

ZOOLOGY

Only Four Koalas Outside Australia Arrive in U. S.

See Front Cover

► ONE OF the four Koalas that arrived this month in Los Angeles on their way to the San Diego Zoo is shown on the cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS LETTER accepting San-Diego-grown Eucalyptus readily. The four are the only Koalas anywhere in the world outside of Australia and were sent to the United States for use in a motion picture. After their brief fling at stardom, they will be exhibited in San Diego's Zoo on an indefinite loan from the Australian government.

Southern California is one of the few spots on the globe outside of Australia which is suited to the survival of Koalas, since these living "teddy bears" feed only on the buds and leaves of certain species of Eucalyptus, a genus of trees native to the Australasian region and widely planted in California. Of the hundreds of species of Eucalyptus, only a dozen or so are eaten by Koalas.

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TEXTILES

Fire Risk for Clothes

► HOW FAST your sweater or other clothes will burn depends not only on what they are made of but also on how the material has been treated.

A brushed rayon sweater may go up in flames almost instantaneously, but a brushed all-wool sweater will not burn because protein materials are usually not flammable. However, a brushed all-wool sweater may have the fibers brushed out from the material to such a length that a flame brought near them causes flash burning of only the very tips. This is much the same sort of singeing that can happen to body hair—

MEDICINE

Chloromycetin for Anthrax

► THE PAINFUL skin sores of sometimes deadly anthrax can be healed and the accompanying sickness remedied by chloramphenicol, or chloromycetin as this member of the Big Five antibiotic team is also called.

News of successful use of this remedy in four cases of skin anthrax among Indian laborers comes to physicians in a report from Dr. P. S. Clarke, chief medical officer of the Tingri Medical Association, to the JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (Jan. 12).

Ability of chloramphenicol to stop anthrax germs in the test tube had previously been reported by other scientists. When five patients were brought to the hospital with this disease on the same day, Dr. Clarke had an opportunity to see whether the antibiotic drug would live up to its laboratory test promise.

One of the five died of the disease seven hours after reaching the hospital, in spite of treatment with penicillin. This man and the next three patients, two of them chil-

dren, had eaten of a cow that had "died under suspicious circumstances" a week before. The fifth patient was the 10-month old baby of the second patient. The baby was being breast fed and had not eaten or handled the cow. But the father said that after he had cut off his portion from the cow and taken it home, he had taken the baby on his knee and played with it.

The father of this patient was treated on traditional lines, with penicillin, sulfadiazine and arsenical medicine, as a control for comparison with the chloramphenicol treatment.

A month later another man, of a different district and a different caste, came to the hospital with an anthrax sore on his back. "Dramatic improvement" followed 12 hours after chloramphenicol was started and this patient also recovered.

The chloramphenicol was supplied by Parke, Davis and Co., Detroit, U.S.A., who manufacture it and who also obtained permission from the Government of India to use it in these cases.

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the ends burn, often without any damage to the skin underneath.

To find out how flammable any material is, scientists make rate-of-burning tests. In the method approved by the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists, strips of material about five and one-half inches long and one inch wide are cut. These are fastened to an inclined plane, slanted at a 45-degree angle, then lit under carefully standardized conditions. Even the manner in which the flame is applied to the fabric is specified to insure that all results are comparable.

In such a test a five-inch strip of brushed rayon will burn in one to two seconds. Materials that are generally regarded as safe for use will usually take about six seconds to burn completely.

Standards to guide manufacturers and retailers so that they can tell whether a certain fabric now being made or being considered for manufacture is flammable or not are now being agreed upon. The standards have been in preparation for nearly a year, but the recent appearance of "torch" sweaters caused a speed-up.

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In an area in northern India where mosquitoes and malaria were brought under control in two years by spraying with DDT *land* values have about doubled.



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