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# Questions

**AERONAUTICS**—How many gallons of kerosene will the average jet carry? p. 186.

**CHEMISTRY**—What advantages would there be in vulcanizing rubber by using irradiation? p. 183.

**MEDICINE**—What is the effect of vitamin-A deficiency on eyesight? p. 180.

Photographs: Cover, U. S. Atomic Energy Commission; p. 179, General Motors Corporation; p. 181, Truscon Division, Republic Steel Corporation; p. 183, Rayonier Eastern Research Division; p. 186, Boeing Airplane Company-Pan American World Airways; p. 192, Damar Products Inc.

**MEDICINE**

## Hay Fever Hits Prisoners And the Aristocracy

➤ SNEEZES, itches and other allergic symptoms aggravate prison populations as well as the old-time favored aristocracy.

A survey of prisoners in the District of Columbia led to this conclusion by Dr. Harry S. Bernton, an allergist at Doctors Hospital, Washington.

Dr. Bernton initiated his survey because of the idea that "royalty, aristocracy, learning and culture characterized the allergic of bygone days." He referred to a report in 1873 by C. H. Blackley in London who said: "Hay fever is said to be an aristocratic disease, and . . . it is rarely, if ever, met with but among the educated."

This and many other old-time reports prompted Dr. Bernton to go into the prisons. He came out with the impression that hay fever and other allergic traits are everyman's ailments, although prisoners do seem less prone than some other groups.

As reported by him in the *Medical Annals* of the District of Columbia, 328 of 1,500 prisoners gave positive history of allergy.

Since many scientists are of the opinion that many allergies are related to emotional disturbances, Dr. Bernton cited several possible emotional causes among prisoners, such as grief, remorse, a sense of frustration, disappointment, resentment and rejection. However, he interviewed three prisoners awaiting the death penalty, and none had any history of allergy.

The total percentage of allergy among the prisoners appears to be somewhat lower than among the general population, leading Dr. Bernton to speculate if there is a psychic inhibition of the allergic mechanism in such groups.

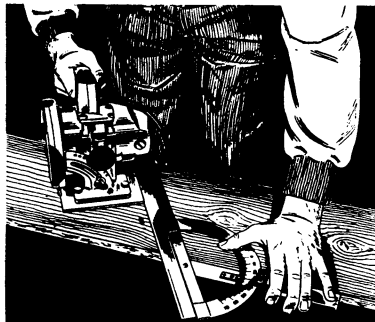
Science News Letter, September 20, 1958

## Do You Know?

*Gelatin capsules* for medicine were first developed in France in 1883.

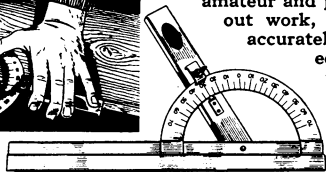
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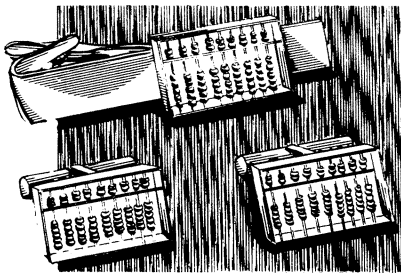
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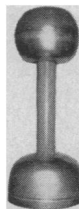
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