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EXPERTS REPORT ON WAR ADVANCES IN THE
FIELD OF MEDICAL SCIENCE

An inspiring glimpse into the future health of civilization, which will benefit almost beyond belief as a result of war-generated advances in medical science and techniques was presented by four authorities at the Forum.

The speakers, whose individually prepared papers fit together like mosaics to form a complete picture, were Dr. O. H. Perry Pepper, professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and chairman of the Medical Commission of the National Research Council; Dr. Paul de Kruif, author; Colonel Walter S. Jensen, Deputy Air Surgeon of the Army Air Forces, and Lieutenant Henrietta F. Richardson, of the Army Nurse Corps.

Dr. Pepper, in addition to discussing the research into the uses of the sulfa drugs, penicillin and plasma, touched briefly on the development of new sprays, powders and ointments to prevent infection by disease-bearing insects. He intimated that these advances may eventually halt the spread of the virus causing infantile paralysis.

MALARIA CONQUEST SPURRED

"There is plenty of evidence that the common house fly can transport bacteria on its feet," Dr. Pepper said, "and the vicious sequence of filth, flies and food is well known. Recent evidence supports the possibility that the virus causing infantile paralysis can also be carried in this fashion

from sewage to the food or milk of children."

One of the most important medical problems upon which research has been concentrated is malaria, and Dr. Pepper observed that "there is no doubt that the length of the war in the Pacific will depend on the conquest of malaria." There is only a limited amount of quinine, and synthetic atabrine, while efficient, is not ideal in malaria treatment. Thousands of other compounds have been tested, Dr. Pepper added, with "some promise of success."

He attributed to immunization the fact that there was not a single case of tetanus in the American Army in the African campaign and that there has not been a single case of yellow fever. Advances in methods of culture of viruses for immunization may in the future be extended to the prevention of other virus diseases, he said.

Plasma, even more than the sulfa drugs and improved prompt surgery, is responsible for the amazingly low death rate of battle casualties, Dr. Pepper said. The death rate recently was announced as being about 3 per cent, as compared with 15 per cent in the World War. Dr. Pepper also told how investigators recently isolated a substance called coumarin, which can be used to prevent undesired clotting of blood, a tragic

complication of some diseases and operations.

Dr. de Kruif, author of such books as "Microbe Hunters" and "Why Keep Them Alive?" devoted his paper on "Co-operation in Medical Care Rather Than Government Control" to an exposition of and affirmative debate on the controversial prepaid medical care program installed by Henry Kaiser in his shipyards at Richmond, Calif.

Dr. de Kruif said that the Kaiser plan—by which employees get complete medical care by expert doctors in ultra-modern hospitals for a pre-payment of seven cents a day—"is really the Hippocratic oath in action." An extension of the plan, being considered now in California, would establish "Mayo Clinics for the common man," Dr. de Kruif said.

He contended that hospital facilities could be created entirely by funds of the plan itself, or else they could be built through a Reconstruction Finance Corporation loan to be paid off in a reasonable time. Thus, he said, the people would not be "medical peons of the Federal government" and "involuntary victims of the highly dubious 'charity' proposed by bureaucrats of the Federal Security Administration.

Dr. de Kruif advocated that the government give returning service doctors financial aid in establishing new health centers for prepaid medical service. These fighting doctors, he added, have learned in the service the beneficent power

of group medicine, and "already they are laughing at the individualistic horse-and-buggy medicine of yesterday."

AIR MEDICINE A VAST FIELD

In his address on "Medical Care of Flyers," Colonel Jensen pointed out that aviation medicine, which must include physiology, psychology, psychiatry, engineering and other sciences, has an enormous postwar value. Much of the knowledge now classified as confidential or secret is directly applicable to future commercial aviation, he said.

In the air age, Colonel Jensen observed, the family doctor will have to know about diseases of every part of the world, since no spot on the globe will be more than six days away, and strange tropical diseases may break out in New York or London after a plane returns from Marakesh, Africa. He envisaged the day of civilian air ambulances and doctors flying in helicopters to the bedside of their patients.

"Those of us whose business is aviation medicine," Colonel Jensen said earlier in discussing military aspects of his topic, "are constantly at work to bridge the gap between the performance of our men and the performance of their perfectly engineered machines. . . . We are making possible the adaptation of the average individual to a strange, wonderful just-beginning-to-be-known environment."

Lieutenant Richardson, whose

home is in Drexel, Pa., was the first flight nurse to return from a combat area. She told how more than 18,000 patients were evacuated by air from North Africa, where she served. The soldier's knowledge that he will receive prompt medical care does much to keep up his fighting morale, she said.—*New York Times*.

AURIESVILLE Shrine of Our Doctor Saint

The Mohawk village of Ossernenon has long since fallen to the ravages of time. The braves have all crumbled to dust in the brown soil of the valley. Their squaws are dead and gone, and the redskinned children no longer laugh on the banks of the Mohawk.

But Ossernenon is not forgotten. How could it be?

Today it is Auriesville, New York, the sacred shrine of America's first canonized martyr, Saint René Goupil.

Pilgrims come to reverence the soil consecrated in his blood. They kneel in trusting prayer in the Chapel of the Martyrs. They make their Via Crucis over the village site, and up the red hill of prayer and suffering where Saint René and Saint Isaac Jogues found the strength to give their lives for Christ.

They crowd about the altars of Auriesville while priestly hands raise the Sacred Host. And they remember the hands of Saint René Goupil—a surgeon's delicate hands, strong hands, bleeding hands, hands ready to give all to God!

Saint René, bless us!—our hands, and our hearts, all that we are and all that we have. That we may be entirely His, and give all gladly to Him!—[Ralph E. Lynch, S.J., in *The Pilgrim*.]

