

EDITORIAL NOTES

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ANTHRAX.

Quite a number of cases of anthrax have been traced to shaving brushes and, recently, several cases have occurred from a more frequent source, namely, the handling of skins and hides. Dr. C. Lincoln Furbush, Director of Public Health of the City of Philadelphia, communicated an article on the subject to the *Philadelphia Ledger*, from which the substance of the following is taken.

"Anthrax is an infectious disease and is produced by the anthrax bacillus. It is interesting to note that this disease is believed to be the first to be looked upon as definitely infectious and the first bacterial disease to be discovered and proved to be due to a microorganism. In this respect, at least, its history is unique.

"It is essentially a disease of animals, and in certain countries of Asia, in Russia, Germany, France, the Balkan States and England, it is far more common than in the United States. In the first mentioned of these countries its ravages are wide-spread, at times appearing in epidemic form. Owing to its infectious nature, hides from animals which have died of anthrax are potential sources of danger to man unless the greatest care is taken in the preparation of them for the market.

"Human beings contract anthrax from animals which have had the disease. Usually this infection takes place among those who have had direct or indirect contact with the diseased animals or with material from these animals which is used in commerce.

"Most of the cases of anthrax which occur in human beings are, therefore, among butchers, hostlers, tanners and those who handle the hair or wool from animals which have had the disease. Occasionally, however, the bacillus remains alive through all the processes of

preparation for the market and some purchaser of a product will contract anthrax from the bacillus which lives, all unsuspected, on an implement perhaps in daily use.

"The anthrax bacillus is one of the largest in size of any of the disease-producing bacteria, and it is further characterized by being what is known as a 'spore producer.' By this is meant that when conditions for its continued growth are not favorable it develops a body or 'spore' of high powers of resistance. This 'spore' can remain for an indefinite period in a quiescent state, and when conditions again become favorable will return to growth and its infectious nature.

"It is this peculiar quality of the anthrax bacillus which has led to human infection here in the last year or two. The malignant germ remains in a seemingly innocuous condition until suddenly it resumes its powers for evil, and then if there be an abrasion of the skin into which it can enter the disease is contracted.

"In man, two kinds of anthrax occur. The usual form is known as an anthrax carbuncle, and is a malignant pustule, commonly found on the hands, arm or face. This starts as a small reddened surface, which rapidly becomes localized, and this area soon shows a blister, the base of which rapidly becomes hardened. Within thirty-six hours the center becomes brownish and incrustated, with small blisters around it, and the surrounding surface is hot and swollen.

"Fever is absent in most of these cases, but in some there is an increase in temperature, with characteristic symptoms. In the latter case, if prompt treatment is not instituted, death will result. But in the great majority of cases of this type the disease remains localized and recovery is to be expected if proper and prompt treatment is given.

"In the second type of anthrax in human beings the disease does not tend to localize, but spreads through the system at once and a fatal termination is usually the result."

SOUTHERN HOLLY LEAVES FOR A CAFFEINE BEVERAGE.

The use of a decoction *Ilex cassine* is not new, having been employed by the Indians and, to some extent, by others of the section in which the shrub grows. Several years ago Dr. Frederick B. Power and Victor K. Chesnut determined the caffeine content of *Ilex vomitoria* to be as high as 1.67 percent (see Year Book A. Ph. A., vol. 8, p. 509). George F. Mitchell, tea specialist of the Federal Government, has worked out methods for curing the leaves, the purpose being to encourage their use for making a table beverage, replacing tea. The leaves are put through a fermentation process and then dried at about 110° C., the methods seen to be based on those employed in preparing tea leaves for the market. The beverage made from cassina is said to be palatable and to possess the stimulating properties of tea.

COD LIVER OIL FOR RICKETS.

