

Chinese Society Stops Exploration

Responsibility for the interruption of the work of the American Museum of Natural History in Mongolia is laid at the door of a Chinese organization, the Society for the Preservation of Cultural Objects, by Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, president of the American Museum, in a communication to *Science*.

The expeditions of the Museum, of which the present was intended to be the seventh, have attracted world-wide attention because of their sensational discoveries of dinosaur eggs and fossils, and for their hope of finding the original home of the human race.

The Chinese Society for the Preservation of Cultural Objects is not in any way an official body, but it possesses great influence and has apparently been able to bend officers of the Chinese government to its will. Roy Chapman Andrews, leader of the American field party, describes much

anti-foreign propaganda which this organization has been carrying on through the press and other media, charging American and European scientific expeditions with "stealing China's priceless treasures," "infringing her sovereign rights," "seeking for oil and minerals," "being spies against the government," and so on.

At the beginning of the 1929 season, Mr. Andrews states, the Chinese demanded joint participation in and control over the field expedition, the retention in China of much of the material obtained and the eventual return of all specimens sent to the United States for study, and payment by the American Museum of all expenses for Chinese experts sent to this country to carry on research in the museum. After prolonged negotiations in an endeavor to obtain a modification of these demands the American Museum authorities decided to suspend operations.

The Chinese Society for the Preservation of Cultural Objects, Mr. Andrews charges, has interfered with the transportation of specimens obtained by the expedition of a year ago, causing Chinese officials to hold them at Kalgan for six weeks, and demanding certain concessions to the Society before they were released. Dr. Osborn adds that through the active interest of the Chinese minister, Dr. Chao Chu Wu, and Secretary of State Stimson, the collection has finally been shipped and is now on the way to the American Museum, after a delay of more than a year.

American scientists have not been alone in their molestation through the influence of this Chinese society. A large Swedish expedition, under the noted explorer Sven Hedin, was forced to accept the addition of a group of Chinese to its personnel at Swedish expense, and to permit joint Chinese control.

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New Anesthetic Removes Fear

A new anesthetic which puts patients to sleep so pleasantly and easily that they ask for more, has been reported by Dr. J. S. Lundy of the Mayo Clinic and Dr. R. M. Isenberger, professor of pharmacology of the University of Kansas. Fewer unpleasant after-effects and far less danger than many of the local anesthetics are claimed for this new aid to surgery, which has the impressive name of iso-amylethyl barbituric acid.

The work grew out of the old problem of how to offset the bad effects of some local anesthetics. Many investigators have sought means of avoiding the occasional cases of poisoning by cocaine. Accordingly, procaine, a synthetic product, was developed as a substitute for cocaine. Drs. Isenberger and Lundy, following along the line of some previous workers, found that certain substitution products of barbituric acid gave protection against convulsions from procaine. They reported their work with iso-amylethyl barbituric acid about a year ago.

In the course of a year's further work, Dr. Lundy has used iso-amylethyl barbituric acid, experimentally, and for the benefit of patients, over

a thousand times. He has given it by mouth before administering local anesthesia and the apprehension from which some patients suffer before an operation has been lessened in this way. Moreover, convulsions, that occasionally come on from the use of procaine, have not appeared in any cases in which iso-amylethyl barbituric acid has been used.

Also, following the work of Zerkas, Lundy has used this product, by injection into a vein, to produce all or part of the general anesthesia in 273 major operations. Surgeons who have employed it in this way have found that patients wish to have it again if, for any reason, they need to have another operation. It quiets patients before operation and adds to their comfort after operation by producing a semi-conscious state for some hours after they have returned to bed. Nausea and vomiting are greatly lessened or entirely eliminated.

More work must be done on this subject before the product will, or should be used as commonly as morphine, ether and nitrous oxide now are used in general anesthesia. For some time, as with any new procedure in medicine, cases in which the substance is to be used must continue to

be carefully selected to eliminate risk. However, with the interest that has been aroused by this work, by the use of carbon dioxide at the end of inhalation anesthesia as advocated by Dr. Yandell Henderson of Yale and by the report on the use of cyclopropane that was given recently by Dr. G. H. W. Lucas of Philadelphia and Dr. V. E. Henderson of Toronto at the Thirteenth International Physiological Congress, patients who must undergo operations may, in the near future, be freed from the dread that some of them have of being put to sleep.

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New Finish for Aluminum

A new, simple and cheap method of giving aluminum a dead white finish is described by Leon McCulloch, research chemist of the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Co. The metal is boiled in milk of lime to which a little calcium sulphate is added. The new coating will be tested as a base upon which to apply paints and enamels to aluminum.

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Plans are being made to furnish airplane service to Iceland for both passengers and mail.