

SURGERY

New Operation for Bunion Lets Patient Wear Shoes

A NEW operation for bunion in which the foot gets well quickly and the patient can wear ordinary shoes in comfort was reported by Dr. Earl D. McBride of Oklahoma City at the meeting of the American and Canadian Medical Associations.

The operation proved satisfactory in 39 consecutive cases, Dr. McBride said. He called it a conservative procedure which tends to restore the normal architecture of the toe.

The muscle that pulls the toe inwards is released by the operation. The muscle on the outside is shortened. Thickened tissues are removed and also a small amount of bone if the deformity is severe. The mechanical force causing the deformity is thus corrected. An additional advantage is having the scar underneath, where it is safe from irritation.

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EUGENICS

Intermarriage Of Deaf Should Not Be Encouraged

A WARNING that intermarriage between young people who have defective hearing is being encouraged, rather than discouraged, and that such couples should think twice about hereditary angles of the situation before marrying, was sounded at the meeting of the American Federation of Organizations for the Hard of Hearing.

Dr. Elbert A. Gruver, superintendent of the School for the Deaf, Mount Airy, Pa., told of a recent survey of publications for hard of hearing persons which brought to light 57 wedding announcements.

"Is anything being done to discourage this tendency to intermarriage?" he asked. "Not so far as we know. On the contrary, the apparent approval expressed by the congratulatory notices in some of the publications would be very likely to have the opposite effect."

Dr. Gruver's report checks up on prophetic alarms of Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, which aroused much controversy over fifty years ago. Dr. Bell, telephone inventor and teacher of the deaf, observed the tendency of deaf couples to marry, and wrote a "Memoir upon the Formation of a Deaf Variety of the Human Race." The memoir raised a storm of protest, but it led quickly to

research showing that congenital deafness is hereditary.

So far as acquired deafness is concerned, Dr. Gruver pointed out that knowledge is still limited. The little-understood condition known as otosclerosis or progressive deafness is clearly hereditary, according to testimony of no less than twenty-six specialists, he said.

"I do not presume to say how we should proceed," concluded Dr. Gruver, "except to advise that we make full information available, and that we see that it is in the hands of all deaf or hard of hearing young people at as early an age as possible. For, to quote a comment penciled on the margin of a book at the Volta Bureau in Dr. Bell's own hand: 'It is too late to reason with a man *after* he has fallen in love. He cannot help himself.'"

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MEDICINE

Over 50 Per Cent Success With Drug Treatment

A NEW method of treating narcotic drug addiction which cured 31 out of 57 addicts was reported by Drs. Theophil Klingman and William H. Everts of Ann Arbor, Mich., to the meeting of the American and Canadian Medical Associations.

Hyoscine, one of many derivatives of belladonna, and pilocarpine, a substance from a South American plant called jaborandi, were the medicines used. Both of these have been tried before in treating drug addicts, Drs. Klingman and Everts pointed out, but they have modified the method of giving these remedies and believe they have developed a rapid, simple, painless and non-hazardous way to give relief from the craving for narcotics.

Hyoscine is given at the beginning of the six to eight weeks' treatment. This causes a mild delirium and has the peculiar effect of washing out of the mind all memory of events during the treatment. Hyoscine also tends to allay pain. Following this, pilocarpine is given. This quickly dispels the delirium. Further treatment consists in investigating the patient's mental state and environment and in making every possible adjustment.

Of the group of 57 so treated, 31 are now known to be free of the narcotic drug habit three and one-half years after the treatment. Seven relapsed after being free for from three to ten months. The other 19 could not be located to learn the results of the treatment.

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IN SCIENCE

MEDICINE

Streptococcus Disease Germs Are Distinct Forms

SCARLET fever, erysipelas and other diseases caused by infection with streptococci are probably each caused by a distinct and different type of streptococcus "germ," in the opinion of Dr. Ludvig Hektoen, of Chicago, who spoke before the meeting of the American and Canadian Medical Associations. The problem is one of the unsettled questions of bacteriology.

Skin tests made by Drs. George and Gladys Dick, of Chicago, showed that some persons were susceptible—or gave a positive reaction, as physicians call it, to scarlet fever toxin but not to erysipelas, and vice versa.

These findings were quoted by Dr. Hektoen in support of his view that the two diseases are caused by two different types of streptococci.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Dionne Quintuplets Normal for Age

THE DIONNE quintuplets are "at age" in intellectual and other development, Dr. Allen Roy Dafoe of Callander, Ontario, reported to the meeting of the American and Canadian Medical Associations. This is the first finding of the scientific psychological studies which are being made of the famous little sisters.

Although they look so much alike that even Dr. Dafoe can hardly tell them apart, their personalities are quite noticeably different.

Their survival is due in large part, Dr. Dafoe said, to the good French-Canadian stock from which they spring and which enabled hardy pioneers like La Salle to survive the hardships of frontier life in exploring and opening up parts of Canada and the United States.

Credit for the babies' survival was also given to the excellent nursing care they have had, and to the fact that "there were no aunts or uncles or grandparents saying what to do."

