

asked to answer questions as to responsibility, we, as doctors, should consider ourselves incompetent to answer. . . .

"Official psychiatry would perform the greatest service to law and medicine if it would decree that any expert psychiatric testimony admitting the existence of legal insanity and accepting the concept of legal responsibility is not in accordance with the basic tradition of the profession and automatically and officially disqualifies the expert in the eyes of the profession itself."

Science News Letter, October 7, 1939

MILITARY SCIENCE

Hitler's Danzig Threat May Have Meant Air Power

WHEN Hitler in his Danzig speech threatened the use of some means still unleashed against the Allies, interpreted by some commentators to mean that Germany may have some new horror up its scientific sleeves, he probably was referring only to his air power that has not come into use on a scale much larger than practiced in Spain and China.

There is extreme skepticism over the existence of any new weapon comparable to poison gas sprung upon French and British in the last World War by Germany. Poison gas is significantly unused so far in the present war. What are the possibilities?

Death rays, that perennial scare completely unconfirmed, are defeated by the good old inverse square law. The power of radiation varies and lessens with the square of the distance.

Germs are not practicable. They are too dangerous, since germs know no boundaries and there are too many natural germs anyway. Any terrible new gas is discounted by chemists; mustard gas is bad enough as it is.

Atomic energy? The original research was done in Germany, but physicists are extremely skeptical that it has been achieved.

Rockets, liquid oxygen bombs, other variations of explosive bombs are discounted.

Newest weapon in this war—radio propaganda, is one against which an immunity is being built up in human minds. Men are learning not to believe anything.

Science News Letter, October 7, 1939

Delaware is the first state to pass a law requiring dentists to spend a year as interns before practising as full fledged professionals.

MEDICINE

Animal Glands Transplanted Give Hope In Addison's Disease

Death of Student During Examination Is Attributed To Taking "Pep Pills," A. M. A. Journal Learns

HOPE that gland transplants from either animals or other human beings can provide sufferers from dread Addison's disease with new and functioning adrenal cortex tissues, restoring them to relative health, is held out by an editorial in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. (Sept. 9)

Caused by a deficiency in the secretion of the adrenal cortex, located above the kidney, Addison's disease has been combatted by injections of the hormone, and more recently by the implantation under the skin of pellets of the chemically synthesized hormone forming "artificial glands."

The fact that the Soviet physician, Dr. E. M. Auslander, has transplanted animal glands into 14 patients with more or less permanent results in mild cases and improvements lasting 5 to 6 months in severe cases, "seems to offer some hope of amelioration and to justify further trial," to the *A.M.A. Journal*.

Five years ago Drs. Edwin Beer and B. S. Oppenheimer of Mt. Sinai Hospital, New York, reported successful transplantation of a human gland with apparent complete recovery of the patient. The glands, whether human or animal, are placed in pockets under the skin.

The death of a Purdue University student last January while writing a college examination was attributed in part by the coroner, Dr. Lowell C. Smith, to use of "pep pills" made of amphetamine sulfate. In a report to the *A.M.A. Journal*, Dr. Smith tells how the student, identified as E. J. S., aged 25, collapsed in the class room after having taken pep pills before a series of examinations.

The use of amphetamine sulfate is "probably more common than one would think," Dr. Smith declared. Severe collapse following its use has been reported, but no fatalities have hitherto been reported in the medical literature.

Weather conditions, particularly rapid changes, which increase the severity of asthma produced experimentally in guinea pigs in German research, suggests to the *A.M.A. Journal* that closer study of the weather may help medical therapy.

A Chicago fireman who complained of asthma after every fire has added wood smoke to the list of asthma causes, Drs. Ben Z. Rappaport and Rudolph Hecht of Chicago, report.

Science News Letter, October 7, 1939

BOTANY

Rare Hawaiian Plant Flourishes in Volcano

See Front Cover

THE RARE silversword plant of the Hawaiian Islands, which grows mainly in the great extinct volcanic crater of Haleakala, in that section of Hawaii National Park located on the island of Maui, apparently is holding its own, according to John D. Coffman, of the National Park Service.

For many years it was feared that this plant was in danger of extermination as a result of destruction of its seeds by insects. National Park Service experts made studies of conditions and experimented in protecting the plant at vital periods. Apparently the results were successful, as a recent count showed a larger number of silverswords in the crater than had been reported for some time.

Recently the National Park Service, through Territorial Forester C. S. Judd of Honolulu, forwarded seeds of the silversword plant to Felixstowe, England, at the request of a British plant enthusiast.

Science News Letter, October 7, 1939

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