

for the constellations of the zodiac, the narrow path in which the sun seems to move, are slowly changing their position, returning again to their old positions after an interval of 25,800 years.

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#### BLUE VITRIOL USED FOR BURNS

Blue vitriol, whose most common use is to supply the poisonous element in many spray mixtures for fruit trees, is now employed medicinally to treat phosphorous burns.

Burns caused by phosphorous are very painful and slow to heal because the cellular elements of the tissues with which the phosphorous comes in contact are destroyed, followed by the formation of ulcers and sores. Experiments conducted at the Medical Research Laboratory at Edgewood Arsenal show that 1 to 3 per cent. of copper sulphate, otherwise known as blue vitriol, applied to a burn of this character will form a coating over the phosphorous ingrained in the tissues and render its removal easy. When the copper sulphate coated phosphorous has been removed the wound is washed out and treated as any other burn.

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#### SUBSTITUTE FOR QUININE IS SOUGHT

The monopoly of the quinine market held by the Netherlands must be broken, say the health experts of the League of Nations. At present the most effective remedy against malaria is quinine made from the cinchona bark grown in the Dutch East Indies, which furnish nine-tenths of the world's supply. Cinchona bark from the other countries which supply the remaining tenth gives only 2 to 5 per cent. quinine while that from Java, the principal source, runs 5 to 7 per cent.

The production of quinine in the Netherlands possessions is in the hands of a syndicate which fixes the price on the Amsterdam market. A return of 36 per cent. is paid on the capital invested. There is an independent Japanese company but the competition that it affords is not for the present appreciable. Requests for the government to regulate the actions of the "quinine ring" have met with the reply that the quinine interests are merely safeguarding the legitimate rights of the industry.

The health officials of the League are concentrating their attention on the development of a suitable substitute for quinine. Cinchonine, a drug made from a combination of several cinchona barks from trees growing elsewhere than in the East Indies, is under consideration as such a substitute. If it is found that it can be made as efficient as quinine, an effort to break the monopoly will be made by encouraging the cultivation of cinchona trees in all parts of the world where they will grow.

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