

MEDICINE

Hope for Leprosy Remedy

Beneficial effects of promin treatment give specialists renewed expectations that they may be able to conquer the disease by chemotherapy.

► **NEW HOPE** for the conquest of leprosy by a chemical remedy appears in a report of beneficial results from promin treatment of leprosy at the U. S. Marine Hospital (National Leprosarium) in Carville, La.

Promin "can be regarded as the most encouraging experimental treatment ever undertaken at the National Leprosarium," Dr. G. H. Faget and associates declare in *Public Health Reports* (Nov. 26), official publication of the U. S. Public Health Service.

Promin is a chemical relative of the sulfa drugs. It has been remarkably successful in combatting experimental tuberculosis in guinea pigs and showed promise in human tuberculosis.

Trial of it in leprosy was started over two years ago. It is not considered a specific cure for leprosy, no case as yet having become arrested under its influence. The progress of the disease, however, has been checked in a considerable percentage of cases. Dr. Faget and associates believe it is an advance in the right direction and that further research may lead to synthesis of a sulfa drug that will succeed "in saving countless lives" threatened by leprosy and other diseases, such as tuberculosis, caused by mycobacteria.

The drug proved too toxic to be given by mouth, but with suitable precautions could be safely given by injection into the patient's veins. It was given daily except Sunday for months, with rest intervals of one to two weeks three times a year. Some patients who showed allergic skin reaction were successfully desensitized to promin and could then continue the treatment.

Eye complications of leprosy, leprosy laryngitis, sores of lips, tongue, gums and palate, and ulcers of the nasal mucous membranes all showed improvement under treatment. One patient who had had leprosy for 12 years improved so much that he was able to play baseball for the first time in three years.

Another drug closely related to promin and which could be given by mouth was also tried and found to check the course of the disease. The beneficial results with both drugs were not, the sci-

entists believed, due to spontaneous remissions in the course of the disease.

Associated with Dr. Faget in the trial of promin were: Dr. R. C. Pogge, Dr. F. A. Johansen, Dr. J. F. Dinan, Dr. B. M. Prejean and Dr. C. G. Eccles, all officers of the U. S. Public Health Service on the staff of the National Leprosarium.

Science News Letter, December 25, 1943

PUBLIC HEALTH

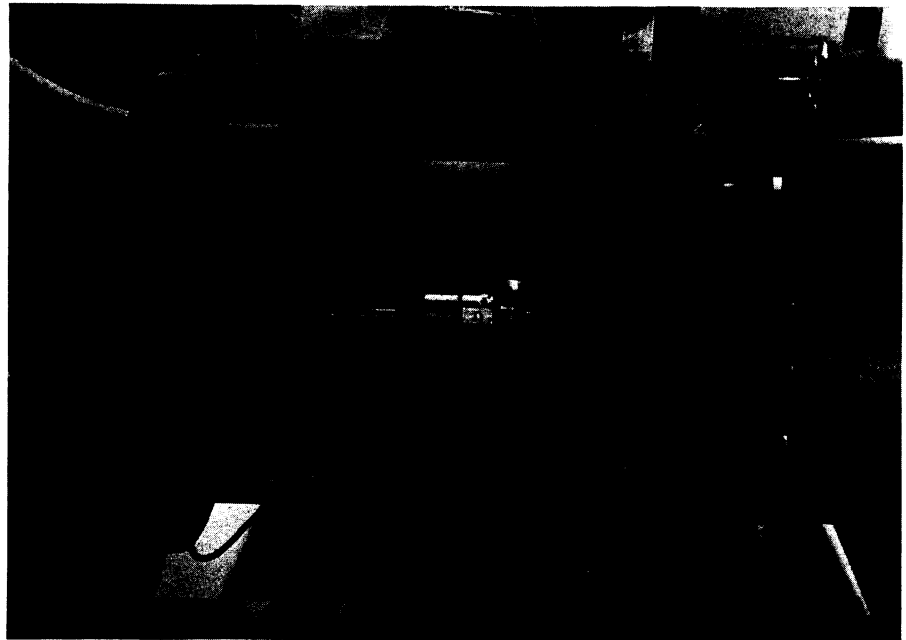
Home-Canned Foods May Harbor Dangerous Germs

► **REPORT** that two persons in New York State have died from botulism acquired by eating home-canned egg plant that was not properly prepared should serve as a reminder that a similar dan-

ger may threaten you and your family. Home-canned fruits, meat and fish may harbor the dangerous germs of this disease as well as canned vegetables, unless the canning was done in such a way as to kill not only the germs but their spores.

If you have the slightest doubt about the safety of any home-canned food, boil it for 15 minutes before you even taste it, much less serve it. This 15-minute boiling will destroy the poison produced by the botulinus organism. Count the boiling time from when boiling, not just simmering, actually starts, that is when bubbles are breaking at the top. The food should also be stirred frequently during the boiling so that all parts get the heat.

The sickness may start as soon as two to four hours after eating the poisoned food, but usually does not begin until some 12 to 36 hours have elapsed. The earliest symptom in most cases is a peculiar lassitude or tired feeling, sometimes with headache and dizziness. This may be attributed to constipation, another usually early symptom of the poisoning. Some patients first have an acute digestive upset, with a burning feel-



TESTING BLOCKBUSTERS—A bomb fuze is shown in place for testing in one of the highest speed wind tunnels in the world, located at Dover, N. J. Bomb parts can be tested in artificial gales of over 700 miles an hour. Pieces of the bomb parts which may rip off are driven into a recovery room where they are examined. An unusual feature of the equipment is that it is possible to read directly the wind speed in miles per hour. A furnace on the site of Picatinny Arsenal, which houses the new wind tunnel, turned out solid iron shot for George Washington's Continental Army.