

MEDICINE

# Goitres Occur in Epidemics, Mayo Clinic Study Suggests

EVIDENCE that there may be epidemics of hyperthyroidism, commonly known as goitre, was presented by Dr. William Carpenter MacCarty of the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota, addressing the meeting of the American College of Physicians at Baltimore.

Dr. MacCarty's report was based on a study of over thirty thousand goitres, made during the past twenty years by his staff at the Mayo Clinic. Beginning about 1921, an increase of enlarged thyroid glands was noted. It is this increase which suggests the possibility of epidemics of hyperthyroidism.

A classification of goitres which would enable practicing physicians to determine the form of the enlarged gland by examination of the neck was given by Dr. MacCarty. Two-thirds of all the goitres examined during the twenty-year study fell in one class.

Thyroid extract need not be given in treating most cases of obesity or overweight, Dr. Frank A. Evans of Pittsburgh said at a symposium on the glands of internal secretion. Instead Dr. Evans recommended a diet of between 400 and 600 calories on which the too fat patients lose weight rapidly. They may be kept on these diets for months if necessary with nothing but improvement in their bodily condition. These patients feel better and have increased resistance to fatigue and they are contented with the diet. Thyroid extract should not be given because, among other reasons, it may disturb this feeling of contentment and well-being, and thus discourage the patient with the dietary regime on which he was improving, Dr. Evans explained.

An extract of pituitary gland is often a powerful remedy for relieving the distressing thirst of diabetes insipidus, Dr. Thomas B. Fitcher of Baltimore said. This extract may be given by hypodermic or as a nasal spray. Diabetes insipidus is not to be confused with diabetes mellitus, the disease in which the body is unable to store and burn up sugars. In diabetes insipidus there is no excess of sugar in the urine, but great thirst, a voracious appetite, weakness and emaciation are symptoms of the disease. Injury to a newly-discovered meshwork of nerve fibers lying

partly in the pituitary gland and partly in the neighboring part of the brain is probably the cause of diabetes insipidus, according to present theories, Dr. Fitcher explained.

The vital hormone of the cortex of the adrenal glands, which has saved the lives of patients suffering from hitherto fatal Addison's disease, was described by Dr. Frank A. Hartman of Buffalo, one of the investigators who prepared the extract containing the hormone.

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ARCHAEOLOGY

## Pot-Hunters Damage Prehistoric Pacific Port

HOW HE has excavated the cemetery of "one of California's first great seaports" after it was threatened by a steam shovel and by curio collectors, is reported by Bruce Bryan of Los Angeles in *Art and Archaeology*. The seaport, which bears the long name Mishopsnow, was in ancient times a center of trade for Indians of the coastal villages and the outlying Channel Islands. The modern town in the neighborhood is called Carpinteria.

PSYCHOLOGY

## Girls Learn More by Rote; Understand Less Than Boys

GIRLS may learn more by rote, but still understand less than boys. These sex differences in type of material mastered in school were indicated by the results of tests given over a period of five years to a group of 338 students, it was reported to the New York branch of the American Psychological Association last week.

Dr. Frederick H. Lund, of Temple University, Philadelphia, who gave the tests, found that the girls received higher school grades than the boys, but that the only objective tests which gave to the girls the superiority indicated by

The burial ground of the old seaside village was discovered when a steam shovel, excavating a road to the beach, tore through the middle of the graveyard, unearthing skeletons, tools, and weapons.

"Work was temporarily halted," Mr. Bryan states, "during which interval the public flocked to the scene armed with picks and shovels and wire screens. They proceeded to loot the old cemetery, and even the school children of Carpinteria were excused from classes that they might join in the gala treasure hunt. As a result, the damage done to the site from an historical and archaeological viewpoint was irreparable."

Later, Mr. Bryan obtained exclusive permission to excavate from the owner of the land. Describing the Indian remains which he has found in the old cemetery, Mr. Bryan cites a number of burials which show traces of battle, murder, and sudden death. When he examined one of the skulls, he found that "driven in under the base of the skull, just at the jointure of the neck, was a large flint spearhead measuring some three inches in length and broken off at the tip, obviously by the impact."

The inhabitants of the port were poor, judging by the plainness and scarcity of their possessions, Mr. Bryan points out. The complete story of Mishopsnow may never be learned, he predicts, for remains of the ancient village are cut through by an automobile highway and the land is divided into ranches and other property sites.

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the school marks were tests of English, language and literature. On a test measuring long-range memory for the material learned during the whole four years of high school, the results indicated that the girls forgot much more readily than the boys.

"Inasmuch as the data of this survey would seem to indicate that sensory-motor and verbal mastery may be all that is required in order to make grades and pass examinations in most subjects it constitutes something of an indictment of our educational system," Dr. Lund concluded.

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