New Research Center for Washington

Plant Physiology

Public Health Work Receives Great Impetus

DEVELOPMENT of a new and very large research center is foreseen as the result of the absorption of the old hygienic laboratory of the U. S. Public Health Service into the new National Institute of Health. The bill creating the new institute has just been passed by Congress and the process of absorption will immediately begin.

The bill carried with it an appropriation of $750,000 which will be used for new buildings and possibly for acquiring sites for buildings. One extra story on the present hygienic laboratory building is planned, with a building for storage and more space for animals. After the original appropriation has been used, further development will depend largely on donations and contributions by private individuals, which the Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to accept on behalf of the government.

The bill provides for the establishment of fellowships so that individual scientists may work at the new institute and contribute the benefits of their research work to the United States. This will increase the research staff of the present force at the laboratory. The Surgeon General of the U. S. Public Health Service will be in charge of the new institute, and Dr. George W. McCoy, present director of the hygienic laboratory, will probably continue as its director.

The process of building up a large research institute will be a gradual one because of the difficulty of securing men adequately trained for the work, Dr. A. M. Stimson, director of the scientific division of the U. S. Public Health Service, stated. At present there is rather a small supply of such men in the country. The institute will probably be a big influence in the training of such personnel, though it is not expected to give such training directly except in special fields of advanced work.

In addition to the fellowships for research at the institute, men on the institute's staff may be sent to institutions here or abroad for special training, Dr. Stimson pointed out.

No definite program of the research problems to be undertaken at the new institute has been formulated. There are many such problems which the U. S. Public Health Service has not yet been able to tackle with present facilities and it is hoped that the creation of the new institute will make it possible to take these up shortly.

Science News-Letter, May 31, 1930

Important Flying Season Planned

Aviation

THE introduction given the 1930 summer flying season by the trans-Atlantic flight of the French aviator Mermoz from Africa to Brazil early this month, and the present three-leg journey of the Graf Zeppelin into two hemispheres bring attention to plans for many other flights in all parts of the world.

Daring aviators still seek Lindberghian fame in spectacular hops such as crossing the Pacific or winging the Atlantic from Europe to America. But popular attention during the coming months is likely to be focused largely on the fuller development by giant craft of routes that have already been explored.

Even now the accomplished Graf Zeppelin is taking 64 persons 18,000 miles into three continents and for the first time it has gone south of the equator. The larger British R-100 and R-101 are scheduled to set out later. They are expected to go to different parts of the world, drawing the first strings to tie the British Empire together by air and to cut distances requiring weeks down to air jumps measured conveniently in hours. The R-100 will visit Canada while her sister ship will call in South Africa, Egypt and India.

The most remarkable heavier-than-air craft planning epochal voyages and one whose useful load compares favorably with the mighty airships is the Dornier DO-X, the largest airplane in the world. Last year it carried 169 persons for an hour over Lake Constance. A hundred people will give way to additional fuel on the coming trip, and the long crossing to New York is to be made in four jumps, with stops at Barcelona, the Azores and Bermuda. American motors are expected to increase the power of the craft 50 per cent, to 7,200 horse-power, and to raise the cruising speed from 115 to 125 miles per hour.

A crossing of the Atlantic on the surface of the water much speedier than any now possible by ocean liner is promised by Paul Dudley's aero speed boat, a hybrid between an airplane and a motor boat. Having wings 48 feet long and a cabin 40 by nine feet, and powered by two 450 horse-power Liberty motors, it will probably carry a score of people skimming over the water at flying speed.

Chief among the adventures with small craft whose flights seem imminent are Dieudonne Coste, of France, who has flown nearly 5,000 miles into Siberia, and Charles Kingsford-Smith, the Australian of Southern Cross fame. They will doubtless seek for their countries the first dashing non-stop crossing of the Atlantic from a famous European air terminal to one in America.

Daring men who would tie more closely the girdle of air communication around the world during the coming months are found in almost every nation. Even if many plans fall through, the summer of 1930 promises to remain epochal in aviation history.

Science News-Letter, May 31, 1930

A Pharaoh's Tomb

THE picture on the cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS-LETTER shows how an archaeologist masters the "human fly" trick when he must measure the stones that form the sloping walls of a pharaoh's tomb. The scene is the famous pyramid at Meydum, Egypt, supposedly built by King Snefru. The Museum of the University of Pennsylvania is probing the pyramid's secrets.

Archaeology

Science News-Letter, May 31, 1930