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E FIELDS

MEDICINE

Current Carries Drug To Heal Varicose Ulcers

VARICOSE ulcers, resulting from varicose veins, some cases unrelieved for as long as 37 years, were completely healed by three weeks of treatment demonstrated before the meeting of the American and Canadian Medical Associations by Dr. Irving S. Wright and his associates, of Bellevue Hospital, New York City.

This treatment consists of galvanic induction through the skin of a chemical called acetyl beta methyl choline chloride.

A bandage soaked in the chemical is wrapped around the patient's leg, a sheet of metal covers it and a galvanic current is passed through. This induces the healing chemical to enter the underlying tissues.

While Dr. Wright and associates believe all cases of varicose ulcers can be healed by this treatment, they will not remain healed unless the underlying condition that caused them is removed. If the cause was varicose veins, which it frequently is, these should be treated.

In diabetic patients, however, it may be impossible to inject the varicose veins. In such cases, the galvanic induction treatment is particularly valuable, though it may have to be continued for years.

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MEDICINE

Acne Sufferers Should Avoid Spinach and Pork

PERSONS suffering with acne would do well to avoid spinach, pork and potatoes, it appears from a report made by Drs. T. D. Cunningham and J. C. Mendenhall, of Denver, to the Association for the Study of Allergy.

These foods more than any others caused a reaction in acne sufferers who were tested for food sensitivity, the Denver physicians found from skin tests similar to those made on hay fever and asthma patients. The tests were made in the course of a search for the cause of acne.

This troublesome condition, one form

of which is the familiar "breaking out" seen on the skins of adolescents, is apparently a state of sensitiveness to foods. Practically all acne sufferers are sensitive to proteins in foods, Drs. Cunningham and Mendenhall reported. Other factors such as drugs and glandular disturbances can and do produce acne in a small group of cases.

Diet has long been a method of treating acne, but the work of the Denver physicians shows that the diet can now be put on a more exact and scientific basis. Instead of avoiding certain general classes of foods as formerly, the acne sufferer can now have the skin tests made to determine whether food is the cause of his condition and if so which foods in particular he should avoid.

Half the acne sufferers described today said they had from ninety to one hundred per cent. relief after following a diet selected in this way. The majority of the patients, seventy-five per cent., received from fifty to one hundred per cent. relief by avoiding the foods to which they were found sensitive.

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MEDICINE

Excess Sugar in Blood Not Necessarily Harmful

EXCESSIVE sugar in the blood is not necessarily harmful, even in diabetes, Dr. Herman O. Mosenthal of New York City told members of the American and Canadian Medical Associations.

A high level of sugar in the blood may be "normal" for some persons. When, however, the sugar content of the blood is high and in addition sugar and water are being eliminated from the body in excessive quantities, as in diabetes, the situation is serious.

Dr. Mosenthal warned against attempting to reduce the excess amount of sugar in the blood by underfeeding. Some diabetic persons do this in an effort to avoid taking insulin. It is dangerous, he explained, because the malnutrition which results from the underfeeding may lead to hardening of the arteries and is a factor in producing diabetic coma.

Many diabetic patients actually need excess sugar in their blood in order to utilize any sugar at all in their bodies, Dr. Mosenthal said. The same is true of some normal persons. The excess sugar appears to act as a stimulus to assimilation of sugar. Dr. Mosenthal said he had noted many persons with a high blood sugar level who did not later develop diabetes.

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CHEMISTRY

Mathematical Equations For Cake Aid Bakers

EQUATIONS for angel cake are the latest aid for bakers in high altitude where the reduced air pressure influences cake dough and makes pastry tough, grainy, soggy, coarse or any of the other "disasters" known to housewives.

Speaking at the meeting of the American Association of Cereal Chemists, Mark A. Barmore, of State Agriculture College, Fort Collins, Colo., described new tricks in baking wherein cakes are made mathematically and tenderness is tested mechanically.

Tenderness in angel food cakes, Mr. Barmore reported, increases with altitude and with sugar content of the cakes; and it decreases with increasing amounts of flour and egg white content.

Just as it is difficult to boil eggs on a mountain top, because water boils at a lower temperature due to the reduced air pressure, so too does altitude affect baking. For one thing, the dough has a greater expansion during baking and the temperature inside the cake falls.

To mechanically-minded bakers, tenderness is known as tensile strength, the same term that is used to indicate the structural strength of steel.

Mathematical equations are now available, Mr. Barmore reported, which link the effects of ingredients and altitude with dough's tensile strength from sea level up to 15,000 feet.

With one-third of all the United States at heights where altitude affects baking, and with 5,000,000 people dwelling in this area, the baking equations are not as meaningless as they may sound at first.

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ORNITHOLOGY

Rare White Oriole Bagged in Siam

ONE of the world's rarest birds, the white oriole, has been added to the Smithsonian Institution collections.

Specimens were collected by Dr. Hugh M. Smith, former fisheries expert for both the United States and Siam. Because white orioles live in the tops of the highest trees of dense evergreen forests they are rarely killed for scientific study.

They are not related to the Baltimore oriole of this country, which is really a form of blackbird. The Old World true orioles are more closely related to crows.

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