

PHARMACOLOGY

Fast Elimination of Poison May Not Mean Recovery

WHY PRESENT methods of treating poisoning by sleeping powders are not more effective was revealed to the American Physiological Society when Dr. Theodore Koppanyi and W. S. Murphy of Georgetown University School of Medicine reported their studies on veronal and related drugs.

These modern sleeping powders cause thousands of cases of poisoning throughout the world every year, Dr. Koppanyi said.

Veronal poisoning is treated by injecting into the veins large amounts of sugar and salt solutions with the object of flushing the poison out of the body. Dr. Koppanyi and his associates found that these methods did little good, judging from their effect on cats. Even with the best methods, by which it is possible to drive out as much veronal or barbital in five hours as would ordinarily take two or three days, the improvement is slight.

In other words, methods of treatment directed toward quickly ridding the body of the poison do not necessarily mean the recovery of the patient. Dr. Koppanyi found the reason for this when he studied the action of the sleeping powders on cats and rabbits.

With cats the effect of the drug increased each day although more and more of the original dose was being eliminated. These animals were unable to stand, walk or eat and showed de-

pression when the amount of the drug remaining in their bodies was too small to cause any appreciable effect if injected into other cats.

With rabbits, on the other hand, the drug was eliminated with increasing slowness so that more and more of it found its way to the blood stream, but when the amount in the body exceeded the average fatal dose, the animals were still able to stand, walk and eat.

Unfortunately, man seems to behave in the same way under the effect of veronal as does the cat. The drug is eliminated from his body in exactly the same way as from the cat's. He therefore suffers from accumulation of effects of the drug, even after most of it has been eliminated from his body.

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An apparently new vitamin B factor which makes rats grow, found in whole wheat by Nellie Halliday and Linnea Dennett of the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station was reported to the American Institute of Nutrition. Animals fail to grow, and develop certain nervous symptoms when this vitamin is lacking from their diet. The vitamin is not the familiar B₁ nor vitamin G, but resembles that known as B₄.

Boiled eggs can be distinguished from uncooked eggs by a spinning test: a cooked egg will twirl easily, while a raw egg can scarcely be made to turn.



Violets

THERE ARE a few early spring flowers that blossom before the violets, but until the children can go into the woods and bring back handfuls of their favorite blue and yellow posies it can hardly be reckoned that spring is really here. Fortunately the violet is a hardy plant, almost as hardy for a plant as the robin is for a bird, and spring is seldom long delayed on its account. Indeed, one can sometimes find violets in bloom in sheltered spots at almost any time when a few warm days break into the winter, just as the same kind of days bring out small boys for pre-season games of marbles.

It is a fortunate thing that violets can be picked freely without fear of exterminating the genus, else we should have to add another, and in this case most irksome, prohibition to the already too long list of flowers whose gathering is *verboten*. But the violet depends little on its showier flowers for planting succeeding crops. The really earnest business of seed production is taken care of during the summer by strange little green, bud-like flowers down among the stems. These never open, but produce their seeds as it were secretly, by internal self-pollination. So the children may pick violets as they please; except that it might be good discipline to get them to leave a few "for the plant to keep."

It is a curious and interesting circumstance in the history of language that this most gracefully-shaped of flowers should have given its name to the queen of musical instruments. For the violin is the descendant of the viola, and *Viola* is the name of the violet in both Latin and Italian.

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