

NOTES and NEWS

PROGRESS IN MOSQUITO CONTROL IN UTAH

Organized mosquito control work is gradually being extended into other cities and counties in Utah as a result of civilian, army, state and federal public health agencies that have become aware of the mosquito problems existing in these areas.

A state law was passed in Utah in 1923 providing for the formation and operation of mosquito abatement districts in any part of the state, upon petition made to the Board of County Commissioners by registered voters equal in number to at least ten per cent of the number of votes cast in the proposed district for the office of governor at the election preceding the presentation of the petition.

Salt Lake City was organized as a district in 1924 and to date has operated as the only district in the state. During this period other cities and counties have considered the organization of districts but no legal action has been taken until recently.

During 1933-34, six counties in Utah carried on mosquito abatement projects with federal funds under C. W. A., F. E. R. A. and other agencies. Most of these funds were expended in Salt Lake County, the remainder in five other counties around the larger centers of population. Some work was continued in most of these counties as long as federal aid was available, but was discontinued in all counties except Salt Lake in about 1938, when federal funds ceased.

In 1943 officials at Ogden and Brigham City became alarmed over the possibility of a malaria epidemic occurring in these areas. These cities are a distance of 40 and 60 miles from Salt Lake respectively. At Ogden a large Internment Camp for war prisoners was established and numerous cases of malaria appeared among the prisoners. At Brigham malaria was common among the patients in Bushnell General Hospital.

A mosquito survey was conducted in Ogden in Weber County, also in Brigham and other parts of Box Elder County in early June 1943. The survey was made by the author and Lt. W. W. Sampson, entomologist of the Sanitary Corps of the Army. Conditions were such in each area that Anopheline control was recommended. Civilian authorities and Army officials did some Anopheline control work in and around Ogden and Brigham during the latter part of 1943.

In June of this year the U. S. Public Health Service placed L. E. Perry Assistant Sanitarian (R) in charge of malaria control in District No. 8. Headquarters for a mobile unit was established at Ogden. Dr. Whitney Young was appointed by the Public Health Service as supervisor of malaria control work in the Ogden and Brigham area and some very effective work has been accomplished.

During the season Box Elder County has completed the formal organization of a district, the second in Utah. This district comprises the entire county, but to begin with control work will be restricted to Brigham, Tremonton and a few other larger communities.

Citizens of Weber County which includes the city of Ogden are attempting at present to organize a similar district. The organization is being sponsored by a recently formed public health unit and success seems highly probable.

These new districts will concentrate first on Anopheline control but will gradually expand to include pest species.

DON M. REES.

FROM THE CITY OF NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

A certain ancient adage expresses the general idea that He Whom Fate Smiles Upon Is Beyond The Need of Great Riches.

I have always felt there was nothing that could quite take the place of a goodly sum in the savings bank when it comes to easing the aches and pains of our daily tussle with life but I must also admit that Fate can be a big help if she cares to hand you a lucky deal.

Last winter the temptation was strong on the part of many mosquito men to give way to a feeling of gloom when they tried to look around the corner toward the summer that was inevitably creeping up on their weakened defenses. Manpower and munitions were both scarce and replacements difficult to obtain. The prospects were not encouraging. But our fraternity is made up of fighters — or they would not be mosquito men — and there was no quitting on any front. From last reports the enemy is again taking a licking all along the line.

Such success can spring only from a combination of knowledge, energy and experience but now and then it is helped along a little by Fate — which is as good a name as any other for dry weather — and that is our case here in the Tidewater Virginia area. From late April until the middle of July, Norfolk experienced an unprecedented drought that reduced ground water to a minimum, nearly ruined the farmer and gave our pitifully meager army an even chance against the mosquito. We have accepted our good fortune gratefully and have employed every effort to make the best possible use of it. We intentionally refrain from anything that could be interpreted as bragging, for Fate's sunny smile often turns to a watery frown over night, but we are just as human as if we had office hours from ten to four and our feelings are hurt when we do not receive credit for what we have accomplished.

This situation is aptly covered by another old proverb somewhat to the effect that A Little Bit of Knowledge Is Likely To Make Trouble For Somebody and I wonder how many of us have been caught in the backfire of our own teaching. For years now we have been impressing our good friends with the fact that water is the only known medium in which mosquitoes can breed. After so long a time we realize that this message has begun to strike home. Our work has borne fruit and the truth has been heard. Now some of these same friends, armed with this Bit of Knowledge, eye the parched landscape and openly wonder if we really deserve the soft job we are enjoying during the drought. No water — no mosquitoes. Nothing for us to do but rest comfortably all day!

Dr. William B. Hermes in the latest edition of his Mosquito Control says, "Man by his works presents numerous opportunities for mosquito breeding, of which the mosquitoes take prompt advantage."

With all of us engaged in mosquito abatement, any statement by Dr. Hermes carries the authority of a top ranking expert in his field and it is obviously no coincidence that during the period from May 1 to July 15 our inspectors have brought to our field office no less than 383 individual samples of breeding taken from all over the city. These, of course, do not represent the total number of places treated to eliminate mosquito larvae since the time required to sample each catch basin visited, for instance, would be prohibitive but they do provide an index of the female mosquitoes' egg-laying urge that can be satisfied even when rainfall ceases to be a contributing