Dr. E. A. Park and Dr. John Howland of the Johns Hopkins Hospital staff have made the statement, according to press reports, that cod liver oil brings about a change in the bones of the patient under treatment, which, if the diet is not too faulty, amounts to a complete cure. The studies have comprised in all some fifty cases, and the results have been uniformly consistent. "The change is not noticeable at once but is readily demonstrable in almost all cases by the end of a month. In two or three months so much infiltration of salts has taken place that the extremities of the bones, except for deformities, are practically normal."

WHY "OILS" OF CADE?

The above question serves as the title of a paper by Dr. Camille Pepin, Paris, in *Ungerer's Bulletin* for January. He states that under the name of "oil of cade," there are three different products on the market in this country—technical, U. S. P. VIII, and U. S. P. IX. In France there are two—veterinary, and true oil. The former probably corresponds to the "technical," while in the oils of U. S. P. VIII and U. S. P. IX, the definition of the latter is more complete and in accord with true oil of cade, obtained in the proper manner from the wood of *Juniperus*

oxycedrus. In Dr. Pepin's opinion the logic of the situation requires:

"First, that technical oil of cade should cease to bear the designation, cade, to which it has no right, and take the vague title of empyreumatic oil.

"Second, that the appellation, oil of cade U. S. P. VIII, be dispensed with in commercial usage since the product designated by it might be confounded with the true oil of cade as defined in the ninth revision and bears the name to which it has no claim unless it coincides with the latter product.

"Third, that the designation oil of cade be reserved exclusively for application to products which are extracted from the *Juniperus Oxycedrus* and correspond to the requirements of the U. S. P. IX."

OIL OF SASSAFRAS.

R. M. Dudley, writing in *Ungerer's Bulletin* for January, gives an account of the oil of sassafras industry, its history, the methods employed in distillation, etc. The total annual American production averages about 85,000 pounds annually.

"The natural oil is yellow to reddish brown, according to the character of the root employed and the form of still used. Since there is no corresponding difference in quality no effort is made to keep the different varieties of root separate. The U. S. Pharmacopoeia recognizes the yellow to reddish yellow color as official.

"Authorities differ as to the correct specific gravity. Proctor states that it varies from 1.087 to 1.094, increasing somewhat with age, while the U. S. P. requires that the official oil have a somewhat lower specific gravity, from 1.065 to 1.075. Since the specific gravity of the principal constituent, safrol, is given as 1.11 and those of the other important ones are lower it would seem that the higher specific gravity would imply a greater percentage of safrol in the oil.

"The optical rotation, according to the U. S. P., should be +3° to +4° and all oil sold with the U. S. P. label must conform to this standard. High grade Oil Sassafras, however, has a lower degree of rotation, usually slightly more than two degrees, which agrees with results obtained by Schimmel and Company who found the correct figure to be +2.14°. The main constituent, safrol, is inactive as are the pinene and phellandrene which are also stated to be present. The plus rotation must therefore be due to other minor constitu-

ents and, if exceptionally high, to adulteration, usually with oil of camphor.

"A pure, high quality Oil Sassafras should have a specific gravity of close to 1.070 at 25° C. and a plus optical rotation of slightly above 2°."

ITALIAN OLIVE OIL PRODUCTION.

The season in Italy has been favorable for the gathering of olives. The yield in 1921 is estimated at 22,046,300 pounds, as compared with 26,896,500 in 1920 and an average of 26,482,500 for the last five years. The yield in oil is estimated at 3,747,900 pounds, against 3,769,900 in 1920 and an average of 3,863,000 for the previous five years. The olive crop is 82 percent that of 1920, while the olive oil production is practically the same.

INTERESTING SUBSTITUTES FOR FOOD PRODUCTS.

