

## BRIEF NEWS NOTES

### GORGAS MEMORIAL LABORATORY AT PANAMA

Within a few months after the death on July 4, 1920, of Dr. W. C. Gorgas, former Surgeon-General of the U. S. Army,—a name that will always be associated with disease-control work in Havana and Panama in the early part of this century,—a movement was started to establish in his memory a laboratory in Panama for the study of the causes and prevention of diseases of the tropics. Early in 1924 a campaign was launched to raise by popular subscription an endowment of five million dollars for the project which was incorporated as "The Gorgas Memorial Institute of Tropical and Preventive Medicine".

A splendid site adjoining that of the San Tomás Hospital in Panama City, then under construction, was donated by the Panama Government, but the campaign for endowment was not successful and the anticipated early initiation of scientific investigations did not materialize. However, the organizers of the movement were not discouraged, and their appeal to the U. S. Government for aid has just met with a success that will doubtless have far reaching effects. A bill passed by Congress providing an annual appropriation of \$50,000 for maintenance of the laboratory, under certain conditions, became a law on May 8, 1928, following the President's approval, and it is expected that the memorial will soon become a reality.

We take this opportunity to welcome the new laboratory into the rather limited group of institutions dedicated to tropical research and to the still smaller group of such laboratories actually located in the tropics.

Our School of Tropical Medicine of the University of Porto Rico under the auspices of Columbia University, in whose name we speak in extending this welcome, is but a young institution itself, having opened its doors only two years ago. But as the successor of the Institute of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, founded some fifteen years ago, it may safely claim priority among institutes of tropical medicine in the American Tropics. Since the reorganization, some sixty students have already received instruction here and the first volume of the School's investigations, soon to be published, will contain more than fifty papers on a variety of tropical-disease problems. However, it is quite possible that the new institute at



Panama with federal support, wide affiliations, and its splendid situation at one of the world's great cross roads, may show in the next few years even larger accomplishments than our modest local institution, whose most valuable assets are environmental rather than financial; that is, an abundance of easily available material for study, adequate laboratories and clinic, an excellent public-health organization to demonstrate the utility of any facts brought to light, but with limited funds for operation.

The friendly rivalry that will naturally arise between these two tropical institutions will be wholesome and mutually helpful. There is need of a strong stimulus to tropical medicine in the United States, where, in contrast with certain European countries, notably England, there has been in our commercial and political relations a decided indifference to the importance of tropical-disease control. The Gorgas Memorial Laboratory, with the aid of the U. S. Government, and the cooperation of Harvard University and various medical and scientific associations, can not fail to awaken in the entire western hemisphere an interest in this broadening field that will redound to the advantage of every institution engaged in the study of tropical disease.

#### THE SCHOOL OF TROPICAL MEDICINE

The following Special Meetings will be held during the month of August:

*August 1:* (1) Review of Recent Studies on the Anemias with Special Reference to Liver Therapy. By Doctor Randolph West, Columbia University.

(2) Infection of the Hand and its Treatment. A motion picture film presented by Doctor M. Díaz García.

*August 9:* Bacterio-therapy and Chemo-therapy in Gonococcus Infections. By Doctor Pérez Grande, Madrid.

#### DR. RANDOLPH WEST

For the purpose of making special studies on the use of liver extract in tropical sprue Dr. Randolph West of Columbia University arrived in San Juan on July 2nd and will return to New York on August 9th.

His investigations are being carried on in the Presbyterian Hospital and the School of Tropical Medicine. A summary of the studies made will be published in an early number of the REVIEW.



**DR. J. RODRIGUEZ PASTOR**

After an absence of three months Dr. J. Rodríguez Pastor, Chief of the Bureau of Social Medicine of the Department of Health is again at his desk.

While in the United States Dr. Rodríguez Pastor was the guest of the Rockefeller Foundation under whose auspices he made an extended tour of investigation with special interest in Tuberculosis Clinics. Among the places visited were Boston where he studied the organization of the Bureau of Child Hygiene of the Massachusetts State Health Department, the Bureau of Tuberculosis of the Boston Health Department, and the State Sanatorium for Tuberculosis; Saranac Lake where he visited the Trudeau Sanatorium and attended lectures at the Trudeau School of Tuberculosis. He also visited Detroit where the dispensary system of its City Health Department was studied, and he was especially impressed with the efficiency of the work on venereal disease being carried out there as well as the activities of the City Health Department as a whole.

In Chicago the Northfield Sanatorium, Rush Medical College, Cook County Hospital and the Chicago Public Health Institute were visited. After two weeks in Alabama, during which time he studied the organization of the State Health Department, especially in relation with child welfare, tuberculosis, social hygiene and public health nursing, he spent ten days in Philadelphia devoting most of his time there to the Henry Phipps Institute and the Philadelphia General Hospital.

Before returning to Porto Rico Dr. Rodríguez Pastor was in New York City for three weeks where he attended tuberculosis clinics at the Yorkville Health Center, and Bellevue Hospital, and visited the offices of the National Tuberculosis Association and the New York Tuberculosis and Health Association.