

MEDICINE

Check Spread of Plague

Banditry and political upheavals notwithstanding, Chinese health officials, many of them trained in occidental schools of medicine, continue to carry on their campaign to keep down disease. According to information just received by the U. S. Public Health Service from Dr. Wu Lien-Teh, head of the North Manchurian Plague Prevention Service, a severe outbreak of pneumonic plague occurred in Mongolia during November and December.

Stringent preventive measures drew a cordon around the infested area. Traffic into Mongolia was stopped. Careful inspection of railway passengers from Siberia was instituted and strict antiplague measures were enforced on the borders between Mongolia and Manchuria. The medical service in the latter region has been able to maintain a constructive program which has been able to keep the plague situation from getting out of hand in spite of the unsettled state of the country. Manchuria has escaped from the disease and no cases have been reported since the middle of December, according to Dr. Wu's report.

Dr. Wu is an internationally known authority on plague and has written an authoritative treatise on the pneumonic form, summarizing the findings of ancient and modern medicine on this much dreaded disease, which has recently been published by the Health Section of the League of Nations.

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SOCIOLOGY

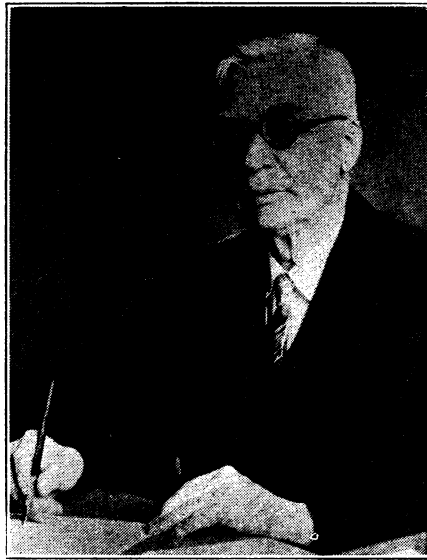
Fewer Youth Suicides

In spite of the commotion caused by the number of young students who have recently shuffled off this mortal coil, the tendency of the suicide rate among young people has been distinctly downward during the last sixteen years.

Suicides among children under fifteen years old are a negligible cause of death in this country, according to the statisticians of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., while the period between fifteen and twenty years takes in only three per cent. of all the suicides in the general population in the country. The suicide rate among white boys on the insurance records was 6.7 for every 100,000 of the population in 1911, and reached a maximum of 7.3 in 1913 and last year was reduced to only 3.9 or about half of that of fourteen years ago.

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LUDVIG HEKTOEN

Legal Medical Authority

As head of the John McCormick Institute for Infectious Diseases, Dr. Hektoen has rendered invaluable service to humanity in sponsoring and encouraging the development of the work done by this institute in the conquest of scarlet fever, and it may one day be possible to add measles to this record.

Though his reputation as an authority on infectious diseases and immunology is international, it is less well known that he is one of the country's leading medical legal experts. This important aspect of medicine has received less attention here than abroad and Dr. Hektoen has been an active agent in building up this branch of medical education in the United States to the standard attained in the older countries of Europe.

Born in Westby, Wisconsin, in 1863, he received his early medical training at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Chicago, studying later in the medical centers of Europe. He became associated with Rush Medical College in 1898 and head of the department of pathology at the University of Chicago in 1900. In addition to his present duties as head of the John McCormick Institute for Infectious Diseases, he has been twice elected chairman of the medical division of the National Research Council.

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A British scientist believes that almost up to a century ago there may have been Indians living who could read the mysterious Maya hieroglyphics.

ASTRONOMY

New Comet Discovered

Stearns' comet, discovered on Thursday, March 10, by Dr. Carl L. Stearns, of the Van Vleck Observatory at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn., has been observed at Copenhagen, Denmark, according to word reaching the Harvard College Observatory. The Danish observation was made a little after midnight on the morning of Monday, March 14.

Both observers saw it in the constellation of Libra, the Scales, which is directly south about 4:00 a. m., and it was moving northwards into the constellation of Serpens, the Serpent. At both times it was of the tenth magnitude, too faint to be seen except with telescopic aid. As expressed in the celestial equivalents of latitude and longitude, its position when observed at Copenhagen was 6 degrees 11 minutes and 54 seconds south declination and 15 hours 15 minutes and 6.6 seconds in right ascension. The comet was also observed in a position close to this on the morning of Sunday, March 13, by Prof. George Van Biesbroeck, of the Yerkes Observatory in Wisconsin.

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PEDAGOGY

Experimental College

An experimental college, with 250 volunteer students, is to be conducted at the University of Wisconsin in order to find improved methods of teaching freshmen and sophomores.

During the first year the experiment will be limited to 125 freshmen, and in the second year freshmen and sophomores will both be studied.

Announcing the plan, Dr. Glenn Frank, president of the university, states that the experiment will enable the university to "test out forms of curriculum and methods of teaching so radically different from the prevailing curriculum and method that no university would feel justified in adopting them for its entire student body in advance of satisfactory tests under controlled experimental conditions."

President Frank states that the quality of the teaching staff of the experimental college will be such that, whatever method be tried out, the students will not lose by not taking the regular courses. The students will receive the same credit for their two years of experimental education, as if they had enrolled in the main branches of the university.

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