

These curious sidelights on both history and zoology have been uncovered by Drs. Alexander Wetmore and Remington Kellogg of the Smithsonian Institution, in a study of the birds and mammals of Tennessee. They found much valuable zoological information in the old tax records and official payrolls.

The Governor was paid 1000 deer skins a year, the Chief Justice, 500. County clerks got salaries of 300 beaver skins each, and the clerk of the state's House of Commons, 200. Beaver and deer skins in those days had a cash value of six shillings apiece, which was also the value of the now almost unobtainable otter.

Taxes were paid in raccoon and opossum skins. Possum pelts were not worth much. Grafting tax gatherers had the thrifty trick of debasing the currency, by cutting off the tails of 'coon skins, sewing them on the opossum skins which they kept in the treasury, and then selling the raccoons for their own profit.

There were elk and bison in the state at that time, but by 1820 the flood of settlers had driven them all out.

The studies of Drs. Wetmore and Kellogg show that present-day Tennessee has 180 species of birds and 87 of mammals. Of bats alone there are 11 species, most of which are rarely seen.

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MEDICINE

## Navy Medical Statistics New Lead for Cancer Research

### Prevalence of Skin and Lip Cancer in Service Is Accompanied By Low Rate of Internal Cancer

**A** PROMISING new direction for cancer research is suggested by a study of medical records of the U. S. Navy. The study, covering nearly 1,000,000 man-years, has just been reported by Dr. Sigismund Peller, of the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, and Commander Charles S. Stephenson, M.C., U. S. Navy. (*American Journal of Hygiene*).

Between the ages of 25 and 64, these scientists found, the mortality from cancer is about 50 per cent. lower among the Navy personnel than would be expected from cancer rates in New York in 1930 for the same age, sex and color groups. The physicians explain this as probably being due to the greater frequency of skin and lip cancers and lesser frequency of internal cancers in the Navy personnel as compared with civilian populations in New York, London and Vienna, where cancer surveys have been made.

Skin and lip cancers occur at several times as high a rate among the active Navy personnel as in the civilian population, the study showed. This is believed due to greater exposure to skin irritants, especially sun, salt water and wind. But these external cancers are easily cured, only about 12 in every 100 cases ending fatally, according to the Navy records. So the total cancer mortality in the Navy remains low.

The irritation which causes the in-

creased number of external cancers, Dr. Peller believes, acts as a protection against the occurrence of cancer elsewhere in the body.

Dr. Peller does not go so far as to suggest that the entire population try to

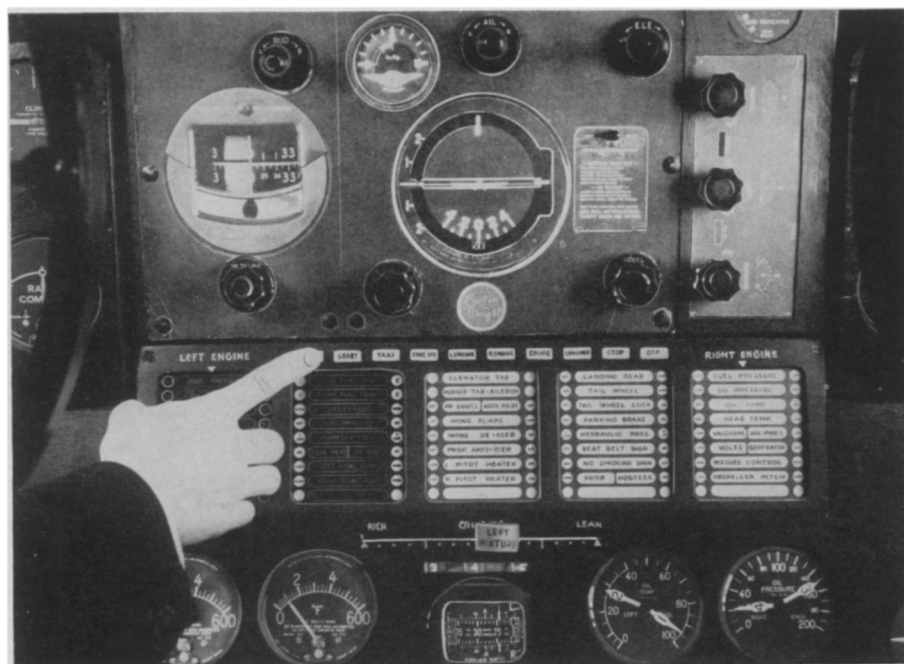
acquire the easily cured skin cancers as protection against possible internal cancers that are more likely to prove fatal. He and Commander Stephenson, however, do suggest that the theory be tested by studies of cancer in animals.

More statistical studies are also needed, these scientists believe, to help solve the cancer problem. Such studies as have previously been made are based on data from hospital groups, not from total population groups, they point out. Their studies are said to be the first in the history of cancer research made on a group for which such complete medical records are available. The Navy records covered each cancer patient's medical history from entry into the service until death.

Cancer does not always give a warning in time for treatment to be successful, the study also showed. In spite of annual thorough medical examinations of officers, frequent examinations of enlisted men, and the constant availability of adequate medical attention in the Navy, many cases of cancer were not discovered until too late for cure and even sometimes not until after the patient's death.

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The National Assembly in the Philippines is taking steps to establish a national language based on Tagalog, one of the many native languages.



#### AUTOMATIC TROUBLE SPOTTER

Here is the new robot pilot which flashes on 90 different lights to warn the airplane pilot of trouble in as many different parts of his machinery. (See SNL, Feb. 18) This new "tell-tale indicator" almost literally watches the instruments for the human pilot.