

Public Health Education in Mexico

THE August issue of the *Boletín de la Oficina Sanitaria Panamericana* contains an instructive article by Dr. Angel de la Garza Brito, director of the School of Hygiene of Mexico, on the present and future of education in hygiene in his country. The old preparatory school in public health which was re-organized in April 1938 gave instruction to 130 medical men, 184 nurses and 70 health officers, as well as to an auxiliary staff consisting of statisticians, laboratory assistants and social workers for venereal diseases. In 1941 the first regular course for medical officers of health was opened. Difficulties which have been encountered are due to an almost complete lack of modern text-books and special literature on preventive medicine and public health, the scarcity of full-time teachers and the absence of basic training in preventive medicine and hygiene. These defects have been partly remedied by the preparation of synopses on each subject, and by encouraging the study of foreign languages, especially English. It has also been suggested that hospital instruction should be supplemented by a sociological approach.

Urea Formaldehyde Glue for Plywood

PLYWOOD is made to one of two specifications, either D.T.D.427 or B.S.S.5.V.3, requiring resistance to three hours immersion in water at 60° C. (140° F.) and 100° C. (212° F.) respectively. At present urea formaldehyde resins are used for D.T.D.427 plywood, and Tego film (paper impregnated with a phenol formaldehyde resin and used in a dry state) for the 5.V.3 plywood. Although modified urea formaldehyde glues meet the requirements of B.S.S.5.V.3, they cannot be used in the manufacture of very thin plywood because of the swelling caused in the thin veneers by the wet glue, and because of the penetration that takes place after pressing. The phenol formaldehyde film type of glue is, of course, immune from these troubles.

To meet this difficulty, and to reduce costs, Messrs. Aero Research, Ltd., of Duxford, Cambridge, have introduced a foamed modified urea formaldehyde glue. The amount of glue applied by any ordinary means (glue spreaders or brushes) is in excess of the optimum amount; by using the glue in the form of a foam an extremely thin uniform spread is obtained in terms of pounds of glue per square foot, although the glue layer has an appreciable thickness. Actually the volume of the glue is about doubled by a special beater machine before it is poured into the glue spreader. Under ordinary factory conditions it is possible to get a spread of 1.35 lb. of glue per 100 square feet. This foamed-up glue, known as Aerolite F.67, gives plywood meeting the requirements of specification 5.V.3. Because of the nature of the foam, it can be used with thin veneers. The press temperature required is 90° C., so that steam-heated presses are unnecessary and the older type of press common in Great Britain, with hot-water heating, can be used; the use of pressing temperatures below 100° C. obviates any risk of over-heating of the wood with its attendant troubles. Messrs. J. M. Steel and

Co., Ltd., of Kern House, 36-38, Kingsway, London, E.C.2, are the distributors of Aerolite glue, and all inquiries should be addressed to them.

Forests of British Honduras

THE annual report of the Forest Department of British Honduras for the year ending December 31, 1940, is an illustration of the failure on the part of responsible administrators to understand the principles of a true forestry management. Mahogany has been exported from the country for a couple of centuries and more. The report commences with the statement that "British Honduras is essentially a producer of raw materials for export, of which in the last eighteen years an average of 79.6 per cent has been derived from the forests. In 1940 there was continued improvement in the export trade, and particularly so for forest produce, in spite of war conditions." There was but slight disruption of communications with North America to which a considerable proportion of these productions goes and the United Kingdom Timber Control Department purchased the whole of the lumber output. The Conservator writes: "the work of the Department in 1940 was concentrated on the most important aims of the forest policy." This policy is apparently to develop the forest estate by the maintenance of the chief export, mahogany, and chicle, etc. This is not forestry. A timber merchant can do this; nor can it be termed a 'forest policy'. The exploitation of the forests is apparently done entirely by licensees who set up their own mills.

That the forests so worked and the amounts of valuable timber they contain is to a great extent unknown is obvious from the statement in the report that "shortage of staff has, for years, made it impossible to do much exploration in advance of exploitation"; there appears to be an idea that by giving longer terms to the licences issued, licensees will plan their work economically. In the history of forest lumbering this hope has ever remained a dead letter. The superior staff of this Department consists of a conservator and two assistant conservators. Both these latter were absent for a greater part of the year; and yet we are told that 79.6 per cent of the raw material exported from the Colony comes from its forests. It would have been interesting had the report told us the direction in which the sums obtained from this produce went. Do they go into the exchequer of the Colony and are they spent in the improvement of the conditions of the people? If the answer is in the affirmative, how long will the forests stand the drain upon them in the absence of the introduction of a true conservative management which could solely be enacted and maintained by an adequate forest staff? According to the report, the latter can only be considered to be present in name.

British Association Seismological Committee

THE report of the British Association Seismological Committee for 1941 has just been received. It shows that some progress is being made in spite of