

a year seems like an ample allowance. It probably would be if they were made of a good quality of leather. But practically all the best leather is now going into footwear for the Army and the Navy. Civilians must be satisfied with shoes made from leather of poorer grades.

Better care of boots and shoes will be helpful, under the new shoe-rationing order. Shoes, like automobile tires, will wear longer if given good care. They should be kept well oiled and polished.

They should not be dried out near a radiator or stove. They should be taken to the repairman as soon as the slightest repairs are needed.

The shoe shortage can be helped also if everybody will dig into their closets and get out all those old shoes which may be put into walking condition again through repair. Less manpower is needed to repair old shoes than to make new ones even if made without leather.

*Science News Letter, February 20, 1943*

## RESOURCES

## Rubber Flown Here

Returning from bases in the Central American Tropics, Army planes are carrying crude to help ease the present shortage.

➤ ARMY PLANES returning from bases deep in the Central American tropics are loading extra nooks and crannies with crude rubber to help ease the shortage.

More than a hundred tons have been flown to the United States during the past three months. At least half came

from the Republic of Panama, while most of the remainder was picked up in the Canal Zone and Nicaragua, with a few tons from Guatemala.

Continually increasing tonnage makes rubber one of the principal airborne cargoes from our Central American neighbors.

Shipments from the Canal Zone so far have been seized enemy rubber now put to work to help defeat the Axis. The remainder of the supply flown in is a new kind of scrap rubber obtained from wild *Castilloa* trees. Tree scrap is the hardened milky juice that collects at the base of the *Castilloa* tree after tapping it in herringbone fashion, a lower grade than the smoke-cured sheets of *Castilloa* prepared from more carefully collected latex.

Scrap from the *Castilloa* trees is gathered by natives throughout the region, then lugged to the airfields where it brings the basic Rubber Reserve Company price of 33 cents a pound. Packed in hundred-pound bags, the rubber is loaded into available space on planes flying northward and dropped later at San Antonio, Texas. A plane may load as much as 4,000 pounds.

In Guatemala and Yucatan, planes formerly used to bring chicle for chewing gum from inaccessible forest regions to river ports are now transporting *Castilloa* rubber as well.

Other planes throughout the vast Amazon River basin area are flying out crude rubber from another source, the wild *Hevea* trees, to speed the rubber program initiated since the wartime loss of Far Eastern rubber sources.

Although these shipments are only a very small fraction of our needs, they are harbingers of a vast development of Central American rubber production now under way. It is expected to yield long-range benefits as well as furnish an immediate supplementary source of this strategic material.

*Science News Letter, February 20, 1943*



**RUBBER CARGO**—At an airbase in Nicaragua, sacks of crude rubber from *Castilloa* trees are loaded into a U. S. Army plane. An increasing quantity of this strategic material is being flown from Central America by planes returning "light" from Latin American missions.

## INVENTION

### New Carrier for Wounded Is Like Papoose Case

➤ QUICKER and safer handling for wounded and sick men being transferred from shore to ship or otherwise handled in transit is promised under patent 2,309,464, issued on a contrivance that looks somewhat like an oversized papoose case. It is the invention of J. P. Lucci and F. M. Reed of Wooster, Ohio.

The patient is first securely wrapped and strapped in warm inner blankets, and then enclosed (except for his face and neck) in an outer case of long wooden slats riveted to straps. Side loops permit carriage like a stretcher, and a ring back of the patient's head provides for hooking onto a derrick, boat davit or other hoisting gear.

*Science News Letter, February 20, 1943*