

Do You Know?

A new chemical compound to improve wear and waterproof *shoe soles* includes raw linseed oil, castor oil or cottonseed oil, varnolene (a petroleum derivative), pine tar and benzaldehyde.

One of the most acute *housing* shortages in the world is in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; this Brazilian capital has increased a half-million in population in the past few years.

Two young bulls and two heifers of the *Red Sindhi* breed have been brought to America to start an experiment in developing better dairy cattle for southern climates.

The great gray marsupial *frog* of the Orinoco river country has an area beneath the skin of the lower back where eggs are deposited and hatched, and from which the developed young emerge through a temporary slit along the back.

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MEDICINE

Aspirin Starts Blood Flow

➤ WHEN BLEEDING starts up two or three days after a tooth has been pulled, it probably is because the patient has been taking aspirin or some related drug to relieve pain.

Studies showing this are reported by Dr. Gustav William Rapp of the Chicago Dental College, Loyola University, in the *Journal of the American Dental Association* (April 1).

It should be possible to prevent the delayed bleeding, Dr. Rapp states, by giving proper doses of synthetic vitamin K, the so-called anti-bleeding vitamin.

Patients who have considerable bleeding after removal of tonsils probably owe this to the aspirin they have been taking to relieve the pain after the operation, Dr. Rapp points out, referring to a report by another scientist, Dr. Rudolph Singer of Vienna who joined the U. S. Army Medical Corps.

Dr. Singer made what Dr. Rapp calls "the remarkable observation" that the high frequency of hemorrhage after tonsil removal in America as contrasted to its infrequent occurrence in Europe is probably because American doctors prescribe acetylsalicylic acid (aspirin), alone or with other drugs, for relief of pain after the operation. European doctors almost always prescribe a different drug, aminopyrine (Pyramidon) for this purpose.

Salicylic acid, Dr. K. P. Link and associates at the University of Wisconsin have discovered, causes a deficiency of prothrombin in the blood. When there is too little prothrombin, the blood clots slowly. Bleeding is prolonged and the clot formed is fragile.

Vitamin K can overcome this because it stimulates production of prothrombin.

Following these clues, Dr. Rapp made some tests on 40 apparently normal students. He gave some of them tablets containing acetylsalicylic acid, acetophenetidin and caffeine, such as are prescribed by many dentists for relief of pain. He gave others the same tablets plus tablets of synthetic vitamin K. Just before this and every day for six days after, he tested their blood for prothrombin.

Those getting the acetylsalicylic acid mixture developed an acute deficiency of prothrombin in their blood. This showed up within one and one-half to two days after taking the tablets. It lasted for longer than five days. The clotting time

in these students was nearly double the normal.

The prothrombin deficiency could be prevented by taking synthetic vitamin K with each tablet of the acetylsalicylic acid mixture.

Science News Letter, April 5, 1947

GENERAL SCIENCE

Science Foundation Bill Takes Step in Congress

➤ A NATIONAL science foundation bill has been reported out of the Senate labor-public welfare committee and has gone on the calendar.

This may be the first step to federal financing in peace of basic research such as paid dividends during the war. Last year a science foundation bill passed the Senate and died in House committee.

The Senate bill is a modification of S. 526 introduced by Sen. H. Alexander Smith, R., N. J., and contains some features of the rival bill authored by Sen. Elbert Thomas, D., Utah.

The bill reported would create a foundation of 24 scientists serving on a part-time basis.

The House committee considering similar science foundation bills has not yet reported, since testimony at hearings extending over two days has not yet been printed. The Senate committee did not hold hearings.

A survey by the Inter-Society Committee for the science foundation, representing 75 scientific organizations, shows that two-thirds of the representatives in that committee favor a full-time administrator rather than a part-time board in control of the foundation. This is the organization proposed in last year's bill and in the Thomas bill.

But the scientists are willing, if necessary, to accept a commission form of administration, which is alternate choice of 95%, or a board, which is alternate choice of 86%.

Allowing the foundation to include the social sciences, which the reported bill is expected to do, met with 99% approval.

Patent legislation should not be included in the bill in the opinion of 94% of the scientists, and 86% are in favor of the foundation granting undergraduate scholarships.

Science News Letter, April 5, 1947