

PUBLIC HEALTH

Plague To Follow War

Epidemics of tuberculosis, malaria and other ills seen as serious postwar problem in League of Nations report. Must be combated by an international organization.

► **PLAGUE** and pestilence, which follow every war, will have to be combated by an international organization such as the League of Nations, reports Sean Lester, Acting Secretary-General of the League.

Smallpox, cholera and typhus were prevented from spreading westward after the last war by the League's Epidemics Commission, which in 1921-1922 established a chain of quarantine stations in eastern Europe.

Malaria will be a serious problem in southern Europe, Africa and the Far East unless the Malaria Commission, "which has earned for itself worldwide authority, once more plays its part as adviser to national health administrations," the League of Nations report

predicts, after studying the problem.

An increase in tuberculosis has already been observed in England, a notable exception to the general improvement in British health. The League report predicts a general rise in tuberculosis everywhere, due to the industrial effort required for the duration, coupled with food shortage.

"It would be desirable for the Tuberculosis Commission to undertake a revision of the guiding principles enunciated in 1932 . . . with due regard to new methods of treatment and detection. These remarks apply equally . . . to venereal diseases."

The report urges that the League of Nations be permitted to resume and increase its public health activities "as

soon as the international situation permits."

In this country the report is being made available by the International Documents Service of the Columbia University Press.

Science News Letter, August 22, 1942

MEDICINE

Kidneys Regulate Fatty Substances in the Blood

► **KIDNEYS** HAVE a hitherto unsuspected function in the normal physiology of the body: they regulate the concentration of fats and related substances in the blood. This discovery, announced by Dr. Walter Heymann of the Western Reserve University School of Medicine (*Science*, Aug. 14), was made as a result of experiments on laboratory animals, in an effort to find an explanation for abnormal quantities of fatty substances in the blood of children afflicted with a kidney disease.

The animals in the experiments were surgically deprived of their kidneys. In all cases, removal of one kidney was followed by a steep rise in concentration of chemical compounds related to fats, followed by a slow return to approximately normal conditions. Then when the other kidney was taken out, a second steep rise in concentration occurred.

Dr. Heymann states his conclusions cautiously: "The tubular apparatus of the kidneys of dogs possesses a regulatory influence on the blood lipids such as has hitherto been unknown and is still unexplained. It is probable that the human kidney exerts the same function, but this has not yet been proved. A disturbance of this function would explain the hyperlipemia observed in nephrosis better than any hypothesis thus far advanced."

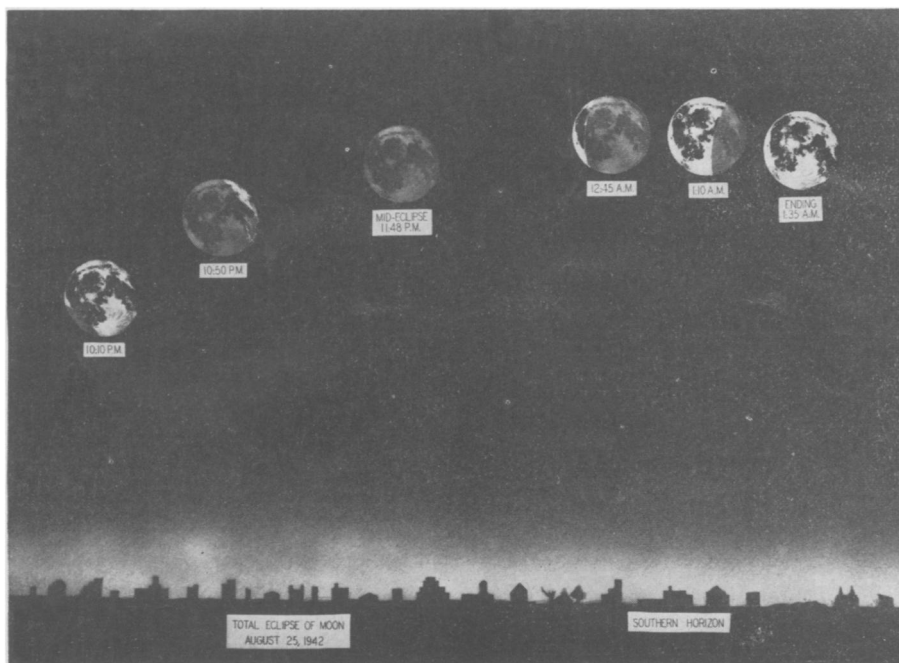
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CHEMISTRY

Registry of Rare Chemicals To Show Sources, Amounts

► A **NATIONAL** registry of rare chemicals, chemicals too rare to be listed by the regular supply houses, has been established by the Armour Research Foundation, Chicago. The chemicals will not be stocked, but an indexed file will show sources and amounts available. Such chemicals are often needed by research chemists who must spend much time trying to locate them or else must produce them in their own laboratories.

Science News Letter, August 22, 1942



TOTAL MOON ECLIPSE on Tuesday, August 25, will be visible in its entirety over most of the United States. Beginning at 10:01 p.m. EWT, the earth's shadow will start to nick the edge of the moon and one hour later the entire moon will be in shadow, as shown in the diagram prepared by Fels Planetarium. By 1:35 a.m. the eclipse will be over. The moon will continue to be dimly visible during the eclipse as some of the sun's rays are bent as they pass through the earth's atmosphere so that they reach the moon despite the fact that the earth is lined up between the sun and moon.