

experts attending the American Dietetic Association meeting. Col. Osmun declared that one of the greatest experiences of our generation is the U. S. Army's correct feeding of one and one-half million men three times a day.

Looking ahead, Col. Osmun foresees that schools will be affected.

"I believe," he said, "that young girls will be taught to cook better and probably to spend more time in preparing food."

Farmers may be the first to feel the effects of Army-style eating at civilian dinner tables. Giving a tip to one-crop farmers, the Army Colonel said that, if wise, these farmers will start producing fresh fruits, vegetables, milk, or other protective foods to meet the demands of men accustomed to Army eating. Quite wrong, he said, was the attitude of a hill-billy merchant who complained that the Army was teaching boys luxurious habits, like milk drinking. They won't get it at home, said the merchant. They should, said Col. Osmun, adding that some enterprising young man will develop a dairy herd in such neighborhoods to supply that demand, and others will follow suit.

Army feeding methods may also have an effect on farm cooperatives and the packing industry, encouraging them to find better methods of marketing fresh food thousands of miles from home.

Science News Letter, November 1, 1941

PUBLIC HEALTH

Health Service Acting To Avoid Doctor Shortage

BECAUSE of the serious shortage of physicians in many vital defense areas, Surgeon General Thomas Parran, U. S. Public Health Service, asks through the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (Oct. 25) that doctors desiring to locate in such areas communicate with him.

The demand for medical care is already so urgent, and likely to be increased during the coming winter, that doctors should find it relatively easy to establish practices in these areas. Defense housing projects offer office and living accommodations.

Every precaution is to be taken to avoid removing physicians from localities already undersupplied, but the U. S. Public Health Service, in cooperation with the Division of Defense Housing, FWA, is interested in acquainting physicians with the needs of the defense areas.

Science News Letter, November 1, 1941

PUBLIC HEALTH

Britain To Assure Complete Hospital Service to All

All Hospitals, Voluntary and Tax-Supported, Now Unified in One System; Improvements To Be Permanent

A REVOLUTIONARY step in Britain's health program, making available comprehensive hospital service to every person needing it, will soon be taken, Sir Wilson Jameson, chief medical officer of the British Ministry of Health, made known at the American Public Health Association meeting at Atlantic City.

By this plan, patients will pay for services if able, but the service will be available to all regardless of ability to pay. Part of the cost will be met by counties and large towns and part by the national government.

All hospitals, voluntary and tax-supported, are now unified in one national hospital system, Sir Wilson pointed out, although few realize it.

This came about because the government took over some existing hospital beds and added new ones in preparation for expected war casualties and reallocated the hospital staffs for efficient service during the emergency. The new step shortly to be taken will insure that the gains from this unification of hospitals will not be lost after the war.

The health of the English people has not suffered and in some ways has improved during two years of war, Sir Wilson declared.

Cases of nervous and mental disease of psychoneurotic type are actually less among the civil population than they were before the war.

With the exception of meningitis, infectious diseases have not occurred. Cooperation of the public in boiling water and efficiency of sanitary engineers in repairing water mains and sewage systems have prevented typhoid fever epidemics in spite of the endless number of times water mains and sewers were bombed and water contaminated in air raids.

Large numbers were saved from death by bombing through the evacuation of children from "target towns," Sir Wilson declared.

This evacuation policy also helped to keep down epidemics, as those evacuated were in the age group most susceptible

to many of the communicable diseases.

Chief lesson for America to learn from England's war health experiences, it appears, is to build up adequate maternal and child health facilities and improve housing in even the smallest towns and rural communities. The excellence of the English health facilities, built up between the two World Wars, and the rehousing during the same period of millions in individual homes contributed largely to the good health which has been maintained through evacuation of cities, air raids and the accompanying disruption and destruction of the war.

Science News Letter, November 1, 1941

ASTRONOMY

Solar System Immersed In Great Cloud of Gas

MINUTE differences in the colors of stars in different parts of the sky have led to the discovery that our solar system is immersed in an obscuring layer of gas 1,600 light years thick extending out 100,000 light years to the limit of the milky way. The discovery was made by Dr. Joel Stebbins, Dr. C. M. Huffer and Dr. A. E. Whitford of the University of Wisconsin working with the 100-inch reflecting telescope of the Mt. Wilson Observatory.

Stars have been found to be slightly reddened when their light passes through thin cosmic clouds in much the same way that the sun is made to look redder at sunset when its light passes through the most atmosphere. The extent of the cloud was determined from previous knowledge of the amount by which starlight reddens with distance. The change in tint was detected with the photo-electric cell or "electric eye" similar to those used to operate burglar alarms and similar devices. The photo-electric cell used on the 100-inch telescope was so sensitive that it could detect the heat from a candle 3,000 miles away if there were no atmosphere.

Science News Letter, November 1, 1941