

beh, now being excavated was occupied by the more prosperous class, it is inferred from the spaciousness of the rooms, the private cisterns belonging to some houses, the inscribed weights and the jar handles marked with ownership seals. Two of these are almost certainly

those of Shebna, official scribe during the reign of King Hezekiah, Prof. Badé believes.

A dye plant, with all the heavy equipment still in place, was found in one of the larger houses.

*Science News Letter, June 1, 1935*

MEDICINE

## X-Raying Pituitary and Adrenals Relieves Diabetes

**E**NCOURAGING results from treatment of diabetes by X-raying the pituitary and adrenal glands were reported by Drs. B. O. Barnes, W. L. Culpepper and J. H. Hutton of Chicago to the American Physiological Society.

The results were obtained with dogs that had diabetes as a result of removal of the pancreas. One of the physicians had previously found that X-ray treatment of pituitary and adrenal glands improved the condition of human patients suffering with diabetes.

The pancreas is the organ that contains the group of insulin-producing cells known as the Islands of Langerhans. When these cells are damaged by disease or removed, so that the body is deprived of its natural supply of insulin, diabetes follows. During the last few years evidence has been accumulating that some other glands besides the pancreas might be involved in diabetes.

Thyroid, pituitary and adrenal glands all seem to play a part in controlling the body's use of sugar, which is the mechanism that goes wrong in diabetes.

Dr. Barnes reported last year that diabetes experimentally produced may be markedly improved by removing either the pituitary gland, located at the base of the brain, or part of the adrenal glands that lie atop the kidneys. Naturally, this drastic procedure cannot be used in the treatment of diabetes in human patients.

In the experiments reported, diabetes was produced by removal of the pancreas and the animals were given enough insulin to correct the diabetes. After a control period, X-ray treatments were given and it was found that with these treatments the animals needed much less insulin. The X-ray treatments apparently had an effect similar to removal of the pituitary and adrenal glands.

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Keefe, "there arose a popular belief that the surface of the Sargasso Sea was studded with derelict ships from the time of Columbus to recent years. They were all supposed to be wedged together in an impenetrable mass of sea weed, which was likewise swept into this area from the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean shores where it originally grew.

"This is just a tall story. Ships traveling from New York to the Guianas, to Brazil and to Africa, pass directly through the region. They report occasional large masses of floating weeds, it is true, but no more than the usual number of derelict ships and wreckage seen on the high seas.

"The behavior of the drifting sea weed or gulf weed is peculiar. At times the floating weed masses may come together to form great undulating golden-yellow prairies. One mass has been reported by actual measurement to have been seven and one-half miles long, and one-half mile wide. It was so thick that sailors who set out to capture a sleeping hawksbill turtle in the tangle, found their ship's boat inextricably caught, and they had to be hauled off by a rope from another boat."

Dr. Keefe's talk was put on the air over the network of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

*Science News Letter, June 1, 1935*

ZOOLOGY

## Man-Eating Sharks Are Claiming More Victims

**M**AN-EATING sharks have been claiming increasing numbers of victims recently along the Australian coast, especially on the beaches of New South Wales, says Gilbert Whitley in a report to the *Victorian Naturalist*.

The number of authentic shark-attack records in the decade 1912-21 was 13; in the decade 1922-31 it jumped to 45, and in the three-year period 1932-34 there were sixteen recorded cases of shark onslaughts.

It is believed that the increasing use of bathing beaches is responsible for the rising count of tragedies. Enclosing beaches in netting or "shark fences" is strongly advised, with patrolling from airplanes or "shark towers" where such complete protection is not practicable.

*Science News Letter, June 1, 1935*

By banding young storks in the nest, European scientists are trying to learn how these birds are guided in their long migratory flights.

OCEANOGRAPHY

## Sargasso Sea Really Exists Despite Mythical Tales

**S**ARGASSO Sea tales, about lost ships stuck forever in a thick expanse of floating weed, are myths pure and simple. But the Sargasso Sea itself really exists. Fact was separated from fable in an address given by Dr. Anselm Keefe, professor of biology at St. Norbert College, speaking under the auspices of Science Service.

The Sargasso Sea owes its existence, Dr. Keefe said, to a tremendous eddy formed by currents circling the whole North Atlantic Ocean. It is an area of relatively still water, greater than the whole Mississippi valley, larger than Alaska, and almost as large as Australia.

The mass of floating weed in the Sargasso Sea belongs to the botanical genus *Sargassum*, represented in Chicago by two dominating forms. The *Sargassum* weed is well known on the shores of the ocean, where it grows attached to the rocky bottom. To what extent the floating midocean masses are recruited from the shore growths, and how much they replace themselves by their own growth, Dr. Keefe said, are still matters of debate among botanists.

"Owing to the fact that wreckage and the usual driftwood borne by the parts of the gulf stream nearest the area gradually float off onto its surface," said Dr.