

FORESTRY

West Pine Yields Pitch

► THE Southeastern Atlantic coastal region, long the source of pine pitch for turpentine, rosin and other so-called naval stores, is facing a rival in the Northwest. Millions of stumps of western yellow pine are available there, from which it is now found that pitch for naval stores can be commercially extracted.

This western yellow pine is known to foresters as *Pinus ponderosa*. It is found in the northwestern states and as far south as Arizona. It is a forest tree, attaining an age of from 300 to 500 years, and often reaching a height of over 200 feet, with stumps up to eight feet in diameter. Little if any use has been made of the stumps left after logging, but now they may be pulled and processed to obtain their pitch.

It has been long known that *Ponderosa* pine stumps contain pitch, but quantity, quality and costs of extracting were uncertain factors. It is now known that the pitch can be extracted commercially. This is a result of work at the Portland, Ore., laboratory of the Western Pine Association, according to American Forest Products Industries, Inc., in Washington. It was found that stumps from trees cut up to four

years ago yielded an average of 340 pounds per ton, and older stumps yielded 500 pounds per ton in extracts.

The process for the recovery of the *Ponderosa* pitch from stumps is similar to that used for the same purpose in southeastern states for some 30 years. The stumps are yanked out of the ground and hauled to the factories. There they are reduced to chips by heavy machinery, and the chips are put in a solvent solution. This liquid absorbs the pitches, but is later easily separated from them. The solvent can be used over and over again.

Big, old *Ponderosa* stumps have been found best for processing. Their bark and sapwood, neither of which are pitchy, have been weathered away. An average aged *Ponderosa* pine stump on good growing land weighs a ton or more, and can yield up to 500 pounds of pitch extracts. Any number of old stumps are available in Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Montana and other western states. It remains now for the necessary processing factories to be constructed.

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PUBLIC HEALTH

Medical Care for All

► GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED medical care for everyone is advocated by the new president of the American Public Health Association, Dr. Charles F. Wilinsky, administrator of Beth Israel Hospital and Deputy Commissioner of Health of Boston.

"The American Public Health Association is earnest in its belief that good health is something that every man, woman, and child has a right to have and to enjoy," he stated in an interview.

Sanitation and the control of communicable diseases have lengthened the life span of the American people. Now, Dr. Wilinsky pointed out, the diseases of middle life and old age, such as cancer and heart disease, are major health problems, and the line between preventive medicine and medical care can no longer be drawn.

No particular plan of government-supported medical care is supported by the association, however, because it does not know which is the best way. The possibilities are social insurance similar to social security, voluntary health insurance by private organizations, support by general taxation both federal and local, or some combination of these. However, its section of medical care, whose organization has just been announced, may well begin a study of the problem.

Any government-supported program

must be instituted gradually, it was pointed out, because the United States does not now have enough doctors, nurses and hospitals to give adequate health care to everyone.

As a goal, Dr. Wilinsky suggested an integrated hospital plan similar to the ones recently set up around Boston and Rochester. Small rural hospitals are linked to larger hospitals in small cities which can provide the services of laboratories and pathologists. These hospitals in turn have access to the facilities and specialists of the great teaching hospitals in large cities and universities. There is great need for more rural hospitals in the form of tax-supported public health centers recommended by the American Hospital Association which can combine limited medical care with sanitation and preventive medicine work.

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CHEMISTRY

Fire-Extinguisher New Fluid Safe in Ventilated Places

► A FIRE-extinguishing vaporizing liquid known as chlorobromomethane, a chemical compound containing chlorine, bromine and methane, is effective and safe to use

in well-ventilated places but may be a hazard in closets and small rooms.

This is the conclusion of Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc., sponsored by the National Board of Underwriters. It is based on extensive studies made to determine the life hazards of the fumes evolved by this chemical in contact with flame or hot surfaces under fire conditions likely to be encountered in practice. The complete results are given in a recent bulletin issued in New York by the laboratories.

The chief gaseous decomposition products of chlorobromomethane applied to gasoline, ethyl alcohol and wood fires, and to gas flames, hot iron surfaces and electric arcs, include hydrochloric acid, hydrobromic acid, carbonyl halides, and in some cases free chlorine and bromine. The concentrations obtained depend upon the quantity of chlorobromomethane applied, the fire conditions, and the degree of confinement of the fumes.

The odor of chlorobromomethane resembles that of chloroform and can not be said to give adequate warning of danger. One quart of the chemical on evaporation produces nearly 12 cubic feet of vapor at ordinary room temperature. In a room of 1,000 cubic feet capacity, the resulting concentration of vapor will be in the order of 1.2% by volume. In concentrations of 0.8% to 1% by volume in air the vapor has marked and prolonged anesthetic effects on guinea pigs.

The concentrations of chlorobromomethane vapor resulting from the application of this extinguisher chemical to fires occurring in open places may not endanger life on temporary exposure, the report states, but when used in unventilated places, operators and others should take precautions to avoid the effects which may be caused by breathing the vapor or its decomposition products.

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ENTOMOLOGY

DDT and Oil Spray Can End Hazards of Black Flies

► A CHEAP and easy way of overcoming the hazards of black flies, which are not only a nuisance to vacationists, sportsmen and hunters but also a source of economic loss to farmers and ranchers at times of flood and high waters, was reported by the Army Medical Department at the meetings in New Orleans of the American Society of Tropical Medicine, National Malaria Society and American Society of Parasitology.

Five dollars' worth of material and a few hours of labor are all that are needed to reduce the black fly hazard on a farm, ranch or plantation.

A man with a two-quart spray gun loaded with DDT and oil may stand on the side of a stream with the wind at his back and spray the surface of the water so that currents will carry the film of