

GENERAL SCIENCE

U. S. Polar Year Funds Fail Passage by Congress

Action on Bills of Scientific Interest Also Taxes Colored Margarins and Provides Huge Sum for Pine Blister War

AUTHORIZATION for sufficient funds to allow this country to participate in the Second Polar Year in 1932-1933 and in the International Geological Congress in 1932, failed to pass the House in the closing hours of the session because of objections to consideration on the part of certain House members.

An enormous program for soil erosion work and technical study of conservation of rainfall for the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering passed the Senate, but failed of passage in the House.

The oleomargarin law was amended so as to put all yellow colored margarins under the ten cent per pound tax previously applied only to those margarins artificially colored. The new regulations are to be applied because of the recent development of natural colored palm oil margarin. Dairy farmers contended they could not compete with yellow margarin, with a butter flavor, which was subject only to the quarter of a cent per pound tax. Objections to the new regulations were voiced by soy bean growers of the country who say they are being hit along with palm oil importers. Soy bean growers took the position that agriculture was not helped by legislation favoring one agricultural group over another. The strongest arguments for the dairy farmers were advanced by nutrition experts, who told Congress of the advantages to health of the vitamins in milk and butter. Because vitamin A has been so often associated with yellow color in carrots and butter and other foods, it was necessary to get the opinion of an expert regarding the yellow color of the palm oil. Dr. E. V. McCollum, professor of nutrition at Johns Hopkins University, told congressional committees that the "yellow color, or at least almost all of the yellow color in palm oil is cycopin, rather than carotin, mother substance of vitamin A."

The maternity and infancy aid act passed both Senate and House, but with such differences that the conference re-

port, though accepted by the House, did not come to a vote in the Senate. The House added to the Senate bill's authorization of such work by the U. S. Children's Bureau, an amendment providing for the setting up of county rural health units to be administered by the U. S. Public Health Service.

The Bureau of Plant Industry and the U. S. Forest Service were provided by this Congress with an enormous fund for fighting white pine blister rust in western forests. The total amount in various bills ran well over \$700,000. In the U. S. national forests alone there are five billion feet of merchantable white pine timber worth \$25,000,000, in addition to one million acres of young white pine worth about \$180 per acre. On privately owned lands there is also an immense acreage which would be a

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Legislator For Science Lost As Senator Ransdell Retires

RETIREMENT from the Senate with the end of the last session of Senator Joseph B. Ransdell, Democrat, of Louisiana, marks a loss to science not easily compensated.

Senator Ransdell has been active in sponsoring many public health measures, most notable of which have been the establishment of the National Leprosarium at Carville, La., and the National Institute of Health now operating under the direction of the U. S. Public Health Service. In this institute, scholarships may be given to research workers in order that they may pursue research work in cancer, the common cold, and other diseases the control of which is of vast importance to mankind.

Senator Ransdell also introduced and pushed legislation which was recently enacted establishing a national hydraulic laboratory at the U. S. Bureau of Stand-

ards; and it was an amendment which he offered to a pending agricultural appropriation bill that first gave the U. S. Bureau of Plant Industry the means to work for the eradication of the pink bollworm. Flood control legislation has long been another subject upon which he has labored.

The Bureau of Mines was authorized to establish a mining experiment station at College Park, Maryland.

A bill authorizing the collection of crime statistics passed both houses and was signed by the President.

Isle Royale in Lake Superior was made a national park, but the Everglades National Park bill failed to get through the House, though it passed the Senate.

A memorial in Washington to the late Stephen T. Mather, former head of the U. S. National Park Service, was authorized. The Stephen T. Mather Appreciation Committee has long had in mind several methods of preserving to the nation's memory the work of the father of the national park system. The memorial in Washington is only one of these. Another plan is to erect in each of the 23 national parks and 33 national monuments a bronze plaque decorated with a bas relief bust of Mather, an epitome to his work.

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In his farewell speech to the Senate last week, Senator Ransdell chose for his theme: The Conservation of Public Health—The Most Important Problem Confronting Mankind.

Senator Ransdell's work was lauded at the close of his speech, by Senators Hatfield of West Virginia and Copeland of New York, both physicians. Senator Copeland said that the United States lagged behind eight or nine other countries in the control of disease. The New York Senator also declared that everyone should read particularly that