

aloft by an airplane and then cut loose one by one to be shot at by anti-aircraft guns on the ground. The glider pilots set the course of the gliders and then jump safely to the ground.

The new British system of using high speed airplanes operated by radio control, while more costly, would appear to bring much more reality into the target practice.

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MEDICINE

## Leprosy, Man's Ancient Foe, Fought With New Weapons

**L**EPROSY, one of the most ancient of human ills, is being fought with the most modern weapons in medical science's armamentarium. At the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's medical section, Dr. H. W. Wade of the Leonard Wood Memorial, New York City, told of new efforts against this old enemy.

Dr. Wade, who flew to the meeting from the ship on which he came in from the Orient, told of closer identifications of the bacillus that causes the disease. Different research workers had obtained different organisms, each of which was blamed for leprosy. Finally, one research worker was sent to different parts of the world, and his cultures from both Occident and Orient show the same bacillus. It is necessary to use special synthetic atmospheres containing 60 per cent. oxygen and a high concentration of carbon dioxide to keep the leprosy germs alive. This technique, the first to produce successful culture of the bacillus outside a living body, was worked out by Dr. Earl B. McKinley, dean of the medical school of George Washington University, Washington, D. C.

Efforts are also being concentrated on a method for testing suspected cases by a method more or less similar to the one used in testing for tuberculosis, but thus far they have not been particularly successful. However, they are being continued, with persistent hope for better luck in the future.

Leprosy, said Dr. Wade, is not confined to the tropics, as we are rather prone to imagine. Some of the worst cases in the world occur in Japan and Korea, which are temperate-zone countries. It is increasing in Argentina. It was known a thousand years ago in Norway, and used to be common in northern as well as southern Europe during the middle ages.

The disease appears to be transmitted mainly by close personal contact between the sufferer and members of his own

family; though it is not known whether there is any hereditary tendency toward susceptibility. It is not primarily a "dirt disease," though lack of sanitation seems to have something to do with its spread in some cases. Badly balanced diets, such as are common in the Orient, seem to be a predisposing factor, Dr. Wade said.

Special efforts are now being made to recognize leprosy in its early stages, when it can be treated with greater success and less cost. This often involves house-to-house visits, for as a rule patients do not report to clinics until the malady is in an advanced stage, due to their own inability to recognize it at its inception.

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PSYCHIATRY

## Sodium Rhodanate Useless For Mental Disease

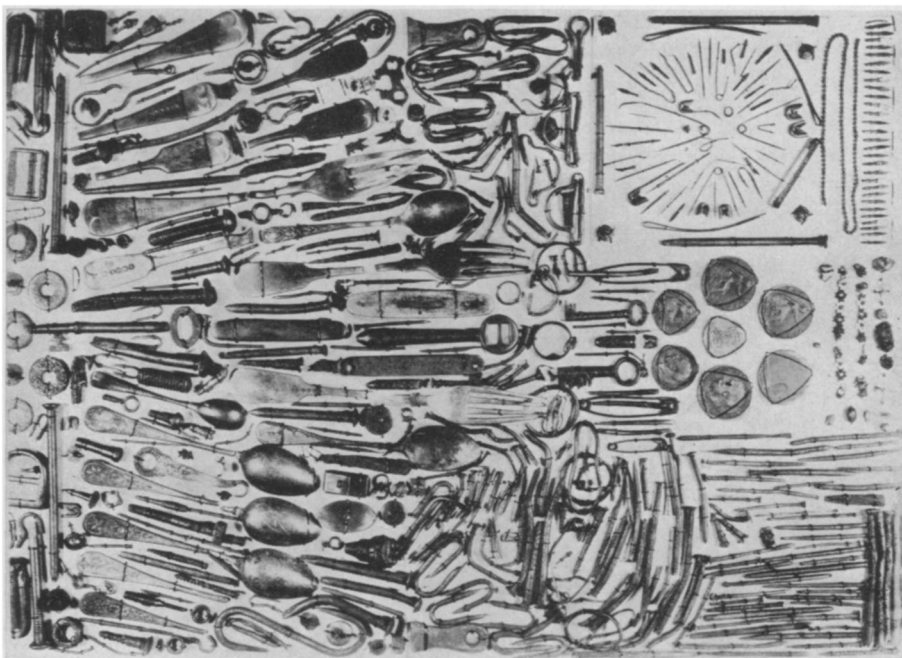
**S**ODIUM rhodanate, contrary to claims advanced for it, is of no value in treating mental disease, Dr. Purcell G. Schube, of the Boston State Hospital, has found. His opinion, based on experience with 75 patients suffering from various mental disorders, is reported to the *American Journal of Psychiatry* (May).

The sodium rhodanate treatment was advocated by Prof. W. B. Bancroft of Cornell University, who suggested that mental disease, dementia precox and manic-depressive psychoses, by the contrasted use of sodium amyral and sodium rhodanate.

Dr. Schube found, contrary to Prof. Bancroft's views, that it is impossible to differentiate between two types of mental disease, dementia precox and manic-depressive psychoses, by the contrasted use of sodium amyral and sodium rhodanate.

"The ideas of Bancroft and his co-workers relative to mental disease and the methods of treating it did not prove to be of any value at all when the experimental method was applied to them," Dr. Schube concluded. "They are therefore untenable."

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### HE SWALLOWED THINGS

But not until an X-ray was made of his stomach was it known that a patient suffering from the mental disease, schizophrenia, had this collection of 500 foreign bodies inside him. A live revolver cartridge, 3 pocket knives, 37 phonograph needles, 45 needles and pins, and 218 nails and screws were included in the lot. The patient died. The case was reported in the *British Medical Journal* by Dr. R. Stewart Kennedy, of the Cheshire County Mental Hospital.