

ANTHROPOLOGY

True Pygmies Found

➤ A GROUP of tiny people only a few millimeters taller than the smallest people living in the world were described by Rev. Dr. Martin Gusinde, anthropologist of Catholic University of America, who has just returned from an expedition to their home in the Aiom Range of mountains in New Guinea.

These people are genuine racial pygmies, Father Gusinde said. In this they differ from the dwarfed people Father Gusinde studied last year in the mountains of Venezuela. Those Yupa Indians, he found, are not true pygmies but are stunted by miserable living conditions and improper nutrition.

The genuine racial pygmies of New Guinea average only about 57 inches tall. This makes them only four or five millimeters taller than the shortest people in the world, the Bambuti of the eastern Belgian Congo.

Father Gusinde, who is the first scientist ever to visit these people, found them very hostile at first but he won their friendship with gifts. They were especially pleased with gifts of paints for their bodies and with knives, an important tool in that wild environment.

The pygmies never used the knives against him, Father Gusinde reports.

Matches had the highest value for the pygmies. They also were greatly pleased to receive razor blades because they now like to shave themselves.

The pygmies were apparently the first occupants of New Guinea. They are a completely different race from the Kanakas. But when Polynesians and Melanesians arrived they pushed the pygmies back into the mountains. They are now found only in remote, isolated heights.

The pygmies are a people without a name,



NEW GUINEA PYGMY—One of the group of tiny people discovered in New Guinea is shown here with the Rev. Dr. Martin Gusinde, Catholic University anthropologist who studied them.

Father Gusinde said. There are among them four different linguistic groups.

Science News Letter, October 13, 1956

DENTISTRY

Hypnotize Dental Patients

➤ USE OF HYPNOTISM to overcome the nervousness and fear patients have when going to the dentist was advocated at the American Dental Association meeting in Atlantic City.

The case of a 15-year-old boy who turned yellow and vomited the first time he sat in a dental chair, but who was successfully treated with the aid of hypnotism was reported by Dr. Arthur Kuhner of Cleveland. Another dental patient helped by hypnotism was a 50-year-old woman whose many emotional problems made it very difficult to do dental work on her.

The underlying problems and anxieties of the patients should not be handled by the dentist, Dr. Kuhner and others warned.

However, after three or four sessions of hypnosis limited to getting the patient tran-

quilized, showing him that he will not feel pain and educating him to have confidence in the dentist, patients are conditioned so that the dentist can perform the necessary dental work on them.

Because of the time needed in the preliminary hypnotic sessions, the method is limited to dental patients who could not otherwise be treated.

However, "tremendous potentialities" for hypnosis in dentistry are seen by Dr. Harold Rosen, Baltimore psychiatrist, and Dr. Milton V. Kline, New York psychologist.

Dr. Kline foresees hypnosis emerging within the next ten years as not only a respected field of psychology but also as a major area of research and application to treatment of dental and other patients.

Science News Letter, October 13, 1956

BIOPHYSICS

Radioactive Dye Aids In Liver Diagnosis

➤ A RADIOACTIVE FORM of the dye, rose bengal, is helping diagnose liver disease, Dr. H. L. Friedell of Cleveland reported at the American Roentgen Ray Society meeting in Los Angeles.

Efforts during the past 40 years to see the liver by X-rays have not been successful, he pointed out.

With the new radioactive dye and a scanner similar to a Geiger counter, a series of dots and dashes, called hepatoscans, are giving doctors a chance to detect liver enlargement, displacement, pressure on the liver by a mass outside and conditions such as tumors that take up space inside the liver.

Important to the new technique is a "cut-off" circuit. This allows recording of only a certain level of uptake by the liver. The information actually recorded then gives the physician conducting the examination somewhat more well-defined diagnostic clues.

In general, with the cut-off technique, it is somewhat easier to delineate defects by the absence of radioactivity rather than by observing areas of increased activity.

These techniques have been extended to problems of delineating other organs and some progress has already been made along these lines.

Science News Letter, October 13, 1956

VIROLOGY

Grow Polio Virus in Cold to Test Virulence

➤ USE of cold temperature for a test of polio virus virulence is suggested in studies by Drs. George R. Dubes and Margaret Chapin of the University of Kansas School of Medicine in Kansas City, Kans.

Such a test might be useful in picking a virus for vaccine production.

A polio virus that has been adapted to life at 86 degrees Fahrenheit by growth of successive generations at this temperature may be deadadapted, or unable to grow, at 96.8 degrees Fahrenheit, the scientists find. The 96.8 temperature is not much below normal body temperature of 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit.

One strain of Type III polio virus that could not grow at this temperature had also become less virulent for monkeys.

Two other polio virus strains, belonging to Type I and Type II respectively, although partly deadadapted to growth at 96.8 after adaptation to the lower temperature, were, however, just as virulent as their ancestors that had not had the cold treatment.

The results with the Type III virus suggest, the scientists report in *Science* (Sept. 28), that the degree to which cold-adapted viruses have lost ability to grow at the higher temperature may "serve as an indicator of their loss of virulence for a warm-blooded animal."

Science News Letter, October 13, 1956