



ARTHUR HAWLEY PARMELEE, M.D.
1883-1961
PIONEER PEDIATRICIAN TO THE NEWBORN

Arthur Hawley Parmelee was born Sept. 25, 1883, in Redfield, South Dakota, a town with a population at that time of 400, traversed by the Northwestern Railroad, and later to become known as the county seat of the largest wheat-producing county in the United States and familiar to sportsmen everywhere as a choice location for pheasant hunting. His family moved to West Salem, Wisconsin, in 1891, and he graduated from the West Salem High School in 1900. The following year he worked as a rural mail carrier. He attended Beloit College during the next 4 years and received his bachelor's degree (cum laude) in 1905. He was interested in athletics, played left tackle position on the Beloit football team, and seriously considered a career in the field of physical education. During the next 2 years he coached the football team at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, and also served as the Y.M.C.A. General Secretary.

In 1907 Parmelee entered Rush Medical College, which was then affiliated with the University of Chicago, where he graduated in 1911. He served internship at Kansas City General Hospital and then became an assistant to Dr. John Cross in Minneapolis. In 1913 he moved to Oak Park, Illinois to open a practice where he specialized in pediatrics. Eventually he would also take a position at the pediatric department at Rush Medical College. In 1924, he departed for Vienna, Austria to study with Clemens von Pirquet, at the time the leading pediatrician in Europe. He would return to Vienna for additional study in 1931 and 1932.

In 1947, at the age of 64, he resigned from the pediatric department at Rush, left a highly successful private practice, and moved to Los Angeles. At a time when many physicians contemplate retirement he entered into the most interesting phase of his career. He became a welcome member of the Children's Hospital Staff and was in immediate demand as a pediatric consultant. Within a short time he exerted a beneficial influence on the entire community. He became a Pediatric Consultant to the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health of the California State Department of Public Health; Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, U.S.C. School of Medicine, and Senior Consultant to the Clinic for the Study of Mental Retardation, Children's Hospital.

Parmelee had a deep interest in the disorders of the newborn. He published 44 articles with 24 directly related to this aspect of pediatrics, which helped to clarify the difficulties in the diagnosis and treatment of conditions such as early intestinal obstruction, congenital lung cysts, congenital syphilis, congenital goiter and diaphragmatic hernia. His most significant article was a 1935 article in the *American Journal of Diseases of Children* (50:1418, 1935) titled "*The Pathology of Steatorrhea*" where he was the first to recognize congenital steatorrhea (cystic fibrosis of the pancreas) as a separate disease unrelated to other steatorrheas, including celiac disease. His work developed into a serious examination of the factors that influence the health of newborn babies. He compiled his observations into a book, "*Management of the Newborn*". Additionally he collaborated in several textbooks including Brennemann's "*Practice of Pediatrics*" and "*The Child in Health and Disease*."

Dr. Parmelee died June 5, 1961, at U.C.L.A. Medical Center after a cerebral hemorrhage.