

MEDICINE

Doctors Are Reading—

► THE LIFE of at least one child out of 101 affected by brain disease following lead poisoning was saved by surgery.

The brain is affected in about one-fourth of lead poisonings among children, Drs. Joseph Greengard, David C. Voris and Raymond Hayden of Cook County Children's Hospital in Chicago reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 180:660, 1962.

"Of 101 acute lead encephalopathies (brain disease) observed at this hospital during the years 1959-1961," the doctors said, "25 were operated upon."

Deaths among these "most-severely-ill children was 64% as compared to 31.6% over-all mortality in the 101 encephalopathies," they reported, concluding that surgery "in selected cases" has a place in treatment of brain disease caused by lead poisoning.

An accompanying editorial points out that lead poisoning is "essentially a problem of big cities with slum areas where deterioration of housing has occurred." Lead intoxication in the young child is a total community problem "of great magnitude," the *Journal* commented (p. 687).

University Without Walls

Better medical care for the nation would result through a comprehensive program of continuing medical education, another editorial points out. A "university without walls" was recommended as a challenge to doctors and a benefit to citizens (p. 684).

Supporting evidence that there is progress toward a national, coordinated agency to further continuing medical education appeared in a report of the Joint Study Committee in Continuing Medical Education (p. 676).

Dr. Bernard V. Dryer, study director and a member of the faculty of Western Reserve University School of Medicine, Cleveland, wrote the report, which cited "a serious gap between available knowledge and application in medical practice." It said "the physician must be a lifetime student if he would maintain his full professional competence."

Television would be part of the teaching mechanism of the university without walls, and a series of voluntary examinations would be developed along with each "core curriculum" to let the participating physician assess his own progress.

Medical centers, community hospitals and general or special medical societies would be used for bedside teaching and group clinics along with group discussions and conferences.

New Cold Hypersensitivity

A new form of cold hypersensitivity was reported by Drs. Walter B. Shelley and William A. Caro of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. They termed it "cold erythema" (redness of the skin that is sometimes serious) (p. 639).

One patient, aged five, became rigid and cried out piercingly on any significant exposure to cold.

"We believe that the clinical syndrome exhibited by this patient represents a previously unrecognized type of cold hypersensitivity," the physicians said. The patient was treated with drugs, but warmth was the sovereign remedy. The disease appears to be congenital and nonallergic.

• Science News Letter, 81:367 June 9, 1962

RADIOLOGY

Radiation Affects Mammals' Nerve System

► RADIATION EFFECTS on the nervous system of mammals have been detected for the first time after 60 years of working with ionizing radiation, two scientists at the U. S. Naval Radiological Defense Laboratory, San Francisco, reported.

Sleeping rats will awaken within 12 seconds after exposure to a very low dosage (three roentgens) of ionizing radiation. The dosage is less than a person receives through his feet from a shoe store fluoroscope.

Dr. Donald J. Kimeldorf, head of the laboratory's physiology-psychology branch, with Edward L. Hunt, reported the findings.

"Inasmuch as radiation is capable of arousing the sleeping animal," the scientists said, "his behavior and emotional reactions in a radiation field might well be altered. This is one of the earliest responses to radiation exposure known and its relationship to the development of radiation sickness requires investigation."

• Science News Letter, 81:367 June 9, 1962

Lithium when present in small amounts in the soil or irrigation water produces a characteristic mottling on citrus leaves.

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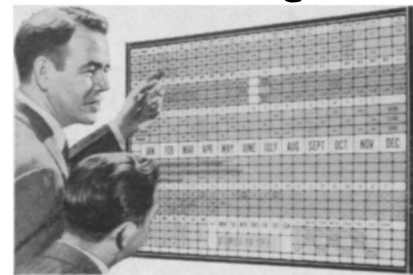
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