

MEDICINE

New Method of Attack On Arthritis Suggested

A NEW method for attacking the problem of arthritis is provided by experiments in which mice were given the disease complete with swollen, stiff knees and swollen toe joints like those rheumatic humans have. The experiments are reported by Dr. Albert B. Sabin, of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. (*Science*)

There is even a possibility, it appears from the report, that the cause of cases of arthritis for which no cause has yet been found may turn out to be an unusual kind of "germ" or micro-organism.

It was by injecting such a germ into the veins or abdominal lining of mice that Dr. Sabin produced the disease in these animals.

"Whether or not a similar micro-organism shall be found to play a part in related human affections," Dr. Sabin says, "the experimental disease provides

a useful tool in the investigation of many pertinent questions."

The germ which caused the arthritis in mice is a pleuropneumonia-like microbe which passes through porcelain filters, as viruses do, and which is about the size of vaccine virus. It was obtained from the brain of a normal mouse. Dr. Sabin has also been able to cultivate it from chronically affected joints of the arthritic mice.

The method of growing this germ, involving what Dr. Sabin calls "blind passage," may, he believes, be profitably applied to the study of human arthritis of unknown origin.

The mouse arthritis germ is somewhat like another mouse germ which Dr. Sabin has recently studied and which apparently is spread by other germs rather than by flies, mosquitoes or other more usual germ transmitters.

Science News Letter, March 25, 1939

PSYCHOLOGY

Typical Business Man Must Watch His Sense of Humor

THE typical American business man who places high value upon utility must beware if he is not to be accused of having no sense of humor. Warning that strong attachment to the practical does not accompany the ability to chuckle over a good joke comes from Dr. N. Franklin Stump of Keuka College who reports new experiments in humor to the *Journal of General Psychology*. (January)

This moral was drawn by Dr. Stump

from results of a sense of humor test which he gave to 90 Keuka College girls—a test which included 90 jokes and 12 humorous drawings culled from 9,000 jokes in as many as 277 different fields in which men have tried to be funny. They ranged all the way from side-splitters to those that fall completely flat.

Another test revealed the basic attitudes of these same girls, showing whether they were, as individuals, theoretically

● RADIO

Dr. Gustav Egloff, director of research for the Universal Oil Products Company, will be the guest scientist on "Adventures in Science" with Watson Davis, Director, Science Service, over the coast to coast network of the Columbia Broadcasting System, Saturday, April 1, 6:15 p. m. EST, 5:15 p. m. CST, 4:15 p. m. MST, 3:15 p. m. PST. Listen in on your local station. Listen in each Saturday.

minded, economic, aesthetic, social, political or religious.

The aesthetic attitude, Dr. Stump found, is very slightly related to sense of humor, but the economic attitude which is, or ought to be, that of the business man, is related inversely—if you want money, you can't have much fun.

If it takes a sense of humor to enjoy "comic" pictures, he said, it is an entirely different sort of humor from that to which jokes appeal. The relation between scores on jokes and pictures is practically non-existent.

Fat people cannot be assured by their weight of possessing a strong sense of humor, if the Keuka girls are typical. Height, in these tests, is more indicative of humor than is weight.

Perhaps you think you have a good sense of humor. Don't fool yourself. A lot of the Keuka girls thought so, too,—until they took Dr. Stump's test. The ability to judge of your own humor is very faulty. There is no relation whatever between the self-estimates of these girls and their response to the jokes—or even to the comic pictures.

Bright girls and the emotionally mature get no more fun out of the funny than do their classmates.

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A stone fish-hook used by some fisherman of about 7000 B. C. was found in France in a peat bed 22 feet below the surface.

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