

PSYCHOLOGY

Consumer in Tough Spot Between Bunk and Debunk

IT'S TOUGH being a consumer these days, and rising prices are not the only reason. Efforts meant to protect and assist him promise, at the present rate, to make it increasingly harder for him to decide what to consume when he does get a few dollars together to meet the bill.

Consider the apparently simple matter of buying toilet soap or breakfast food or a hand lotion. Long before he gets around to buying one of these or many similar items, the consumer has been deluged by sales efforts of nation-wide advertising which these days takes the form of neighborly advice on his health, diet and beauty problems. (Mr. Consumer is told he has beauty problems as well as Mrs. Consumer.)

Pretty well worn down by the enthusiasm of advertisers and promoters and perhaps confused enough as to just which product he really wants or needs, the consumer is next subjected to assault by the enthusiastic debunkers who see deadly peril lurking in apparently every advertised health, food and beauty product, and who consider it their duty to warn

Mr. and Mrs. Consumer in terms even more lurid than some of the advertising they denounce. And if a product cannot be found dangerous to life and health, it can almost always be found too expensive.

Reliable investigations and analyses have shown that some nationally advertised and sold products are dangerous. It does seem that the consumer should be warned against these if he cannot be protected any other way. It would be too

bad, however, if the business of warning the consumer should become an ineffectual cry of "Wolf" or worse still, another racket. The rising generation of warners would do well to take a lesson from one of the ablest and most experienced of them and learn the power of ridicule.

Meanwhile the consumer, in the tough spot where bunk and debunk meet, needs to call on his heritage of Yankee horse sense, sales resistance and humor.

Science News Letter, February 5, 1938

MEDICINE

Too Much Fuss Over Blood Transfusions**Well Organized Hospitals Always Have Donors Available; Blood Bank Plan Now in Effect in Several Communities**

THE FRANTIC appeals for blood donors that are made to the public every now and then and the consequent "fuss and furor" are causing some concern to physicians in Indiana and, presumably, elsewhere.

Blood transfusions have an important place in medical and surgical practice, but the general excitement over them may have confused the public as to their actual value. With this in mind, the Indiana physicians have, through their state medical association, issued a clarifying statement.

"The principal value of a blood transfusion is to replace a patient's loss of blood," it is pointed out.

The usual cases which require blood transfusions arise from street and highway accidents, hunting casualties, and occasionally from home accidents such as a cut with a sharp instrument. In such cases the first duty to the patient is to stop the loss of blood and get him to the nearest hospital. If a transfusion is needed, the authorities at most well organized hospitals will be able to locate a donor during the interval while the patient is being given other attention.

A few communities have, besides the hospital lists of blood donors, so-called blood banks. These depend on the recently discovered fact that blood can be preserved for as long as a month. Blood from lifeless bodies of accident victims is removed, examined and, if suitable, preserved for future transfusions.

It is very rare, the Indiana State Medical Association points out, that a pa-

tient needs blood from a person who has recovered from a specific type of infection.

Another type of patient who may need a blood transfusion is the mother who loses much blood during childbirth. A maternity service in one city has prepared for this emergency by building up a blood bank into which each expectant mother may deposit some of her own blood, taken several weeks before her confinement.

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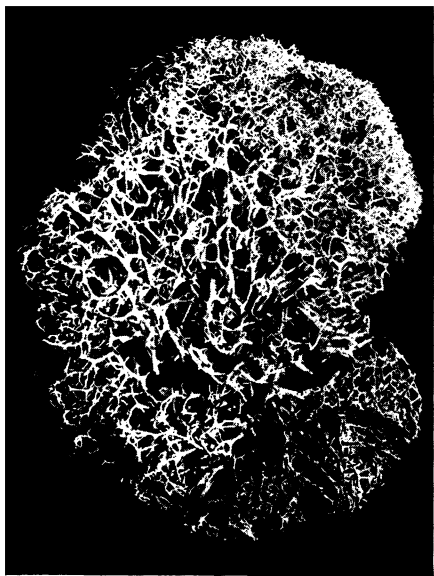
PSYCHOLOGY

Quiet Conversation Preferred by Hard-of-Hearing

DEAF people do not enjoy loud talk. When allowed to adjust the loudness of the voice to which they are listening, individuals with normal ears prefer to have it 38 decibels, or loudness units, above the level at which it is audible. Hard-of-hearing persons will adjust the same speech at a loudness only 23 to 20 decibels above their threshold of hearing. This was discovered in experiments at the University of Iowa by Dr. Noble H. Kelley.

Deaf ears function differently from normal ears, Dr. Kelley found. In speaking to those with normal hearing you will have most difficulty in making your consonant sounds understood; vowel sounds are most intelligible. For the deafened, the consonants are recognized practically as easily as the vowels.

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**REINDEER MOSS**

Reindeer and caribou, up in the Arctic lands, would often have a hard time in winter, if they could not scrape away snow and find thick mats of reindeer moss beneath. Tough chewing, of course, but the reindeer have good teeth. It is not a moss but a lichen. Neither is it confined to the Far North: it grows in the subtropics and even in the tropics.