



PRICE FOR NEGLECT

"This man was never vaccinated against smallpox," states the New York State Department of Health. The picture of the patient was taken by the health department's staff photographer on a day when the attending physician despaired of saving the patient's life. He had had a fever of 105 degrees Fahrenheit for a week, was unconscious most of the time, and roused only in delirium. The patient did recover—possibly due to sulfanilamide which was given on the day the picture was taken—but he will carry the ugly smallpox scars the rest of his life. The patient consented to the publication of this photograph in order that others might be saved.

MEDICINE

Warns Against Cleansing Skin With Agents That Irritate

Don't Use Turpentine, Alcohol, or Kerosene to Take Off Paint; Photographers' Hypo Called Safe

PAINFUL skin irritations and the consequent annual loss of thousands of dollars in time to industrial workers may result from use of many common cleansing agents for removing stains from the hands, Dr. Joseph V. Klauder, of Philadelphia, warned at the meeting in Philadelphia of the American Academy of Dermatology and Syphilology.

Turpentine, alcohol, naphtha, gasoline, kerosene, benzene, soda ash and hypochlorite of lime, commonly used to remove dye or paint stains, are important causes of industrial dermatitis or inflammation of the skin, he said. Harmless methods of cleansing the hands are just as efficient, but unfortunately many factories and workmen are uninformed or careless on this subject.

A 10% solution of sodium hypsul-

fite, commonly called "photographer's friend," was recommended as a harmless dye and stain remover. Dr. Klauder also advised using a brush instead of a cloth and a tool instead of the hand in applying paints, dyes and other chemicals.

"Prolonged contact of the hands with water or soap is harmful," Dr. Klauder warned housewives as well as industrial workers.

Science News Letter, December 2, 1939

Skin Disease from Brains

AN OVERSTIMULATED brain and nervous system may lead to skin disorders, Dr. Samuel W. Becker, of the University of Chicago, reported.

Persons with "high powered brains

and hypersensitive nervous systems" have all their sensations intensified. This results in bodily and mental exhaustion which disturbs both the skin and other organs of the body including, sometimes, the brain itself. These people, unfortunately, do not possess a normal sense of fatigue to act as a brake for their nervous systems.

Highly significant, said Dr. Becker, is the fact that these functional disorders appear in man but not in other animals having half or less than half of man's brain tissues.

Science News Letter, December 2, 1939

Moles That Lead to Cancer

THE common mole, skin-colored or a little darker, "rarely, if ever, terminates in cancer," and blood vessel birthmarks and the dark brown, warty, hairy birthmarks are also relatively innocent of cancerous tendencies, Dr. Eugene F. Traub, of New York City, declared.

"The smooth, dark brown or dark blue marks, devoid of hair, are the ones that are most dangerous. It is from this type that melanoma (serious skin cancer) often develops," he said.

Skin cancers, Dr. Traub emphasized, are easy for the doctor to diagnose and generally can be cured by X-ray or radium treatment or surgical operation.

Science News Letter, December 2, 1939

War on Two More Plagues

THE war on disease needs to be extended to two more hush-hush plagues besides syphilis and gonorrhea.

These two types of venereal disease, lymphogranuloma and granuloma venereum by name, are little known to the public but are dangerous to the public health, Dr. Harold N. Cole, of Western Reserve University, Cleveland, told members of the Academy.

These two diseases are particularly widespread in the southern part of the United States, Dr. Cole said. So many persons are affected that some of the

● Earth Trembles

Information collected by Science Service from seismological observatories resulted in the location by the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey of the following preliminary epicenters:

Tuesday, November 21, 6:01 a.m., EST

About 600 miles off Cape Guardafui in northern part of Indian Ocean. Latitude, 10 degrees north. Longitude, 60 degrees east.

For stations cooperating with Science Service, the Coast and Geodetic Survey, and the Jesuit Seismological Association in reporting earthquakes recorded on their seismographs, see SNL, Oct. 28.

medical centers in the south are setting up special clinics for treating them.

"These diseases are not readily transferred from the sufferers to other persons by the use of drinking cups, kissing and towels, although granuloma venereum may be," Dr. Cole said. "Sexual relations do spread them rapidly though," he emphasized.

Science News Letter, December 2, 1939

Skin Diseases Predominate

SKIN diseases make up about three-fourths of all occupational diseases in the United States, causing millions of dollars loss in time and efficiency every year, Dr. Marion B. Sulzberger, of New York, declared.

Plants, drugs, cosmetics, textiles, wearing apparel, household articles, parasites, fungi and other agents all may cause occupational dermatitis or skin disease in those whose jobs bring them in contact with these objects. Physical and chemical agents such as dyes, may cause the condition by direct irritation of the skin, but trouble may also be caused in sensitive or allergic persons by substances which in most cases are innocuous.

The "hazards" of the patient's home and working place and even his intelligence and ability to follow treatment and his truthfulness in reporting his case history must be investigated, Dr. Sulzberger said, in order to make an accurate diagnosis and to prescribe effective treatment.

Science News Letter, December 2, 1939

INVENTION

Research Laboratories Announce Useful Finds

FROM industrial research laboratories: A new coating of alkyd resin for copper that keeps it bright and metallic when tested on the General Electric's New York World's Fair building.

Germ destruction by ultraviolet lamps that solves the problem of sanitary control of those paper hood-caps that milk bottles now wear.

Stainless steel serving trays, solid, corrosion-resistant, etched with beautiful designs.

Paints that tell how hot a machine part is becoming by changes in color.

Science News Letter, December 2, 1939

It is estimated that India has 1,500,000 blind and another 3,000,000 partially blind, and that at least half of this misery is due to preventable conditions.

PHYSICS

Use Flickering Beam To Probe Upper Atmosphere

"No Man's Land" of Atmosphere Below the Radio Reflecting Layers Explored With Distinctive Light

THE PIERCING, puzzling searchlight beam which mystified residents of northwest Washington last summer on moonless, dark and clear nights was explained at the meeting of the Philosophical Society of Washington by Ellis A. Johnson, of the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

No ordinary searchlight beam was that seen by Washingtonians. Its brilliant beam flickered ten times a second and identified it, for scientific research, so that its scattering at heights of as much as 24.8 miles could be detected.

The experiments, Mr. Johnson reported, seek to probe the upper atmosphere for its secrets of temperature, density, presence of clouds and other important

information at heights which are beyond the reach of stratosphere flights with balloons.

Moreover, the new searchlight experiments tap that region of space lower than the radio reflecting layers in the ionosphere. The new technique thus investigates the "no man's land" of the atmosphere.

While the current experiments have been preliminary, seeking mostly to show the feasibility of the method, they indicate that studies can be carried out on the height of water vapor in the atmosphere, the amount of turbulence, the winds, dust, fluorescence and absorption of these upper altitudes up to nearly 20 miles. Actual measurements have



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by A. S. EVE

Foreword by EARL BALDWIN

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