

supposed previously, containing only a half a dozen different amino acids as building blocks. This gives the chemists new hope that eventually they will be able to manufacture ACTH artificially rather than obtain it from the pituitary glands of hogs which are in short supply.

Science News Letter, September 16, 1950

MEDICINE

Cortisone, ACTH Shield Against Arthritis

► CORTISONE and ACTH act as shields against the fire of whatever it is that causes rheumatoid arthritis. But they "do not put out the fire nor act as carpenters to repair the fire's damage," Dr. Howard F. Polley of the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn., declared at the American Congress of Physical Medicine in Boston, Mass.

For repairing the damage of deformed joints and wasted muscles, doctors who specialize in physical medicine, called physiatrists, are still needed.

"The means by which cortisone and ACTH produce their anti-rheumatic effect is not yet known," Dr. Polley said.

"They do not kill germs. Neither do they 'cure' diseases the symptoms of which they may so profoundly modify. But in some unknown manner they provide susceptible tissues with a shield against a wide variety of irritants."

When stiffness of joints and pain are relieved, patients can be further helped by exercise, heat, hydrotherapy and other kinds of physical therapy. Physical medicine can also help patients who cannot be given enough cortisone or ACTH to control the arthritis completely.

Dr. Polley warned, however, that joints which have long been inactive or crippled should not be rehabilitated too fast or strenuously. Sudden increase of activity can cause broken bones. Exercises should be started gradually and carefully, even when relief from pain makes the patient ready to try anything.

Science News Letter, September 16, 1950

MEDICINE

Cortisone Cost Cut to One-Fourth Former Price

► PATIENTS getting cortisone for rheumatoid arthritis and other conditions now will pay only one-fourth the price they had to pay one year ago when it first became available for clinical research.

Merck and Co., manufacturers of cortisone under the trade name of cortone, announced that the price to hospitals will be \$50 per gram. In August, 1949, the price was \$200 per gram. This price cut, the fifth in the past year, results from improvements in production which have significantly increased the yield of the chemical as well as reduced production costs.

Good supplies of cortone are now available to 6,500 hospitals which meet certain requirements. At present the drug is to be used in the beginning stages of treatment only in patients treated in these institutions. After the initial treatment, however, the doctor may give continued treatment in his office or the patient's home.

The amount of cortisone given a patient varies, so it is difficult to state exactly what the new price will mean to an individual patient. After a higher dosage at the start, the patient may be put on one-tenth of a gram per day or even every other day. The cost to hospitals for maintenance dosage is figured at \$2.50 to \$5 per day.

More than 3,000 patients with rheumatoid arthritis have now been treated with this drug, with a prompt let-up of all signs and symptoms of the disease in practically every case. In addition, the hormone chemical has been used to bring striking improvement in acute rheumatic fever, bronchial asthma, early stages of disseminated lupus erythematosus, Addison's disease, inflammatory eye diseases, and many skin disorders including pemphigus, angioneurotic edema, atopic dermatitis and exfoliative dermatitis and cases of skin trouble due to drug reactions.

Science News Letter, September 16, 1950

PSYCHOLOGY

"Democracy" in New York Times, Pravda Means Same

► BELIEVE it or not, the word democracy does mean the same when used by Stalin as it does in the writings of Lincoln.

A study of the context in which the word was used in Russian writings of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin as well as in Pravda, New Times and the Cominform Journal was reported in State College, Pa., to the American Psychological Association by Dr. Ralph K. White, Washington, D.C., psychologist. He compared the meaning of democracy in the Russian texts with the same word as used by Jefferson, Lincoln, Roosevelt and in the New York Times, Life, and the Chicago Tribune.

The Soviet definition of democracy is not radically different, on the ideological level, from our own, Dr. White found. The difference is mainly in emphasis.

The idea that the Russians stress government "for the people" and not "by the people," is mistaken, Dr. White said. They stress both. What they do not stress is individual freedom—even on the ideological level.

Science News Letter, September 16, 1950

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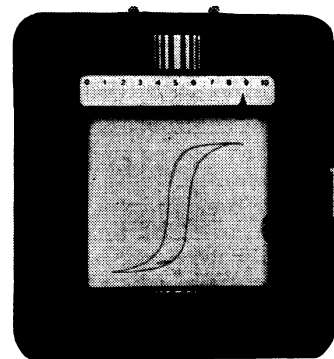
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