

VETERINARY MEDICINE

Anti-Distemper Vaccine Used on Huskies of Arctic

EPIDEMICS which in recent years have wiped out husky dogs in many sections of the Canadian northland and threatened the safety of Arctic travelers who must depend on dogs are now being fought with the anti-distemper vaccine-virus and serum developed by Drs. P. P. Laidlaw and G. W. Dunkin of the Field Distemper Council.

Supplies of this material and instructions on how to use it have been furnished by the Canadian Government to Mounted Police, traders, trappers and missionaries. Dr. J. R. West has been in charge of this fight against the epidemics and personally visited all the posts where the annual supply ship stopped, treating the dogs at the posts.

Few dogs, he learned, recover from the disease, which occurs in cycles of about five years. During the height of the spread of the disease dogs may die in as short a time as one or two days with symptoms of the nervous form of distemper. Frequently when the disease attacks the dogs, wild foxes also suffer from a similar epidemic. Even fox farms as distant from the Arctic as Prince Edward Island have suffered from the disease at the same time that it struck the Arctic dogs.

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PALEONTOLOGY

Largest Land Mammal Being Mounted at Museum

BALUCHITHERIUM, a giant rhinoceros and the largest land mammal that has been discovered thus far, is being assembled for exhibition at the American Museum of Natural History. Prof. W. K. Gregory and Dr. Walter Grainger of the American Museum, in a report to the American Society of Mammalogists, described their work on the restoration of this great creature of more than 30,000,000 years ago, which stood over thirteen feet high at the shoulder.

Parts of over twenty-five individuals, collected on the museum expedition to Mongolia, are being sorted and pieced together to make a restoration that will look very different from the only other assembled skeleton in existence, in a Russian museum in Leningrad.

The Russian *Baluchitherium* is made up of more bones from a single indi-

vidual, but has been given a longer neck than the American investigators believe is justified. He has been posed in the position of a giraffe cropping grass with his forelimbs widely spraddled apart.

Dr. Grainger and Prof. Gregory are making their restoration with a shorter neck with the result that it will look much more like a rhinoceros.

A curious parallel to the structure of the giant dinosaur *Diplodocus* was found in the great cavities on the sides of each vertebra.

One of the *Baluchitherium* specimens found in the desert of Gobi had evidently become mired in quicksand and was left in a standing position for millions of years. Unfortunately excessive weathering had eroded away all the upper part of the body, so that only the four legs and feet were recovered.

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WILD LIFE ADMINISTRATION

ECW Operations To Halt Bear Raids

BEAR RAIDS may or may not be stopped in "the Street," but ECW workers are determined that they are going to be halted in "the Park."

For many years, the black, brown and cinnamon bears have played the role of robber barons in the tourist camps of Yellowstone National Park. Auto tourists who pitch their tents and trustingly leave the sugar and bacon where bears can get at them (and that means almost anywhere) have at times had their slumbers disturbed by blundering hungry Bruins—and found themselves breakfastless in the morning. It does not happen often, but it is plenty annoying when it does.

Now the emergency conservation workers are about to build bomb-proofs, or rather bear-proofs, for the campers' supplies. They will be solid, concrete-and-iron affairs, affording shelter from the elements as well as protection against the paws and jaws of marauding bears.

A special problem will have to be faced in the matter of door fastenings, for a bear's combination of brute strength and almost rodent-like persistence is more than a match for most locks.

The first installation of the bear-proofs is to be made at Old Faithful Camp. If the shelters function successfully, similar ones will be erected in other camps.

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IN SCIEN

MEDICINE

Digestive System Lack May Cause Deficiency Ills

ALL THE vitamins in the world will not keep you healthy if your digestive system is deficient and fails to react properly with the vitamins. This theory was advanced by Dr. William B. Castle of Harvard Medical School in the Herbert Swift Carter Memorial lecture at Columbia University.

In "deficiency" diseases, like pernicious anemia, beriberi or pellagra, the deficiency may be in the diet which lacks some essential substance or it may be in the digestive organs themselves. This theory would account for the occasional development of a disease like pellagra in persons eating a diet containing plenty of the pellagra-preventing vitamin G, for example.

In pernicious anemia the deficiency is in the digestive tract which does not react properly with the food; in another type of anemia associated with the tropical disease, sprue, the deficiency is usually in the diet, Dr. Castle explained.

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PUBLIC HEALTH

Wants "White Wings" To Wear Another Color

"WHITE wings," those white-uniformed public servants who clean the city's streets, will change their plumage for another color, if the recommendations of Dr. Bernard Sachs, president of the New York Academy of Medicine, are adopted.

White is no color for anyone working in the streets to wear, Dr. Sachs declared. Refuse carts and cans should be painted a drab green or some other drab color, he holds, and presumably the street cleaners' "white wings" should be exchanged for similar dull tones.

Dr. Sachs reviewed the accomplishments of the Committee of Twenty on Streets and Outdoor Cleanliness.

