

## MEDICINE

**Common Water Purifier Prevents Ringworm of Feet**

**A** COMMON CHEMICAL used in purifying city water supplies, sodium hypochlorite, has been found to be an effective preventive of ringworm infection of the feet by two workers in medical research, Dr. Earl D. Osborne and Miss Blanche S. Hitchcock, of Buffalo, N. Y. This disease, also known as "athletic foot" and similar nicknames, has spread spectacularly with the post-war rise of sports involving the use of common dressing-rooms and other gathering-places where athletes trample around barefooted for a time. There the spores of the fungi that cause the disease are spread from foot to foot, later causing irritation, cracks and itching watery blisters.

Dr. Osborne and Miss Hitchcock state in their report to the official publication of the American Medical Society that they have not been able to find a record of sodium hypochlorite being used or suggested as a fungus-killer before. They made some preliminary trials with cultures of various fungi in test-tubes, using solutions of the chemical in concentrations stepped up from one thousandth of one per cent. to one half of one per cent. The latter concentration seemed the most effective, and was chosen as standard for a clinical trial.

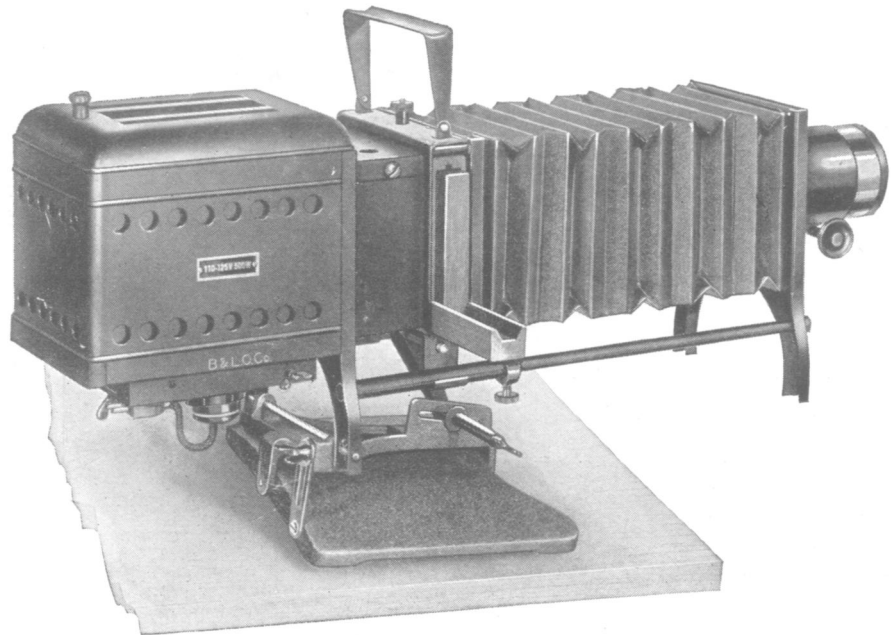
**Solution Renewed**

With the cooperation of the physical training department of the Buffalo high schools, heavy rubber pans were installed in all the gymnasiums, and students going to and from gymnasium classes were required to wash their feet in a one-half per cent. solution of sodium hypochlorite. The solution was renewed every day. In a new high school a shallow "well" for the solution was built into the corridor passing from the dressing room to the showers. Later, the strength of the solution was increased to a full one per cent. because of possible dilution through use.

The results of the experiment are reported as most encouraging. The spread of the infection was completely checked.

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