

# SCIENCE INFORMATION

## for Members of the Armed Forces OVERSEAS

**I**N order to serve the armed forces, Science News Letter recently offered its new monthly Overseas Edition to men and women outside the United States.

This special edition is geared to the armed forces—it contains scientific information interesting and useful to them. News important to us here, but not to them there, is cut out in order to pack the Overseas Science News Letter with the science information of greatest interest and use to members of our armed forces Overseas.

It is just sixteen pages (like the Science News Letter you are reading), but it is pocket size, printed on Air Mail weight paper, and the pictures and types are one-third smaller than the regular weekly edition. It is mailed by **FIRST CLASS MAIL** to service people Overseas each month, for \$1.25 per year.

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### MEDICINE

## Search for Filariasis Cure

➤ **SEARCH** for a chemical cure for filariasis, worm-caused disease that has attacked some American troops in the tropics, can be helped by Florida cotton rats which are a convenient animal for testing possible anti-filariasis drugs, Prof. James T. Culbertson and Dr. Harry M. Rose, of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, report. (*Science*, March 24)

The rats have already pointed to one drug as worthy of trial in human cases, the Columbia scientists report. The drug is called neostam or stibamine gluco-side and is a pentavalent antimony com-

pound that has been used to treat another tropical disease, kala-azar.

"Repeated injection of neostam has resulted in the cure of filariasis in the cotton rat," the scientists state.

If further trials of the drug succeed in curing the disease in humans, it will come as an agreeable surprise to many specialists in tropical medicine. Pentavalent antimony compounds, although valuable in certain protozoal infections, have not heretofore shown promise against the worm-caused disease, filariasis.

*Science News Letter, April 1, 1944*

### GEOLOGY

## South American Oil

➤ A **VAST** untapped region extending the whole length of South America promises rich oil reserves, Dr. John L. Rich of the University of Cincinnati reported before the American Association of Petroleum Geologists' annual convention in Dallas.

A belt bordering the eastern base of the Andes mountain system from Tierra del Fuego to the island of Trinidad is the area which Dr. Rich forecasts will be oil-productive. The belt is now productive in the Neuquen, Mendoza, and Salta regions of Argentina, in southern Bolivia, in central Peru, and in Venezuela, Dr. Rich revealed.

Though much of the sub-Andean belt is geologically favorable for the generation and accumulation of oil, the finding and development of that oil promises to be more than ordinarily difficult, Dr. Rich warned.

"In much of the belt, except locally close along the mountain base, the prospective oil-bearing rocks lie at great depths, ranging up to 15,000 feet or more, and the structures will be difficult to find owing to a thick mantle of comparatively recent gravels, sands and silts spread eastward from the growing Andes, unconformably burying the older rocks."

Transportation of the oil to market is another obstacle cited by Dr. Rich: "Some 1,600 miles of the sub-Andean belt, from central Bolivia to the Llanos of central Colombia, is an unbroken tropical rain forest where the heat and humidity are trying and where the presence of tropical diseases will re-

quire the utmost vigilance. Transportation in the region is not yet developed, and at best the distance to markets is very great."

According to Dr. Rich, one of the largest areas of potential oil territory, not yet productive, is the huge Parana Basin region of southwestern Brazil, Paraguay, and northern Uruguay, where good showings of oil have been found in test wells.

"But most of the basin is covered by an enormous lava field which makes prospecting extraordinarily difficult," Dr. Rich says.

*Science News Letter, April 1, 1944*

### ORDNANCE

## Simple Oxygen Helmet Invented for Flyers

➤ A **SIMPLE** oxygen helmet for flyers is the subject of patent 2,344,718, obtained by S. A. Morehouse of Glendale, Calif. Instead of having the pressure-reducing bag in an awkward position on the wearer's chest, it incorporates it into the structure of the helmet fitting over the flyer's head, with the intake tube from the supply tank coming up behind his seat and hence wholly out of the way.

*Science News Letter, April 1, 1944*

Among the *scarcest articles* in the Netherlands are ordinary straight pins.

*Mice* have been taught to distinguish between two musical notes, one of which is associated with the appearance of food.