

MEDICINE

Medical Reforms

Correction of X-ray film situation and hormone treatment advised. Fight urged for animal experimentation, study of marihuana problem recommended.

► CORRECTION of the X-ray film situation which causes needless expense and trouble to many patients is among a number of reforms advised by Dr. Herman L. Kretschmer, of Chicago, president of the American Medical Association, at the opening session of the association's house of delegates.

Dr. Kretschmer believes that when a patient has recently had a satisfactory set of X-ray pictures made at one hospital or by one roentgenologist, he should be able to get the films when he consults another physician who wants X-ray pictures to help in diagnosis. Too often at present, hospitals and roentgenologists or other physicians refuse to release the films and the patient is put to the expense and trouble of having another set made.

The present "fad" of considering every obscure complaint as due to endocrine gland disturbance and treating it with hormones is another situation that needs correction, Dr. Kretschmer advised the medical association's policy-making body. He praised highly the various scientists responsible for advancing knowledge of the glands and their disorders, but warned against turning the use of hormones into "another vitamin-like fiasco."

The hormone-conscious public, he stated, should be protected by physicians from the danger of misuse of hormones and by advertisers, health columnists and scientific writers for the lay press from wrong information about hormones.

The marihuana problem, "acutely before the nation today," should be investigated by the American Medical Association, Dr. Kretschmer advised, so that authoritative facts about this drug become known.

Medicine should take the offensive and get laws passed enabling medical scientists to perform experiments on animals rather than forever remaining on the defensive against the attacks of anti-vivisectionists, Dr. Kretschmer urged. Both man and animals benefit from animal experimentation, he declared. The public needs to know the facts of the situation and county medical societies should take the lead on this, he added.

County medical societies themselves were told by the A. M. A. president that they should enlarge or expand their scientific meetings and hold some for the lay public at which timely educational topics could be discussed.

Positive action on the deferment of medical and premedical students from service in the armed forces should be taken by the association which, Dr. Kretschmer declared, should demand that a situation of "confusion and chaos" should not be permitted to arise again.

He reiterated the association's stand against "regimentation of medicine" by which, though not specifically mentioning it, he apparently referred to proposed legislation for compulsory health insurance.

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FOR THE RECORDS—Here is one of the pictures in a play by play story of an amputation operation photographed by the new clinical camera developed by the Pictorial Engineering and Research Laboratory of the Signal Corps Photographic Center as a joint project of the Signal Corps Army Pictorial Service and the Surgeon General's office. (See SNL, Nov. 24)

de-icing for wings and propellers, should in the near future bring us to the point where commercial aircraft flights can be completed 99% of the time as contrasted to the present 91%," Dr. Furnas said. "This will make a tremendous difference in the confidence which the traveling public will have in aviation, and hence will greatly increase the number of potential passengers."

"Phenomenal changes" in commercial aircraft should not be expected in the near future, he indicated, but there will be a steady improvement to bring the newer things in aviation to the public.

"The focus of attention of most research work in commercial aircraft," Dr. Furnas stated, "is on speed, safety, comfort and reliability. Aero-dynamic constructional research will make significant contributions, but it is anticipated that the developments which will be most evident to the public will be in safety, comfort and reliability."

The average speed of airliners will be from 225 to 300 miles an hour, he ex-

AERONAUTICS-METEOROLOGY

Fly Regardless of Weather

Independence of atmospheric conditions predicted for commercial aircraft. With radar and de-icing devices, flights may be completed 99% of the time.

► "PRACTICALLY independent of the weather" is the forecast for commercial airplanes of the future, according to Dr. C. C. Furnas, director of research for the airplane division of Curtiss-Wright Corporation of Buffalo. He foresees completion of flights 99% of the time, as com-

pared with the present average of 91%. The prediction was made at a recent meeting of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in New York.

"Adaptation of the various devices of radar to the development of very reliable blind landing systems, coupled with heat

pects. This is in comparison to 180 miles an hour, a speed now quite common. The bulk of the air travel in the United States about a year from now will be carried in planes of from 40- to 60-pas-

senger capacity, with a few of 100-pas-senger capacity. It is not expected, he said, that any of the super-sized airplanes will be in use for some time.

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ENGINEERING

Disabled Are No Problem

Physically impaired workers present no employment problem to industry if definite program of fitting man to job is followed.

► PHYSICALLY impaired workers, whether returned veterans or others, present no employment problem to industry if management follows a definite program of fitting the man to the job, declared John V. Grimaldi, research engineer, National Conservation Bureau, New York, at the meeting of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in New York. Fitting the job to the man is frowned on in the modern selective placement program and "only should be considered as a last resort," he said.

Mr. Grimaldi is a research engineer in the Association of Casualty and Surety Executives in its national conservation bureau. The successful placement of the physically impaired depends primarily on good personnel or management plan-

ning, he emphasized.

"Before one can recognize fully the employment equality between the impaired and the normal worker, he must cleanse his thinking of any misconception concerning the impaired," he stated. "He must be able to look at a noticeably impaired worker objectively and remember that a twisted, deformed or lame body may be equipped, for example, with a fine mind or be capable of extreme dactyl dexterity. An impaired person may have any grouping of a number of outstanding abilities.

"It is generally our unfamiliarity with severe impairments that corrupts our thinking," he explained, "so that we evaluate the impaired solely in terms of the deficiencies we see. It would be more

appropriate if we regarded such workers not as physically disabled, but as physically exceptional."

The program for the successful placing of impaired workers, Mr. Grimaldi outlined, should contain a definite company policy on rehabilitation, analysis of jobs with special reference to disabled workers, medical determination of an applicant's physical capabilities, matching men to the job, job training, and periodic review of such placements.

\$12,000,000,000 Business

► OPERATIONS of the Army Ordnance Field Service, storing and supplying to the Army the materiel of war, compares in scope with both the wholesale and retail functions of a vertically organized concern manufacturing \$12,000,000,000 worth of goods a year and distributing in both domestic and foreign markets, declared Brig. Gen. E. E. MacMorland at the same meeting.

Vital to the system, he said, were 53 storage depots covering 285,000 acres and employing 100,000 workers. Despite these storage facilities, during the last stages of the war some 35% of the total tonnage of ordnance supplies were shipped directly from manufacturing plants to ports, he said.

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SPEEDY CAMERA—Maj. Gen. Norman T. Kirk, Surgeon General, U. S. Army, and Brig. Gen. Edward L. Munson, Jr., Signal Corps, inspect the new speedy camera for medical photographs. Every phase of the picture-taking except focusing and clicking the shutter is automatic. (See SNL, Nov. 24)

ENGINEERING

Electric Finger Guides Machine Tools in Cutting

► WHAT MIGHT be turned an electric finger, designed to guide machine tools in the cutting of dies and other metal articles at once intricate in shape and precise in dimensions, is the invention on which patent 2,389,594 has been issued to a trio of inventors, S. H. Caldwell of Belmont, Mass., J. J. Jaeger of Cambridge, Mass., and Richard Taylor of Great Neck, N. Y.

A pointed metal rod or stylus slides over the contours of pattern or template. Metal masses connected with its shank move through hollow electromagnets. Every lateral or longitudinal deviation of the finger thus results in a change in one or more magnetic fields, and these changes, suitably relayed, control the action of electric motors that in turn guide the cutting tools.

Patent rights have been assigned to the Niles-Bement-Pond Company of Hartford, Conn.

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