

Wood and other forest products have almost innumerable uses in warfare. The War and Navy Departments, the Emergency Fleet Corporation, Committees of the Council of National Defense, and manufacturers of war orders have all demanded exact knowledge about forest products and never before has this demand been so urgent. Much of the need for knowledge has concerned aircraft material and problems relating to the construction of wooden ships and vehicles. Hardwood distillation plants have needed information in order to increase the production of acetone and other things needed for munition making. Museum botanists can make exhibits and otherwise give publicity to the fact that wheat rust must die out where there are no barberry bushes because it lives part of its life in a form not recognized by the average farmer, on a barberry bush. Had this been done it would have been easier to secure the consent of the farmers to cut their prized ornamental barberry bushes.

What the geologists of a museum can do in war time is well illustrated by the following single statement made by one geologist:

"My work is to be concerned with the location of trenches and dugouts. We must have trenches into which the country will not drain. These slashes in the earth can be made so that they will do their own draining. Mud, mud, mud! That is the trench curse which brings on trench feet and puts the soldier out of business."

And then on a sheet of paper he drew the slope of a hill and explained how if located in one place, because of the peculiar stratification of the earth, the trench would act as a cesspool or reservoir, gathering in all the waters of the neighboring terrain, while if placed elsewhere it would be immune from this disadvantage and through certain strata furnish a natural waste pipe for the superficial waters.

The uncertainty of action in the Mexican oil region and the increased need of oil for the navies of the allies has created a great demand for geologists to cooperate with business men in locating oil fields. Museum geologists are now lending a hand here.

The general knowledge of museum men may be applied to war work and in some instances be of greater service than scores of men. For instance, as related to hospital work, museum men have drawn attention to a method of treating