dr. Michael M. Davis, of New York City, is chairman of this Committee.

A forum of signed expressions of opinion by individuals or agencies; non-technical reports of scientific studies of the medical, administrative and financial experience of plans of organized care in the United States; news of the field, and summaries of reports appearing elsewhere are promised to readers of the new journal.

Medical Care, it is stated, "considers equally the interests of the people who receive medical care and of the professions that furnish it. It seeks to promote cooperative research, planning and action by the professions and the public, in their common interest."

The editorial advisors of the new journal include members of the medical and allied professions, social scientists, public administrators, and men and women informally representing labor, agriculture, employers, and social work. Besides these, the new journal has an editorial board composed of the following:

Dr. Ernst P. Boas, New York City; Dr. Samuel Bradbury, Philadelphia; Dr. Claude W. Munger, New York City; Dr. John P. Peters, New Haven; Dr. C.-E. A. Winslow, New Haven; Dr. Herbert