Dr. Arno Viehoever contributed an interesting article on above subject to *The American Food Journal*. *Zamia flondaua* is one of the products considered; tepary beans, until recently largely grown in California, is another. The yield of latter is stated to be up to 4,000 pounds per acre; the plant is closely related to the common bean and also Lima bean; the author points out that probably the use of them has not grown on account of a somewhat bitter taste of the bean. *Solanum macrocarpum* is mentioned as a possible substitute for tomatoes, and is used by the natives of Madagascar. The importance of cassina for making a table beverage is discussed. Spanish thyme has recently been imported; the flavor differs from that of *Thymus vulgaris*, and it is not definitely known whether the former contains thymol. Two new substitutes for cubebs have appeared on the market, *Piper ribesoides* and *P. cubeba*, var. *rinoe badak*; the latter is considered poisonous; cubebin, the author states, is evidently absent in both of the substitutes. *Jeffersonia diphylla* is in several respects very similar to hydrates, but contains no hydrastine. The article is illustrated.

THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THE LABORATORY.

A most interesting and comprehensive contribution by Dr. Henry Kraemer appears in the February *American Druggist* on above subject. The author states that one of the greatest needs in every community is a laboratory properly conducted and operated upon a high professional basis by a pharmacist.

"No one can conduct a laboratory," he states, "unless he has the research spirit and an unselfish desire to help everyone who is in the dark, whether it be the physician, the patient, district attorney, or the individual who wishes some light on some particular problem.

"To be a financial success it must be an all around laboratory and equipped in such a way that a great diversity of work can be done."

Dr. Kraemer states that the work done in the laboratory advertises it, and cites examples of coöperation with physicians, officials and laymen. Methods of urine analyses, blood examination, examination of exudates, are given. References are made to laboratory workers. He concludes by saying that there are three essentials in the making of a laboratory man—the possession of good eyes, he must be intellectually honest, and he needs moral strength.

WHY DOCTORS ARE SCARCE IN RURAL PENNSYLVANIA.

A committee of the County Medical Society, composed of David Riesman, chairman, professor clinical medicine, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine; Thomas McCrae, professor practical medicine, Jefferson Medical College; William Pepper, dean, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine; and John H. Gibbon, professor surgery, Jefferson Medical College, reports that, not including Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, there is in the state one physician for every 947 inhabitants. Some of the reasons assigned for the scarcity are as follows:

"(a) The reduction in the number of medical schools throughout the country.

"(b) The war.

"(c) Limitation in the number of students accepted by the best medical schools.

"(d) The long time required to obtain a medical education and the license to practice.

"(e) A special reason for the scarcity of doctors in rural communities is that capable men are deterred from settling in country districts because of the lack of proper hospital facilities.

"The small cities and towns and villages are greatly in need of physicians. The lack of trained medical men has led to the influx of quacks and irregular practitioners."

The committee recommended to the society the following to meet the conditions:

"First. It is desirable to increase the number of students admitted to medical schools.

"Second. Extra-urban practice should be made more valuable and more attractive by erecting modern hospitals throughout the state, placing them with due regard to the needs of the communities.

"Third. Colleges, as well as primary and secondary education, should be speeded up so that men and women may be able to enter medical schools at an earlier age."

The *Journal of the American Medical Association* comments: "The saving of one or two years of time in intermediate and secondary education, as recommended in the Pennsylvania report, is indeed desirable; but that reform would have no effect whatever in supplying doctors for rural communities. It is quite clear that the only way by which physicians can be induced to locate in rural districts is to make those districts more attractive places in which to live, from the professional, social and economic points of view."

BRITISH PHARMACOPOEIA SALES.

According to the report of the Pharmacopoeia Committee of the General Medical Council, given in a recent issue of the *Pharmaceutical Journal* (London), 1,427 copies of the British Pharmacopoeia, 1914, were sold by the publishers between May 21 and November 19, 1921. The number sold in the year ending November 19, 1921, was 2,407, the total number sold since the date of publication being 41,385. It is also noted that the Council has given permission for the British Pharmacopoeia to be translated into Chinese.

THE METRIC SYSTEM.

