

done by the federal government, in his opinion. The federal government should also be responsible for expert determination of the relative needs of various portions of the country, he suggests, and he favors following the "well-established principle that the more prosperous portions of the country should give aid and assistance to their less prosperous neighbors."

A federal department of health with a Secretary of Health in the Cabinet, often proposed, is viewed with some alarm by Dr. Cabot. While he favors a single

agency to administer all problems in the field of education, research and medical care in which the federal government is involved, he thinks these problems should be combined under the U. S. Public Health Service which in turn should be under some major department of government. This will insure the supremely important permanency of tenure, detachment of view and freedom from political influence which might be threatened by setting up a Department of Health with a Secretary in the Cabinet.

*Science News Letter, January 27, 1940*

stocked and were willing to sell bottled remedies, especially when asked for them by name. About half of those who sold remedies urged the inquirer to see a doctor. Only 7 percent of the entire number refused to diagnose or sell remedies.

*Science News Letter, January 27, 1940*

#### OCEANOGRAPHY

### War Hampers Ice Patrol Through Radio Silence

WAR has cast a new shadow of danger over ships plying North Atlantic steamer lanes, by hampering the work of the International Ice Patrol. This patrol, which usually begins in late March, is conducted by special U. S. vessels but is internationally sponsored, and it depends for full efficiency on radio reports from merchant ships sighting icebergs. Now, to avoid being located by Nazi submarines, all British and French vessels, and many neutral ships as well, maintain complete radio silence.

A statement in the *Hydrographic Bulletin* issued by the U. S. Navy Department takes cognizance of this situation, and requests that "In the interests of safety to shipping in general, the Hydrographic Office would appreciate receiving reports of ice sighted by such ships, immediately upon arrival in port."

*Science News Letter, January 27, 1940*

#### AERONAUTICS

### Canada To Fit New Skis To Military Aircraft

CANADA is getting ready to fit skis of a new type to its high-speed military aircraft. Tests have been underway at Sioux Lookout, Ontario, where winter temperatures are low and snow conditions suitable. The new airplane skis have low sliding resistance, little tendency to freeze to the surface and high resistance to wear.

*Science News Letter, January 27, 1940*

#### PUBLIC HEALTH

### Illness, Poverty Linked In Country as in City

POOR health and poverty go together in the country as well as in cities. This long-suspected situation has just been confirmed by U. S. Public Health Statistician Harold F. Dorn. Scanning death reports from Ohio's agricultural regions, he found the standardized death rate in the poor economic areas 10% greater than in good economic areas.

*Science News Letter, January 27, 1940*

#### PUBLIC HEALTH

## Public Health Service Warns Venereal Disease Quackery

### Men and Women Who Are Infected or Fear They Are Found To Be Swindled Out of Tens of Millions Yearly

MEN and women who have, or think they have, syphilis and gonorrhea are today being exploited to the tune of tens of millions of dollars annually, the U. S. Public Health Service charges on the basis of a new survey of drug store "back counter prescribing" and other aspects of venereal disease quackery.

Instead of going to reputable physicians or clinics, these unfortunate men and women are going to quacks such as "men's specialists," and herbalists or drug stores for diagnosis and treatment of venereal disease. They are paying, the federal health service finds, from \$1 to \$3 for a bottle containing a few cents' worth of such substances as boric acid and glycerin which cannot help them if they have syphilis or gonorrhea, and in some cases they may be paying for medicine for a disease they do not even have.

The increase in venereal disease quack-

ery in recent years today constitutes "one of the major obstacles to the public health control of syphilis and gonorrhea," federal health officials stated in a nationwide broadcast.

Quack advertising has apparently decreased in volume, but the sales curve for "patent remedies" has been rising during the past six or eight years, the latest survey indicates. This survey was made by the American Social Hygiene Association in cooperation with the U. S. Public Health Service.

Personal interviews by trained investigators posing as "friends" of presumably infected persons were carried on in 1,151 drug stores in 35 cities in 26 states. Sixty-two percent of the drug stores visited diagnosed the disease and offered to sell remedies for alleged syphilis or gonorrhea, especially the latter. Thirty-one percent did not attempt to diagnose, but

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