to the extent of blocking the recognition of the most crucial problems of all.

One triumph of the Commission was the final acceptance of the view that what is understood by the term 'mental health' is part of a system of values; it is, in other words, a culturally determined and approved end. It required a tremendous effort to pluck out this view from the mass of anxieties, tensions and resistances which obscured it.

If the Commission made no striking new discoveries, at least it brought to light the fact that multi-disciplined thinking involves more than the mere coming together of diversely educated persons in order to exchange views. Multi-disciplined thinking may operate at many levels. In its most rudimentary form it is simply 'additive', combining the points of view of different disciplines. At a more advanced stage, it requires a new type of concept, which reflects the many-faceted situations of real life. This is one aim of operational research which is essentially a multi-disciplined activity.

The major outcome of the Congress was the formation of a World Federation for Mental Health. This Federation has already been accepted by the World Health Organisation and Unesco as a consultative body on all matters pertaining to mental health in the widest sense. The new organisation will have its roots in the professional groups formed in so many countries to prepare the way for the Congress. These groups will be strongly encouraged to broaden the base of their activities to include all the social sciences as well as psychiatry, and machinery will be devised to link all these groups with the new World Federation. In the way it is hoped to mobilize all the efforts of social scientists, in research and practice, towards the study of the most urgent human problems agitating the contemporary world.

JOHN COHEN

OBITUARIES

Dr. P. R. Lowe, O.B.E.

PERCY ROYCROFT LOWE, who died on August 18, was born at Stamford, Lincolnshire, on January 3, 1870. He was educated privately and went to Jesus College, Cambridge, where he graduated as a B.A., and afterwards qualified in medicine and surgery at Guy's Hospital, London. He served as house physician and surgeon at two hospitals in the Midlands. In 1899 he volunteered for service in South Africa and was appointed medical officer in charge of Princess Christian's hospital train. It was while he was in South Africa that he became interested in ornithology and began to make a collection. On the termination of hostilities he returned to Great Britain and a short time afterwards was appointed private physician to Sir Frederic Johnston. This was a most fortunate appointment for an ornithologist, as Sir Frederic Johnston spent the winters abroad in his private yacht and during the next six years Lowe visited the West Indies and a number of islands in the Atlantic. On these voyages he took every opportunity to study birds and brought together a collection of some three thousand skins which he later presented to the national collection. Lowe contributed a series of papers on his collections, including a study of the genus *Coereba*, in which he paid special attention to the variations in colour in that genus.

In the First World War, Lowe served in Lord Dunraven's yacht fitted up as a hospital ship, and afterwards as a captain in the R.A.M.C. in command of Princess Christian's ambulance train. In 1919 he succeeded Mr. Ogilvie-Grant in charge of the bird collection in the British Museum, and retired in 1935.

Lowe was specially interested in the anatomy and osteology of birds, and was an exceptionally careful and painstaking worker. He made a close study of the Charadriiformes, or wading birds, and published several papers on their classification based on osteological characters and colour pattern. He wrote extensively on the ostriches—both recent and fossil. His studies of the primitive characters of penguins aroused a good deal of criticism, but all will admit that his work on the microscopical structure, arrangement and moult of the feathers of these birds was of outstanding importance. For long there had been much discussion as to whether there were two species of the steamer duck (*Tachyeres*) but it was left to Lowe to prove, in 1934, that there was a volatile and non-volatile species.

Archaeologists are indebted to Lowe for proving that the supposed remains of the pheasants from Roman sites in Great Britain are nothing more than the bones of domestic fowls.

It is no exaggeration to say that in the last fifty years Lowe has done more than anyone to advance the study of the anatomy of birds and their classification.

Although Lowe had always been interested in the preservation of birds, it was not until 1925 that he began to take an active part in the cause. In that year he received a letter from the late Prof. Lönnberg directing attention to the grave decline in the numbers of wildfowl in Sweden and asking his advice and assistance. He took up the matter with characteristic energy and started extensive inquiries in Britain and elsewhere. His conclusions, which were published in pamphlet form, went to show that the decline in numbers was mainly due to increased commercialization, and that unless something was done the numbers of wildfowl were bound to go on decreasing. Through his efforts the British Government was persuaded to hold an International Wildfowl Conference in 1927. A year or two earlier the International Committee for Bird Preservation had been founded, and Lowe became secretary of the British Section and for many years was chairman. His efforts in the cause of bird preservation were greatly appreciated on the Continent, and in 1938 he was elected chairman of the European Section. He was president of the British Ornithologists' Union during 1938-43 and in 1946 was awarded the Salvin-Godman Medal for his outstanding work on the anatomy of birds and his efforts in the cause of protection.

In 1924 he married Harriette Dorothy, widow of Charles Parker of Fairlee and younger daughter of the late E. G. B. Meade-Waldo. He is survived by his widow and one daughter. N. B. KINNEAR

Dr. C. A. Elsberg

CHARLES ELSBERG, who died at his home in Stamford, Connecticut, on March 18, was one of the most distinguished neurological surgeons of his generation. When he started his career, neurological surgery did not exist as a specialty. While brain surgery was being developed by Harvey Cushing, the surgery of the spinal cord, in which Elsberg was to win international renown, was in its infancy.