Society Proceedings

COMING MEETINGS

American Association of Railway Surgeons, Chicago, Oct. 16-18.
Clinical Cong. of Surgeons of North America, New York, Nov. 11-16.
Kentucky State Medical Association, Louisville, Oct. 29-31.
Mississippi Valley Medical Association, Chicago, Oct. 22-24.
Southern Medical Association, Jacksonville, Fla., Nov. 12-14.
Virginia Medical Society, Norfolk, Oct. 22-25.

INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION CONGRESS

Fourth Annual Congress, held in Indianapolis, Oct. 1-4, 1912

The President, HON. J. B. WHITE of Kansas City, in the Chair

While the attendance was not equal to that of the two preceding congresses, the interest was unabated, the enthusiasm for better public health legislation being marked. A large and interesting hygienic exhibit was arranged in the corridors and rotunda of the state-house, a large portion of the material exhibited being supplied by the Indiana State Board of Health. In addition to the exhibit, illustrated lectures on public health were given three times a day, the stereopticon and moving-picture machine being used.

The first session was devoted to the usual addresses of welcome and responses, and addresses by President White and by Hon. H. L. Stimson, Secretary of War, representing the President of the United States. At the second session Prof. George E. Condra, president of the National Association of State Conservation Commissioners, reported on "What the States are Doing." Dr. W. A. Evans of Chicago spoke on "Human Life, Our Greatest Resource," and various committees reported progress during the year. In the evening, a public meeting was held at Tomlinson Hall at which Dr. Harvey W. Wiley spoke on the "Conservation of Man."

Human Life as a National Asset

At the Wednesday morning session, Mr. E. E. Rittenhouse of New York City, Conservation Commissioner for the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States, read a paper on this subject, which was noteworthy as summing up the entire question of conservation of life on a basis of hard, uncontrovertible facts. The paper was written by a business man, and not by a physician or sanitarian, which makes it all the more noteworthy.

Mr. Rittenhouse said: The life-saving movement is still in its infancy. It has been directed so far almost wholly against contagious diseases common to infancy and early adult life, while the degenerated diseases of middle life and old age, to which comparatively little attention has been paid, are steadily increasing. The average length of human life has been increased by increasing the proportion of people living in the younger age periods, while the average duration of life of those who pass into middle life and old age has been constantly shortened. The principal items of life waste are due to the hazards, habits and conditions of life which civilization has introduced.

Our fire losses amount to about \$250,000,000, to prevent which our cities are spending \$1.65 per capita. Our annual economic loss from preventable diseases is conservatively estimated at \$1,500,000,000, to prevent which our cities are spending 33 cents per capita. A million and a half people in the United States are constantly suffering from preventable diseases. During the next ten years, over 6,000,000 lives will be needlessly destroyed, if present conditions continue. The city and state health officer knows that with an appropriation of \$1.50 per capita, the health, happiness and longevity of the community can be greatly increased, but as the taxpayer will give him only 25 cents per capita, he is compelled to run a 25 cent health department. Even in Pennsylvania the appropriation is only about 48 cents per capita. Arkansas spends nothing at all for this purpose; New York State spends about 1.7 cents; Massachusetts, 4.2 cents; Florida, 10 cents; Indiana, 1.8 cents; Kansas, 2.7 cents, and Virginia, 1.9 cents. In cities the same condition exists. Providence, R. I., spends 11 cents per capita for health and \$1.99 per capita for fire protection;

Portland, Ore., spends 13 cents per capita for health and \$1.91 for fire protection; Minneapolis spends 14 cents per capita for health and \$1.67 for fire protection.

To remedy these conditions, business institutions, civic, social and religious organizations should join in a life-conservation campaign. The individual should be educated to adopt the healthful habits of life. Communities should be urged to establish public health organizations; the organization of local health leagues and the encouragement of rigid supervision of contagious diseases should be advocated. Every effort should be made to encourage states and municipalities to appropriate sufficient funds to finance adequate health departments.

The Public Health Movement

PROF. IRVING FISHER of Yale gave a history of the present movement for better health conditions, the organization of the Committee of One Hundred, the efforts made to secure the establishment of a national Department of Health, and the present situation. He also discussed the conditions in public health in Sweden and other European countries, and emphasized the importance of a national Department of Health, of proper vital statistics and of careful study of eugenics to provide a better race for advanced generations.

Authority in Health Control

DR. L. E. COFER of the United States Public Health Service reviewed the public health loss of the United States, and of the different states. He said that he was at a loss to suggest what additional health legislation is necessary or desirable. He is unable to see the necessity for any different plan of organization than that now in existence, as long as the people in whose behalf the organization is maintained are satisfied.

