

PUBLIC HEALTH

# Pneumonia Death Rate Cut By Use of Sulfapyridine

Report From Norway Shows Reduction of Fatalities  
Of Three Fourths or More; "Nonallergic" Label Banned

**T**HE PNEUMONIA death rate in Norway has been cut three-fourths or more by the use of the new chemical remedy sulfapyridine, the Oslo correspondent of the American Medical Association reports. (*A.M.A. Journal*, Sept. 2). Serum treatment of pneumonia was never very popular in Norway, chiefly because of the frequently great distances between the patient and a laboratory where typing of the pneumonia germs could be done. This disadvantage does not hold for sulfapyridine, which is apparently being widely used. Records from various hospitals show that among 342 uncomplicated cases treated with this new drug, there were only 20 deaths, giving a death rate of 5.8 per cent contrasted with a rate of from 20.5 to 35.2 per cent in the pre-sulfapyridine period of 1928-1938.

*Science News Letter, September 23, 1939*

## Combat Tropical Diseases

**S**ULFAPYRIDINE, sulfanilamide and other members of this powerful disease-fighting family of chemicals are winning fresh triumphs against diseases that threaten life and health in the tropics, according to reports of discussions at the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene in London. Most impressive, perhaps, are the experiments showing "remarkable results with sulfapyridine for plague, although little has been published about the drug's action on bubonic plague in man. Elephantoid fever and some strains of malaria may also be controlled by the chemical remedies.

*Science News Letter, September 23, 1939*

## Whitens Negro Skin

**L**OSS of coloring matter from the skin of Negro and white workers in a leather manufacturing company was traced, by Drs. Edward A. Oliver, of Chicago, and Louis Schwartz and Leon H. Warren of the U. S. Public Health Service, to an ingredient in a certain brand of rubber gloves worn by the workers. The ingredient is an antioxi-

dant known by the trade name of Agerite Alba, the doctors reported to the A. M. A. Workers in other tanneries, plating works, electrical apparatus manufacturing and all other places where that particular brand of rubber gloves was worn were found to be having the same skin trouble. The rubber company has withdrawn the antioxidant from the rubber glove formula and the workers are all gradually getting the color back in their skin since they have stopped wearing gloves containing this ingredient.

*Science News Letter, September 23, 1939*

## "Nonallergic" Label Banned

**M**MUSCLE oil, contour cream, skin food, rejuvenating cream, hair color restorer and hair grower are among the terms formerly seen on labels of cosmetics which are now banned by the new laws governing foods, drugs and cosmetics. Commenting on the list of banned terms recently issued to manufacturers by the federal authorities, the editor of the American Medical Association calls special attention to the term "nonallergic" now also banned by federal law. The term is considered misleading because while cosmetic products may be and are made without such ingredients as orris, to which many persons are allergic, even the simplest preparation may be allergenic to susceptible persons. The problem of allergy was one of the first attacked by an A. M. A. committee appointed, before the new federal laws were passed, to advise the Journal of the A. M. A. concerning cosmetic products advertised in its pages.

*Science News Letter, September 23, 1939*

President James Madison over 100 years ago predicted that by 1930 the United States would probably have 192,000,000 people.

An apparatus for de-insectizing airplanes has been devised by a South African health official, who sees grave danger of airplanes spreading yellow fever throughout Africa.

## ● RADIO

O. C. Durham, chief botanist at the Abbott Laboratories, will be the guest scientist on "Adventures in Science" with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over the coast to coast network of the Columbia Broadcasting System, Monday, October 2, 4:30 p.m., EST, 3:30 CST, 2:30 MST, 1:30 PST. Listen in on your local station. Listen in each Monday.

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2. Synthetic rubber can be made for automobile tires and the countless other uses of rubber out of raw materials such as air, coal, limestone and water that are widely distributed.

3. "Chemical agriculture" growing an abundance of food in tanks and other compact places can overcome the fear of nations about their food supplies.

4. The development of lacquers for the interior linings of food containers has overcome the fears of the U. S. about a stoppage of Bolivian tin supplies.

"A good deal has been said about the ways in which science has been applied to make warfare more destructive, just as science has also been applied to bring about a certain compensating degree of protection against new weapons. . . . Far more significant than these is the use of science to remove some of the major causes of war," Dr. Compton declared.

*Science News Letter, September 23, 1939*

## "Chemical Dice Game"

**A** "GAMBLING" type of chemical reaction, new to science, promising important developments in America's \$200,000,000 organic chemical industry, was announced at the meeting. It may explain even the aging of wines and liquors.

The new reaction, revolutionary in its fundamental concepts, obeys the laws of

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