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ENTOMOLOGY

African Ticks Tricky Entomologists Discover

➤ VISITORS TO UGANDA or to West African forests have been asked to be on the lookout for an elusive white tick that may hide in their own noses.

Three experienced entomologists were unaware of the nasal invasion until they discovered a tenderness in their noses when they were touched or blown. The infestation occurred during the immature nymph stage of a tick belonging to the genus *Amblyomma*. Dr. V. G. L. Van Someren of Nairobi reported the discovery to Prof. G. A. Walton of University College, Cork, Ireland, who is issuing a call for cooperation in *Nature*, 188:1131, 1960.

Prof. Walton reports that the absence of reaction to the presence of the parasite in man might suggest that nymphs of these ticks normally infest the nasal passages of anthropoid apes, common in Uganda forests.

Assistance in identifying the ticks can be provided by persons who will examine the nasal passages of Uganda mammals, looking for any white ticks falling from the nose of captured chimpanzees.

Persons who become aware of tenderness in their own noses are asked to allow the ticks to remain until they are approximately the size of a small pea. Then they may be blown out or gently removed with forceps.

• *Science News Letter*, 79:14 January 7, 1961

MEDICINE

Mental Deficiency Produced in Monkeys

➤ PHENYLKETONURIA, a metabolic defect that causes mental deficiency in human infants, has been reproduced in baby monkeys. Hopefully, this achievement will provide a test animal through which researchers can develop a more satisfactory treatment for human cases.

One or two persons in every 50,000 are born with this metabolic disorder. It is caused by a missing liver enzyme, without which the individual cannot metabolize phenylalanine, an amino acid found in protein. If the disorder is undetected and the child is not put on a special diet before he begins eating protein, brain damage results.

Phenylketonuria was produced in adolescent monkeys in 1959, but in monkeys, as in humans, the brain is more sensitive to abnormal chemical influence in the infant stages.

To induce the defect in the baby monkeys, researchers at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, fed them milk mixed with excessive amounts of phenylalanine from the second day after birth.

Psychological and performance tests begun when the monkeys were one week old showed that they were mentally retarded.

"These monkeys demonstrated motivational defects, inappropriate behavior, subnormal learning and sub-optimal intellectual performance," the scientists reported in *Nature*, 188:1124, 1960.

Neurological examination, however, revealed no sensory or motor abnormalities

in these animals up to one year of age, although two of them had infrequent convulsions.

The researchers, Drs. Harry A. Waisman, Hwa L. Wang, Gail Palmer and Harry F. Harlow, all of the University of Wisconsin, hope to pinpoint biochemical changes in the brain that may be the cause of damage, and to produce other types of retardation in monkeys.

• *Science News Letter*, 79:14 January 7, 1961

MEDICINE

Remove 258 Objects From Man's Stomach

➤ THREE SETS of rosary beads, 26 keys and a beer-can opener were among the 258 objects removed from the stomach of a mental patient, it is reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 174:2073, 1960.

Other highlights of your doctor's weekly reading are:

In spite of progress with anesthesia, numerous deaths are still attributed to its faulty use. A study of 1,024 postoperative deaths reported by the Baltimore, Md., anesthesia study committee showed 19.2% of them related to anesthesia. The mortality risk associated with anesthesia has been estimated at four per 10,000 operations. The lowest risk for both sexes in the age group of 15 to 24 years, with the risk for males 7.1% as against 2.7% for females (p. 2015).

Kidney stones are gradually disappearing in children because of increasing attention being paid to nutrition, Dr. Hans H. Zinsser of Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, reported. He said that if as much attention were paid to the diet of adults as for children, great strides could be made in preventing kidney stones. Dr. Zinsser blamed the calcium in milk and antacid preparations as partly responsible for kidney stones among those who have a tendency toward forming them (p. 2062).

• *Science News Letter*, 79:14 January 7, 1961

MEDICINE

TV Westerns Produce "Fast Draw" Syndrome

➤ PHYSICIANS of the country can read an editorial in their official magazine, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 174:1970, 1960, blaming television westerns for the "fast draw" syndrome.

The *Journal* said it is "a pity" that advertisers who profit from showing gangster and horror scenes on television do not show the disfigurement, the hopeless disorganization of joints, the helpless invalidism, the laming and blinding that so often follow.

Another editorial (p. 1968) points out that additional work is needed before measles vaccine can be used as a routine measure, but that a safe and effective preventive for this disease seems near. The public must be educated to a "realization of the great hazards of measles and to acceptance of the vaccine" before its ultimate benefits can be realized, however.

• *Science News Letter*, 79:14 January 7, 1961