MOSQUITOES, MALARIA AND THE WAR IN THE PACIFIC

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The recent fall of Bataan was attributed mainly to malaria and lack of quinine by the United Press correspondent, Frank Hewlett, writing in The New York Times for April 18, and other observers. In the last war malaria took first place among the diseases responsible for casualties. Even in normal times, it is one of our most important public health problems.

1 "Studies on Fauonal Distribution," No. 7. These studies have received the support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the National Academy of Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Society of Sigma Xi, the American Philosophical Society, the May Esther Bedford Fund, Incorporated, and various subscribers to the Oxford University Chest. See G. D. Hale Carpenter, Science, 95: 325-326, 1942.

With the Dutch East Indies now largely in enemy hands, the principal source of supply of the world's quinine is lost to the United Nations, and although synthetic anti-malarials have been in use for some time, one can not overestimate the seriousness of a quinine shortage. Because of a low toxicity, and the fact that careful medical supervision is not required, quinine is still the most valuable drug for malarial prophylaxis and the treatment of acute malaria. There is no drug known to-day which can completely replace quinine and the other cinchona alkaloids. Because of these and other factors which are obvious, it is particularly important at this time to consider