RESEARCH AND THERAPEUTICS

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During the year 1942 nearly one tenth of the entire population became a hospital bed patient. One person entered a hospital in the United States as a patient every two and a half seconds. Surgical operations were performed at a rate of one to each 5.6 seconds and the hospital birth rate exceeded three live babies to the minute.

This represents only a part of the total illness in this country and is, of course, only a fraction of the illness prevalent throughout the world. By the time the war is over such figures when compared to worldwide statistics will be infinitesimal. At the recent National Conference on Planning for War and Post-war Medical Services a number of papers were presented to show post-war medical needs. Obviously the papers could not be specific in details as exact estimates for post-war needs are impossible to determine at this time, but they did give an indication of the future enormous requirements from the drug manufacturers. Will the demands be met entirely by current drugs or will there be available a host of new agents? With American medicine encountering diseases alien to these shores through participation in worldwide health problems and the return of infected troops, new and more effective agents will have to be provided.

At present the drug-manufacturing industry is faced with many problems—two major ones are increasing reductions of certain basic materials and increasing demands for Lend-Lease, armed forces and civilian use. The probable needs in the early post-war period stagger the imagination. As each manufacturer will have to give careful thought to the optimal use of his supplies, there is afforded a good opportu-