The remainder of the morning was devoted to a discussion of farm lands and agriculture.

Conservation and Its Relation to Hygiene

At the afternoon session, DR. OSCAR DOWLING of New Orleans, president of the Louisiana State Board of Health, spoke on this subject.

Duty of the Employer Toward Conservation

MR. E. A. RUMELY, La Porte, Ind., stated that we must care for the increasing population, not by increasing exploitation or natural stores, but by providing abundant work for skilled labor. Agriculture has been a process of mining. The farm must now furnish a field for the profitable employment of skilled labor, for the use of capital and the demonstration of the principles of scientific management, becoming thereby a workshop instead of a mine.

Duty of the Teacher Toward Conservation

PROF. E. T. FAIRCHILD of Topeka, Kan., president of the National Educational Association, emphasized the need of better teachers and better equipment for the public schools, especially in rural districts.

Duty of the State

DR. J. N. HURTY of Indianapolis, secretary of the Indiana State Board of Health and ex-president of the American Public Health Association, advocated the restriction of the use of drugs, poisons and improper foods, the prevention of over-fatigue, the reduction in venereal diseases and the use of alcohol in order to reduce crime, pauperism and insanity.

Section meetings on foods and on accident prevention were held later in the afternoon.

Accident Prevention

MR. MELVILLE W. MIX of Mishawaka, Ind., president of the Dodge Manufacturing Company and vice-president of the National Association of Manufacturers, one of the founders and a director of the National Society for the Promotion of Efficiency, said: Almost every establishment is to-day giving more thought to the safety of its employees, with the result that employers themselves are necessarily compelled to give more thought to the safety of themselves and others. The popular disregard for personal safety is the most important factor in the present situation. There must be an established

public conviction, an active, subconscious state of mind that automatically thinks of safety first, before industrial accidents will be reduced. It may be a generation or two before this is brought about. It can be accomplished only by constant drill and discipline. We are lacking in proper statistics regarding these questions, and have to rely on Germany for much of our information.

Cold Storage

DR. HARVEY W. WILEY, speaking before the food section, emphasized the improved condition of cold-storage business.

MR. FRANK A. HORNE, chairman of the Committee on Legislation of the American Association of Refrigeration, said that the cold-storage warehouse was performing a useful public function.

In the general discussion which followed, Dr. Wiley said that attacks on the cold-storage business five years ago were justified by conditions, which have since greatly improved.

History and Importance of the Conservation Movement

In the evening, MR. HENRY WALLACE, editor of *Wallace's Farmer*, Des Moines, Iowa, reviewed the history of the conservation movement, and said that man is after all the biggest thing on the planet. The farmer is more important than the farm. The American farmer has farmed some of the richest soils in the world for a few generations, and has wasted fertility so recklessly that he is now crying out for commercial fertilizer, while the Chinese have farmed the same soil for at least forty centuries, and have maintained the soil fertility without the use of such fertilizers. The only way to restore wasted fertility of the soil, and the waste of the forests and mineral resources, is by increasing to the utmost limit human efficiency, physically, mentally and morally.

Pensions for Mothers

JUDGE BEN B. LINDSEY of the Juvenile Court of Denver appealed for state pensions or compensation for needy mothers, reviewing the child welfare movement and emphasizing the duty of the state to the child.

The audience at the evening meeting was large and attentive.

The program Thursday morning included an address on "Lumber Conservation" by Major E. G. Grigg, of Tacoma, president of the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association, and a symposium on the prevention of accidents, which included a paper on "Saving Miners' Lives," by Dr. John A. Holmes of Washington, director of the National Bureau of Mines; Mr. Thomas H. Johnson of Pittsburgh, Pa., consulting engineer of the Pennsylvania Railroad, on the "Prevention of Railroad Accidents," and Mr. Reginald P. Bolton of New York, on the "Prevention of Elevator Accidents."

In the afternoon the congress met in the Coliseum building at the State Fair Grounds, where an address was given by Hon. Woodrow Wilson, governor of New Jersey.

