

aeroplanes were available without wireless to advise of the need for medical attention, their value would be negatived. So he sought a transmitting-receiving set so moderate in price as to meet the pocket of the outback settler; so foolproof that experienced servicing would not be required more than once per year; and so simple that a stockman could operate it.

Here, another man came into the story—a thirty-year-old South Australian engineer named Alfred Traeger, who tinkered with radio in his spare time. He met Flynn in 1925, caught the parson's enthusiasm, and set out to invent a simple and cheap portable radio set that could be used by isolated bush people to summon the Flying Doctor of the future. He had tremendous technical difficulties to overcome and it took him three long years of research and disappointments to solve them. At last he was able to show Flynn the now world-famous Traegar pedal "transceiver" radio set. The first set was contained in a small compact box and derived its power from a pedal generator worked by the foot.

Flynn's dream came true in 1928. A gift from Mr. H. V. McKay, an Australian millionaire manufacturer of farm implements, inaugurated a public fund for the first Flying Doctor experiment and the public subscribed generously. In May, 1928, the Flying Doctor Service began operations from a base at Cloncurry (Queensland), the centre of a vast area of pastoral country where doctors were few and far between. In the first year, 50 flights aggregating 20,000 miles, were made and 255 patients were attended. The cost of each "consultation" was about L80, but the patients paid only a token fee. From the Cloncurry experiment has emerged the nation-wide organisation of to-day. In 1943 for example, the seven Flying Doctor bases throughout Australia undertook 311 flights covering 126,803 miles. To-day there is no place in Australia more than 300 miles from a Flying Doctor.

The seven main bases have been established at Cloncurry and Charleville (Queensland), Broken Hill (New South Wales), Alice Springs (Northern Territory), Kalgoorlie, Port Hedland and Wyndham (Western Australia).

Queensland bases are the largest. There the Flying Doctors cover more than 60,000 miles per year and 90 transceivers are in touch with their base stations. Last year two men and four girl assistants handled over 20,000 calls out of a total of nearly 59,000 for all Australia. Although the service depends mainly on voluntary help for its finances, the Federal Government and some State Governments assist with subsidies. Each Flying Doctor base has complete hospital and nursing facilities. A fully-qualified doctor is ready at all times to



*The Flying Doctor attends a patient.*

answer emergency calls by plane or to give consultations over the pedal wireless network. An aircraft with stretcher accommodation stands by, with a skilled pilot and engineer. Each base has a broadcast transmitting station in cons-