

MEDICINE

# Two New Attacks Made On Painful Rheumatic Fever

## Sulfanilamide Practically Eliminated Recurrence In Group of Children; Germ Believed Identified

**R**HEUMATIC fever, disastrous malady that makes heart cripples of young children and kills thousands of them each year, is being attacked along two lines which seem to promise hope of eventual conquest of the plague.

One line of attack is being made with the successful new chemical weapon against many other diseases, sulfanilamide. Recurrence of rheumatic attacks in one group of children has been practically eliminated by having the children take three small daily doses of this drug. Dr. Alvin Coburn of Presbyterian Hospital, New York, has reported.

These recurrences of rheumatic fever are said to be more dangerous than the initial attack and to have a high death rate. If the child does not die his heart is nearly always further damaged. When the children in Dr. Coburn's group were getting sulfanilamide they had these recurrences at the rate of less than one per hundred children, compared with the usual rate of 35 to 50 per hundred. About fifteen cents' worth of the drug a day seemed fully as effective in keeping the children well as trips to Florida, Southern California or other warm, dry climates which are known to be helpful in this condition. The economic factor is important because rheumatic fever is usually a disease of poverty.

Dr. Coburn warned, however, that sulfanilamide is actually harmful if given during acute attacks of rheumatic fever.

Second important attack on the ailment was launched in England by Dr. C. A. Green of the Royal Naval Medical School, Greenwich. Dr. Green's studies will be interrupted by the war, but he hopes American scientists can carry

them on. He has given important evidence of what many have believed but no one has conclusively proved—that the disease is caused by streptococcus germs. By unusually careful technic he was able to grow from the heart valves of 10 children who died of acute rheumatic fever the same type of streptococcus germs which had been found in their throats during the sore throat which preceded by a week the actual rheumatic attack. Curiously, Dr. Green's results came from his attempt to find proof for his own doubt that streptococcus germs were guilty of causing rheumatic fever.

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ARCHAEOLOGY

## Clothes Important In Old Incan Empire

**W**HEN strangeness of 1939 winter hats and shoes and silhouettes has been exhausted in conversation, there remains the argument as to whether clothes get queerer.

For perspective, turn back to almost any other civilization and survey the clothes problems. Edda V. Renouf of the Brooklyn Museum has done something of this sort with Indians of the Incan Empire in prehistoric Peru. They had their oddities.

They were, she concludes, apparently free from dictates of "the fanciful rogue Fashion." The same tunic and mantle styles were good for centuries. But when it came to accessories and trimmings, there was endless variety, and Miss Renouf rates clothes as very important in life of the Incan Empire.

The Inca, ruler of several million Indians, is said to have kept a sisterhood of maidens busy making his clothes. He wore a garment once, and since no one else dared wear his clothing, piles of exquisitely woven and decorated articles were stored away.

In centuries preceding Spanish Conquest, when the Incas dominated a huge area with fascist tactics, they even dictated hair styles. Only the ruling Inca could wear short hair, says Miss Re-

# RADIO

Dean Joseph Barker, of Columbia University's School of Engineering, will be the guest scientist on "Adventures in Science" with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over the coast to coast network of the Columbia Broadcasting System, Monday, November 6, 4:30 p.m., EST, 3:30 CST, 2:30 MST, 1:30 PST. Listen in on your local station. Listen in each Monday.

nouf. Medium length was for aristocracy, and long hair for the general public.

In a crowd, you could pick out Indians from different districts by their headgear, and judge social rating. The Inca's headdress had a crimson fringe, and according to one historian, if a thread of it accompanied an order, it was unhesitatingly carried out, however drastic.

Wearing sandals too short was a custom, for both men and women. They said it provided a toe grip against slipping.

Peruvian men had no pockets, but they could reach toward the left hip and find their small belongings in a pouch, slung from the right shoulder.

Men as well as women wore jewelry, and the enormous ear stoppers worn by high officials won the nickname Big Ears from the Spaniards. That may not be Fashion, but in current slang it still looks like "spinach."

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CHEMISTRY

## Canadian Inventors Find New Resin Material

**A** NEW type of organic resin material which can be made into artificial silk fibers has just been patented at the U. S. Patent Office by the Canadian inventors George O. Morrison and Aubrey F. Price of Quebec Province.

The new resins are of the vinyl-acetal type. Fourteen different ways of preparing them are described in the patent, which has been assigned to Shawinigan Chemicals Ltd. of Montreal. Three of the methods yield materials "suitable for the manufacture of threads of artificial silk," states the patent.

Other forms of the new type resin also have wide use. Some are suitable for the interior lining of bottle caps and cans because of their insoluble properties. Others can be made into clear, colorless transparent sheeting suitable for wrapping materials.

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Ballots made out in raised Braille type were recently used for voting at a meeting of blind workers in Washington.

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