In the evening a women's meeting was held, with Mrs. Philip M. Moore of St. Louis, ex-president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, in the chair. Addresses were given by Mrs. Matthew T. Scott of Washington, president-general of the Daughters of the American Revolution; Miss Julia C. Lathrop, chief of the Children's Bureau, Department of Commerce and Labor; Mrs. John R. Walker of Kansas City, honorary vice-president-general of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and Mrs. Marion A. Crocker of Fitchburg, Mass., chairman of the Department of Conservation of the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

The fourth and last day's session included addresses on "Conservation of Human Life," by Mr. A. B. Farquhar of York, Pa.; on the "Problem of Tuberculosis," by Dr. Livingston Farrand, executive secretary of the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis; "Water as a Natural Resource," by Dr. W. C. Mendenhall of the United States Geological Survey; "Conservation and Civics," by Mr. Ralph M. Easley, National Civic Federation; "Disposal of Sewage," by Dr. Burton J. Ashley, Morgan Park, Ill.; "The Story of the Soil," by Mr. H. H. Gross of Chicago, president of the National Soil Fertility League, and "The Story of the Air," by Prof. Willis L. Moore, Chief of the United States Weather Bureau.

Resolutions on Health Conservation

At the afternoon session the report of the Committee on Resolutions was adopted. The following resolutions refer to vital resources and public health:

Recognizing the natural resources of the country as the prime bases of property and opportunity, we reaffirm the declaration of the preceding congress, that the rights of the people in these resources are natural, inherent and inalienable; and we insist that these resources shall be developed, used and conserved in ways consistent both with current welfare and with the perpetuity of our people.

We put chief emphasis on vital resources and the health of all the people; since health and brains are the first and most important factors for efficient life, we urge the adoption of all rational and scientific methods which will lead to their building-up.

To be well born is the primal requirement, and the first step to make sure that children shall be well born is to stop the multiplication of those bearing hereditary defects of body and mind. We believe that science is capable of solving the problem satisfactorily and that improvement is possible under existing conditions. We earnestly urge its consideration by the public.

We believe that every state should have wisely ordered health laws, with well-paid health officers with power to enforce them, and also that a national Department of Health should be created comporting with the dignity and importance of the cause. This department should work effectively for the promotion of the physical and hence the moral and intellectual health of the people.

The accurate registration of births and deaths, which has been called the "bookkeeping of humanity," is a fundamental necessity for a study and knowledge of disease, and for all public health work; therefore, we affirm our belief in the importance of vital statistics registration, and recommend that all states now without proper vital statistics adopt as early as possible the model bill for the registration of vital statistics endorsed by the United States Bureau of the Census and by many prominent professional and scientific bodies.

We urge the strengthening of laws safeguarding the health and the lives of workers in industrial establishments; and we commend to the employers of labor all practicable safety devices and proved preventive measures against illness and injury and physical inefficiency; and we urge on the other states the investigation of accidents by elevators and the enactment of laws similar to those on the statute-books of Pennsylvania and Rhode Island.

We commend the activity of all individuals and organizations and governmental agencies to put an end to such work by children and women as impairs the health of the race. Childhood is our greatest resource and its right to protection in growing to a normal maturity is inalienable. We deplore the ignorant use of medicines; and we call on all human and educational agencies to teach the waste and danger of any drug-habit.

We earnestly advocate the employment by communities and manufacturing concerns of such methods of sewage disposal as will render their waste products harmless to health and utilize them in the restoration of soil fertility; and we urge the enactment by states of laws prohibiting stream pollution, and by the federal government of such legislation as will prevent the pollution of interstate and coastal waters.

Uniform state legislation regulating the refrigeration of perishable foodstuffs is advisable; therefore this congress recommends that its food committee be requested to study the questions involved in the production, collection, sanitary preparation, transportation, preservation and marketing of perishable foods and to report its findings to the succeeding congress as a basis for uniform legislation.

Officers Elected

The following officers were elected for the coming year: president, Mr. Charles L. Pack, Cleveland; vice-president, Mrs. Philip N. Moore, St. Louis; secretary, Mr. Thomas R. Shipp, Indianapolis.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON HYGIENE AND DEMOGRAPHY

Fifteenth Meeting, held at Washington, D. C., Sept. 23-28, 1912

(Continued from page 1316)

Protection of Passengers

DR. H. M. BRACKEN, Minneapolis, Minn.: It is the duty of railways to protect their passengers from disease. The traveling public spreads disease through ignorance, indifference and selfishness. Some travel on railway trains, knowing that they are suffering from a contagious or infectious disease. Others travel, knowing that they are carriers of disease germs, which do not affect them, but which are communicable from them to others. To this extent, responsibility for jeopardizing of passengers on railroads rests with the public.

Rural Hygiene

DR. JOHN N. HURTY, Indianapolis: Rural hygiene is really not different from urban hygiene; the question is: How much and how shall the general principles of the science be applied? The first step in rural hygiene is to see to it that rural