

PUBLIC HEALTH

Anthrax, Gasoline Poisoning Seen as Health Hazards

ANTHRAX is definitely on the increase among agricultural workers in this country and is a definite menace in the wool industry in several manufacturing areas, Dr. Henry F. Smyth of the University of Pennsylvania reported to the American Public Health Association in Pasadena, Calif. The death rate for this disease, except in a few states, shows no tendency to decline, the committee of which Dr. Smyth is chairman found in studying the anthrax situation during the past five years. The best method of treating the disease is by large doses of anti-anthrax serum applied locally and injected into the veins. This treatment must be kept up until definite improvement is evident.

The increasing number of deaths from anthrax is due in part to its increase among agricultural workers where the serum is not available. Wool and wool clothing are frequently sources of this infection. Machinery in a textile mill may become infected and

transmit the infection to subsequent materials.

A distinct hazard to both acute and chronic poisoning from gasoline and benzene exists in the petroleum industry, Dr. Smyth reported. These substances act as narcotic poisons and produce injuries to the nerves in chronic cases.

Treatment with calcium, the substance which gives bones their hardness, is the "sheet anchor" in cases of carbon tetrachloride poisoning, the committee found on investigation of this industrial hazard. Carbon tetrachloride is the chief ingredient of many cleaning solutions.

However, because it is used as one of several ingredients in certain mixtures, it has often been unjustly blamed for causing harm when some of the other ingredients in the mixture have probably been the real cause of the poisoning, in the opinion of the committee.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Gland Treatment Rescues Infant's Intelligence

THE CASE of a child who at two years had the mental age of an infant of less than seven months, or an intelligence quotient of only 28, but who while being fed pituitary gland extract gained in mental ability until at five and a half years it equalled children nearly six years old and had an I.Q. of 103, was reported to the American Psychological Association by Dr. Florence Mateer, director of the Merryheart Schools, Columbus, Ohio.

For 34 children under treatment at Merryheart for diseased pituitary glands, the gain under pituitary feeding has been from 5 to 22 points in intelligence quotient in a year, the gain continuing throughout the period of study, Dr. Mateer reported.

"In general, the younger children improve more, and more rapidly," Dr.

Mateer said. "A child of seven or eight may well be expected to gain 20 to 22 months on the Stanford-Binet scale in the school year, with a consequent jump of intelligence quotient of as many as 12 to 14 points in the year."

In a group of 19 Mongoloid idiots, 7 were found who showed symptoms of pituitary disturbance. These have been given feedings of the gland, and have been gaining in intelligence throughout the period of treatment. Five have now reached intelligence quotients of over 78 and one of these now scores 103. A score of 100 is taken as normal.

These promising results have been obtained despite the very complicated nature of the disease. One investigator quoted by Dr. Mateer has estimated that there are at least 8 pituitary hormones

with three functional conditions of each. This makes possible at least 6,500 variations of the gland's activity. The picture is further complicated by the body's reported ability to develop an anti-hormone which prevents the influence of the hormone when artificially taken into the body.

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MARINE ENGINEERING

Slow Motion Ship-Launching

THE SLIDING down the ways of the giant new Cunarder *Queen Mary* at Clydebank, Scotland, was ship-launching in slow motion. So huge was the vessel that the available deep water in the neighboring Clyde River and the River Cart was only just enough to float the boat. The *Queen Mary* had to be "eased" down the ways rather than allowed to slide in formal fashion.

Ways Almost Level

Launching ways, as everyone realizes, are but inclined planes. For the new liner the incline was so small as to be almost level. As *Queen Mary* pushed the button releasing the launching mechanism there was no rush of the boat toward the water. Instead four giant hydraulic rams went into action and provided the initial push. Then slowly, with smoking grease from the ways, the vessel slipped gently into the water. Ten minutes, a very long period of time for such an operation, was needed to launch the ship.

Like a lumbering giant chained by a race of lilliputian men the huge hull was slowed up still further by eighteen great chains dragging along the ground. Each weighed 1,000 tons.

Once in the water twenty puffing Clyde tugs pressed against the *Queen Mary's* sides and stayed her speed even though it was but little more than a normal walk; six miles an hour.

Potential Disaster

To the thousands of visiting spectators the launching was a thrill, but one wreathed in all manner of dire rumors of potential disaster. To the shipbuilders at the John Brown shipyard, however, the *Queen Mary* was but another of the giant vessels which have been "born" on this site.

At this place the *Aquitania*, the *H. M. S. Hood* and the *Empress of Britain* have been launched. The dread-