Inventions Win Places on Stamps

Philately

Edison's first electric lamp, soon to be pictured on a special two-cent U. S. postage stamp as a part of electric light's golden jubilee, is one of the few inventions to be so honored.

Last fall a picture of the Wright Brothers' first airplane appeared on a special stamp commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first flight. Airplanes, steamboats, bicycles and railway trains have appeared on U. S. postage stamp as a part of their places because they are means of transporting mail rather than because they are inventions.

The Edison commemorative stamp was placed on sale June 5 at Menlo Park, N. J., where fifty years ago this year the incandescent lamp was born of Edison's genius.

Edison's portrait can not be placed on postage stamps because of the general rule that prevents a living person being portrayed on any money, stamps, or other security of the nation.

Few scientists have been commemorated by portraiture on American stamps. Franklin and Jefferson, both eminent scientists, are on stamps because of the part they played in founding the republic rather than on account of their scientific work.

France and other nations have from time to time honored their scientists in this way. Pasteur's head is now found on widely used French stamps, whence it was placed in connection with his centenary seven years ago.

Science News-Letter, June 8, 1929

To Observe Eclipse Next April

Astronomy

An expedition will be sent out from Lick Observatory, University of California, to a site not yet selected, to observe a solar eclipse which will be visible in Central California and northwestern Nevada on April 28, 1930.

The relative position of the sun, moon and earth at that time will be such that the tip of the moon's shadow cone will barely reach the earth, scratching it as a duellist's sword may scratch the skin of his opponent's cheek, missing all other parts of his face.

Out of the 5 hours and 32 minutes which will be required for the moon to pass centrally between the earth and sun, the shadow point will reach the earth's surface for only 38 minutes. During this short period of time the shadow will sweep along from a point in the Pacific Ocean about 240 miles southwest of San Francisco to a point near Butte, Montana.

Fortunately, this means that at stations along the path of the shadow across California the sun will be totally eclipsed for from one to two seconds, and that the eclipse will occur near the noon hour when the sun is highest in the sky.

The very short duration of totality, however, will prohibit any photographs of the sky surrounding the sun, and will restrict the observing program to single direct photographs, to record the brighter part of the sun's corona, and to observations with the spectrograph.

It should be possible, astronomers at the university declare, to secure spectograms that will greatly add to the present knowledge of conditions prevailing in the sun's atmosphere.

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Memorial Lectures Announced

Psychiatry

A search for the scientist, famous or obscure, who has made the greatest original contribution of the year to the cause of preventing or treating mental disease is to be conducted annually. When the scientist is selected each year, either in this country or abroad, his work will be recognized by a new award, to be known as the Thomas William Salmon Memorial. He will be requested to give lectures in various cities of the United States.

This is the project designed to honor the memory of one of the outstanding American psychiatrists, Dr. Thomas W. Salmon, who died in 1927. Dr. Salmon was professor of psychiatry at Columbia University and had been the first medical director of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.

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17 Months to Cross Pacific

Hydrography

From a point off lower California to the Philippines in 17 months was the trip made by a drifting bottle recently, and reported to the U. S. Navy's Hydrographic Office. On September 27, 1927, Second Officer R. M. Stall, of the American steamer *K. R. Kingsbury,* threw the bottle overboard at latitude 25 degrees 32 minutes north and longitude 113 degrees 35 minutes west. On February 12, 1929, it was picked up among the Philippines, at about 9 degrees 51 minutes north and 127 degrees 7 minutes east. The bottle drifted for about 7200 nautical miles, or 8300 statute miles.

The longest drift in the records of the Hydrographic Office is one made from the Southern Indian Ocean to the tip of Cape Horn between May 31, 1909, and May 19, 1912, traveling a total of about 11,820 statute miles. A drift of 11,550 miles in the same part of the world from 1902 to 1905 is second. In these southern seas the longest drifts are possible. The recent drift of 8300 miles in the Pacific is about the longest possible in that ocean.

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Relationship of Glands

Physiology

Interrelationship between insulin, adrenalin and the sex hormone exists and may even be expressed mathematically, Prof. Heinrich Poll, director of the Anatomical Institute of the University of Hamburg, has announced in a communication to the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Prof. Poll considers this interrelationship an example of the Gestalt theory, or theory of the whole, which was developed by Prof. M. Wertheimer of the University of Berlin. Prof. Poll applied this theory, developed by a psychologist, to biology and even to the fields of finger prints and medical education.

The tissues of mice and pigeons were examined in the study of hormone interrelationship reported by Prof. Poll. Changes in the tissues of the adrenal glands due to the effect of injections of insulin, can be seen in stained sections of the gland examined under the microscope. Similar examination showed certain adrenalin producing cells found outside the adrenal glands were affected by increased or decreased activity of the sex hormone.

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