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CE FIELDS

ETHNOLOGY

Scalped Indians Who Survived Were "Ghosts"

TO BECOME a ghost—a dead man in the eyes of your family and neighbors—this was the tragic fate of an Arikara Indian who survived scalping.

The plight of these living ghosts of the Great Plains is told by Dr. Melvin R. Gilmore of the University of Michigan, in a report to the Michigan Academy of Science, Art and Letters.

No warrior would knowingly scalp a living man, says Dr. Gilmore. But in the confusion of battle an apparently dead enemy might have his scalp lock taken. He would later awake to find himself in the paradoxical position of being alive, yet rated dead by his people. The sight of him thereafter would have been a shock and an offense to the living.

Living scalped men had to become hermits, foraging for food and supplies mostly after dark, and entirely without help from friends or relatives.

Dr. Gilmore has learned of the experiences of two such Indians, one of whom managed to hold secret meetings with his wife.

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BACTERIOLOGY

Milk Keeps Better After Ultraviolet Irradiation

MILK that has been irradiated by exposure to ultraviolet light keeps longer, has a slightly lower bacterial count and lower acidity than has ordinary whole milk.

This added keeping quality of irradiated milk has been proved through research work done during the past year by K. G. Weckel and H. C. Jackson of the University of Wisconsin. They found that at refrigerator temperatures irradiated milk will keep several hours longer than whole milk not so treated. This added keeping quality is partly due, the experiments show, to a very slight reduction in the development of acidity of the milk after irradiation.

Irradiation also causes a slight reduc-

tion in the bacterial count in milk, but the process has no specific effect on some of the most important milk bacteria, namely the lactic acid, gas-forming and coagulating types. This seeming contradiction is explained by the fact that the exposure of the milk to the ultraviolet light is for such a short period, and that the opaqueness of the milk furnishes a protective film against the light rays.

In high quality milk of low bacterial count the percentage of bacterial reduction by irradiation was found to be very low. But in poorer quality milk, high in bacteria, the reduction was somewhat higher. In neither case was the bacterial reduction great enough to indicate that the reduced acidity in irradiated milk was caused by the smaller number of bacteria. Many large and small milk plants have during the past year installed machinery to produce irradiated whole milk.

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MEDICINE

Hay Feverites Warned Of Certain Insecticides

HAY FEVERITES who owe their suffering to the ragweed pollens should keep away from insecticides made from pyrethrum, warns Dr. Samuel M. Feinberg of Chicago. Among the household insecticides of this kind he mentioned Black Flag and Flit.

Out of 225 persons who start sneezing when the late summer breezes blow ragweed pollen about, 104 were sensitive to commercial pyrethrum, skin tests showed. Insect powders and sprays containing pyrethrum may bring on attacks of hay fever in these persons outside the ragweed season, Dr. Feinberg reported to the American Medical Association.

Pyrethrum flowers are distantly related to the ragweeds. Commercial pyrethrum seems to be capable of making trouble for the unwary in three different ways, Dr. Feinberg pointed out. One part of it, which is the agent that kills insects, is poisonous when taken by mouth. Another part may cause skin irritation in persons handling it, gardeners or those working in the factories where the insect powders and sprays are made. The third part is what scientists call an allergen, and this is the part that can produce an attack of hay fever in a sensitive person who is un-likely enough to get it up his nose.

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SEISMOLOGY

Three Quakes in 36 Hours Keep Seismographs Busy

THREE earthquakes in less than thirty-six hours kept seismographs busy more than halfway round the world on Sunday, May 13 and Monday, May 14, reports received by Science Service and deciphered by scientists of the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey indicate.

The strongest shock of the three occurred west of Seward, Alaska, on Monday at 5:13.2 p. m., Eastern Standard Time. The epicenter was determined as in approximately 60 degrees north latitude, 151 degrees west longitude. An earthquake had been registered from the same general region ten days before.

On the same day, at 8:15 a. m., Eastern Standard Time, a moderate earthquake took place near the western edge of the Gulf of California, in latitude 28 degrees north, longitude 113 west.

The third quake could not be located exactly, because it was not reported by a sufficient number of stations. The Coast and Geodetic Survey scientists, however, stated that it had probably centered somewhere under the floor of the South Pacific Ocean.

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MEDICINE

Vitamin C May Aid Body To Fight Tuberculosis

VITAMIN C, the scurvy-preventing constituent of many fresh fruits and vegetables, may help the body in fighting tuberculosis, it appears from studies reported by Drs. Eugene de Savitsch and his associates, J. D. Stewart, Louise Hanson and E. N. Walsh, of Chicago, at the meeting of the National Tuberculosis Association.

Guinea pigs given about a third of an ounce of freshly prepared orange juice daily were better able to withstand the disease induced by fatal doses of tubercle bacilli or germs than pigs equally infected with tubercle bacilli but not getting orange juice.

The study was undertaken in order to determine whether the peculiar resistance of rats to tuberculosis is correlated to the fact that they can manufacture their own vitamin C and need not depend on a dietary source of this vitamin.

No suggestion of immediate application of the studies to the treatment of tuberculosis in man was made.

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