

## PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICINE IN STAMPS OF THE AMERICAS

On the following pages appear some of the many American stamps which may be considered directly or indirectly related to medicine and public health.

Among the countries which have thus honored their scientists are: Argentina (José Penna<sup>1</sup>, 1855-1919; public health pioneer); Brazil (Father José Anchieta, 1533-1579, missionary, naturalist, founder of the first hospital in Brazil); Colombia (Francisco José Caldas, 1741-1816, scientist and patriot, and José Fernández Madrid, 1789-1830, physician and statesman); Costa Rica (Jesús Jiménez, 1823-1897, physician, statesman, president); Cuba (Carlos J. Finlay, 1833-1915, who in 1881 enunciated the theory of the transmission of yellow fever by the mosquito; Juan Guiteras,<sup>1</sup> 1853-1925, noted American and Cuban sanitarian; and Nicolás José Gutiérrez, 1800-1879, founder, in 1840, of the first Cuban medical journal, *Repertorio Médico Habanero*); Ecuador (Francisco Eugenio de Santa Cruz y Espejo, 1740-1796, pioneer journalist, publisher, librarian, as well as physician and patriot; and José Mejía Lequerica, 1776 [1777 ?]-1813, physician, orator, and patriot); El Salvador (Manuel Enrique Araujo, 1859-1913, physician and president; and Tomás G. Palomo, XIX century, physician and statesman); Dominican Republic (Father Francisco X. Billini, 1832-1890, founder of the insane asylum, and an orphanage); Honduras (Vicente Mejía Colindres, physician-president (1929-1933); and Miguel Paz Baraona, d. 1937, physician-president (1924-29)); Mexico (Father Juan de Zumárraga, about 1468-1548, who was the first to institute medical training in Mexico, in his school for Indians); Panama (Manuel Amador Guerrero, first President of the Republic, and a physician, and William Crawford Gorgas, 1854-1920, who eradicated yellow fever from Cuba and Panama; he has also been portrayed on a Canal Zone stamp); United States (Manasseh Cutler, 1742-1823, physician, minister, scientist, who aided in the settlement of the Northwest Territory; Crawford Long, 1815-1878, first physician to use anaesthetics; Walter Reed, 1851-1902, who confirmed Finlay's theory of the transmission of yellow fever by the mosquito and made possible the sanitation of Cuba and Panama) and, finally, Uruguay (Dámaso Antonio Larrañaga, 1771-1848 [1849 ?], botanist and humanitarian, founder of one of the first charity lotteries.) One might extend the list to include the naturalist Audubon, the botanist Luther Burbank, and Benjamin Franklin, who among his many other activities, was instrumental in the founding of the first hospital in what is now the United States; all of these men have appeared on stamps of that country, as have the medical students, Hamilton and Harrison. Of foreign scientists, Ecuador has honored Charles Darwin, and Cuba and Panama the Curies, discoverers of radium.

The role of nutrition in health is everywhere recognized, and in this connection stamps honoring agriculture and national food products are of interest, such as the fruit of Argentina and Uruguay; the coffee of Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti and Venezuela, the banana of Colombia and Costa Rica;

<sup>1</sup> Semi- postal.

the cacao of Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Venezuela; the sugar cane of Argentina, Ecuador, Cuba, El Salvador; the mate and orange of Paraguay; the rice of the United States, and the food-producing industries in general, such as agriculture, fishing, and stock-raising.<sup>2</sup> El Salvador has honored its noted balsam, and Peru displays the cinchona plant in its national coat of arms on a stamp, and also has one showing cotton. Other substances sometimes used in medicine have been pictured: gold (Colombia, Ecuador); petroleum (Bolivia, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela); and nitrates (Chile).

