

The reason acclimatized men can get along without the salt supplements, which frequently have untoward effects, Dr. Conn said, is that the sweat glands are able under certain conditions to stop salt from leaving the body in the sweat. This mechanism is an adaptive function, independent of the phenomenon of acclimatization, and does not go into operation until the need for salt conservation is dire.

By virtue of this mechanism, Dr. Conn reported, men are able to continue efficiently to perform hard work in a tropical climate even when sweating out as much as approximately five to nine quarts of water daily with a total daily intake of salt as low as five grams, which is about one-third the average normal salt intake.

Men who lived day and night for 35 to 72 days in a tropical climate room with a temperature of 85 degrees Fahrenheit and 85% humidity furnished the evidence of salt-saving function of the sweat glands. While in this tropical climate room they worked on a bicycle ergometer for five hours a day.

When pushed by the physiological load of high sweat gland volume and

low available salt, the studies showed, the sweat glands can produce sweat containing one-fourth the amount of salt in the average sweat of a fully acclimatized man with plenty of salt available and one-tenth as much as is found in the sweat of the unacclimatized man.

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GENERAL SCIENCE

### Widow of Dr. Ritter Christens Liberty Ship

► THE LIBERTY SHIP *SS William E. Ritter* was successfully launched at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, May 3, with Mrs. Mary Bennett Ritter, widow of Dr. Ritter, pronouncing the christening words as sponsor, and Mrs. S. J. Holmes, wife of a close friend and associate of Dr. Ritter at the University of California, serving as co-sponsor and shattering the champagne bottle on the vessel's bow.

The launching took place at the Permanente Metals Corporation Yard No. Two, at Richmond, Calif., only a few miles from Berkeley, where both the Ritters lived and served with distinction for many years, Dr. William E. Ritter as professor of zoology at the University

of California and Dr. Mary Bennett Ritter as University physician for women.

Flower girl at the ceremony represented both the constructing company and the university, for she was Mrs. Seth B. Benson, welder in Yard No. Two, who is the wife of a member of the zoology faculty in private life.

The principal speaker was Dr. Harry Beal Torrey, longtime associate of Dr. Ritter. Dr. Torrey briefly reviewed the long career and manifold activities of his old friend, and in particular his collaboration with the late E. W. Scripps in the founding of several scientific organizations, beginning with the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and culminating with Science Service.

Bidding the *William E. Ritter* Godspeed, Dr. Torrey said, "Where this ship goes he will go, in the hope of peace, willing to struggle to the last for freedom for all men, in the spirit of a brave, far-seeing naturalist."

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PUBLIC HEALTH

### Some Headache Powders Cause Bromide Poisoning

► A WARNING against the danger of bromide intoxication, or poisoning, from headache powders taken to overcome the effects of war worries is issued by Dr. Roy R. Kracke and Dr. William R. Platt, of Emory University, Ga. (*Journal, American Medical Association*, May 13)

"There seems to be an increase in this type of intoxication caused, according to the Federal Trade Commission, by increased consumption of various agents designed to soothe the nerves of a population at war living in a scarcity of doctors," the two physicians state.

They report two cases of men picked up apparently drunk who subsequently were found to be suffering from bromidism. In each case the patient had been taking daily large numbers of a brand of headache powders which contain seven and one-half grains of potassium bromide each. One man had taken six to 10 of these powders daily for years, the other had been taking six packages daily for one week and on one day was seen to take 13 powders.

Pointing out that "increasing numbers of cases of bromide intoxication are to be expected with increasing self-medication, caused by the present depletion of civilian physicians," the doctors urge all physicians to become familiar with the symptoms of this poisoning.

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**FOR FREEDOM'S SAKE**—Present at the launching of the *SS William E. Ritter*, ship named after the well-known naturalist, were: (seated) Mrs. Mary Bennett Ritter, sponsor; (standing, left to right) Mrs. Seth B. Benson, flower-girl; Dr. Harry Beale Torrey, speaker; Mrs. Joseph Grinnell, matron of honor; The Reverend Horace Westwood; Mrs. Samuel J. Holmes, co-sponsor, and Dr. Samuel J. Holmes, triggerman.