Child and maternal welfare have been the subject of stamps in Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Peru, and (Motherhood) the Dominican Republic and the United States. Athletics and sports have been commemorated by Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, Nicaragua, Panama, and the United States, especially in connection with international or national sports assemblies. Red Cross and tuberculosis stamps and seals have been issued by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay, the Philippines, the United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Surinam has a Green Cross stamp. Costa Rica, Guatemala and Panama have issued stamps picturing a nurse. Hospital stamps have appeared in Costa Rica (asylum), Guatemala (maternity), El Salvador, Honduras and Peru (children's hospital). Ecuador has issued social security stamps and Peru several for the relief of the unemployed. Charity stamps have appeared in Brazil, Surinam and elsewhere. Peru's Medical School and Institute of Hygiene appear on stamps. Guatemala has the unique distinction of having the beautiful building of its National Department of Health on a stamp.

Other stamps which might be mentioned are: mineral waters (Chile); aqueduct (Haiti) and dams (Mexico and Uruguay), calling to mind the importance of water supplies; the Universities of Brazil, Mexico and Peru; Bolivia's Torch of Learning; Mexico's Census, Peru's National History Museum, Surinam's disease campaign, Mexico's malaria control, and the public health stamps of Colombia and Uruguay.

The latest, and to some extent the most interesting, series of this type is the one (originally intended for the VIII American Child Welfare Congress scheduled for 1940 and indefinitely postponed) issued by Costa Rica on Pan American Health Day with the overprint "Día Panamericano de la Salud".

While the list might be extended indefinitely, it will serve to show that medicine and public health have not been neglected by the stamp-makers of the American Republics.

<sup>2</sup> See the article on agricultural stamps by Beatrice Newhall, *Bull. Pan. Amer. Union*, Mar., 1939, p. 179; *Bol. Un. Panam.*, Mar., 1939, p. 183.



I.—Personalidades médicas (medical personalities); Penna (Argentina); Anchieta (Brasil); Gorgas (Zona del Canal); Caldas, Madrid (Colombia); Jiménez (Costa Rica); Finlay, Guiteras (Cuba); Espejo, Mejía (Ecuador); Araujo, Palomo (El Salvador); Reed, Cutler, Long (Estados Unidos); Baraona, Mejía Colindres (Honduras); Zumárraga (México); Santa Rosa (Perú); Amador (Panamá); Billini (República Dominicana).



II.—Alimentos, Drogas e Industrias Afines (Foods, Drugs and Related Industries): Pesca—Fishing (Guayana Inglesa, Chile); Agricultura—Agriculture (Paraguay); Arroz—Rice (Estados Unidos); Agua—Water (Haití); Azúcar—Sugar (Argentina); Banana (Costa Rica); Café—Coffee (Brasil); Cafe y cacao—Coffee and cacao (Ecuador); Mate y naranja—Mate and orange (Paraguay); Bálsamo—Balsam (El Salvador); Quina—Cinchona (Perú); Petróleo—Oil (Colombia); Oro—Gold (Ecuador); Salitre—Nitrates (Chile); Cobre—Copper (Chile); Algodón—Cotton (Perú).



III.—Protección Maternoinfantil y Deportes (Child and Maternal Welfare and Sports); Protección infantil—Child welfare (México y Perú); Maternidad—Motherhood (Estados Unidos y República Dominicana); Deportes—Sports (Colombia, Ecuador, Estados Unidos, Nicaragua, Panamá).



IV.—Cruz Roja y Tuberculosis: timbres y sellos (Some Red Cross and Tuberculosis stamps and seals): Cruz Roja—Red Cross (Colombia, Estados Unidos, Guatemala, Venezuela); Tuberculosis (Argentina, Brasil, Cuba, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Estados Unidos); Caridad—Charity (Brasil); Pro Desocupados—For the Unemployed (Perú); Seguro Social del Campesino—Peasant's Social Security (Ecuador).



V.—Miscelánea: Sanidad—Health (Colombia, Perú, Uruguay); Censo—Census (México); Vivienda obrera—Workers' housing (Bolivia, Perú); Restaurante popular—Popular restaurant (Perú); Termas—Hot springs (Chile); Prensa Médica—Medical Press (Cuba); Malaria (México); Pro-Defensa y Salud—Defense and Health (Estados Unidos); Asilo Chapuí—Chapuí Asylum (Costa Rica); Luz eléctrica—Electric light (Estados Unidos); Antorcha de inteligencia—Torch of Knowledge (Bolivia).