Senator E. F. Ladd, in an article contributed to the *New York Commercial*, states that the question of the adoption of the metric system of weights and measures "is no longer circumscribed by the boundaries of our own country. It is a world question. There are now about 40 countries that have adopted the metric system as the sole legal standard. If we intend to carry on commerce with the rest of the world we will have to conform with their commercial requirements. Practically all the presidents of the foreign delegations to the conference on the limitation of armament have expressed their keen interest in the possibility of the United States soon adopting the metric system.

"Now that there is so much interest aroused in the metric question it behooves all those who have the cause at heart to lend a helping hand until the American people are freed

from the bondage of an archaic system of weights and measures."

PERSONAL AND NEWS ITEMS.

Crippled by neuritis in the wilds of South America, DR. HENRY H. RUSBY, ex-president of American Pharmaceutical Association, has been compelled to abandon the leadership of the Mulford biological exploration of the Amazon Basin. Dr. Rusby, after struggling for months against this malady, his discomforts being increased by an infected tooth, according to an announcement at Columbia University, February 15, set out alone from the Bolivian fastnesses on a hazardous journey of 1,600 miles for a Brazilian port, whence he will embark for New York, where he should arrive about March 1; he arrived at Manaos, Brazil, January 9.

The duties of the director of the expedition were turned over to Dr. W. M. Mann, an entomologist of note and Assistant Curator in the Division of Insects of the United States National Museum. Under the direction of Dr. Mann, who has had wide experience in tropical travel and as a collector, Dr. Rusby's party is continuing its work in Bolivia and western Brazil, making studies and collections in the valleys of the Rio Beni and some of its tributaries, including the Rio Negro and Rio Ivon.

Plans for the trip into Colombia have been modified and the explorers will work in Bolivia and Brazil until April. The botanical work of the expedition is being continued by Dr. O. E. White, a representative of the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens and Harvard University, assisted by Señor Cardenas, a young Bolivian botanist who became a member of the party as a result of a request made by the Bolivian Department of Agriculture.

Despite the changes in plans and the unexpected termination of Dr. Rusby's active leadership, the sponsors of the expedition, it was said, feel that important contributions to botanical and medicinal science will result. More than 3,000 plant numbers have been collected and many more will be added. The explorers have already shipped to this country many boxes containing specimens of economic importance.

Educational and scientific circles in South America are said to be viewing the work of the expedition with favor. One Peruvian newspaper, describing Dr. Rusby and his researches, refers to his exploits as "the gallantry of a man of science."

Henry M. Whelpley, retiring treasurer of the A. Ph. A., after serving two years as vice-president of the St. Louis Anthropological Society, has been elected president of that association.

Dr. Edgar Fahs Smith is the Chandler lecturer for 1922. The lecture was delivered March 2 at Columbia University on the subject, "Samuel Latham Mitchill—a Father in American Chemistry." The foundation of the Chandler lectures was established in 1910, and a medal is presented annually to each lecturer in further recognition of his achievements in science. (See *JOUR. A. PH. A.*, March 1917, p. 228.)

Samuel Latham Mitchill was the first professor of chemistry at Columbia University and the first senator from the state of New York. He was born at North Hempstead, N. Y., August 20, 1764, and died in New York City, September 7, 1831. He founded, with Dr. Edward Miller and Dr. Elihu H. Smith, the "New York Medical Repository," and was its chief editor. Prof. Charles F. Chandler is a life member of the American Pharmaceutical Association.

Prof. Frank X. Moerk delivered the ninth of the series in the public lecture course at the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science on the subject "How Chemistry Develops the Industries."

Dr. Charles E. Caspari delivered an address on "The Science of Chemistry" before the

Academy of Science, St. Louis, February 20.

Prof. Anton Hogstad, Brookings, S. D., spoke before South Dakota Academy of Science on "Drug Cultivation." He also presented a report on medicinal and poisonous plant investigations.

Prof. Henry Kraemer delivered an address on "Manufacturing for the Retail Pharmacist," at the South Dakota School of Pharmacy, February 20.

Saunders Norvel, New York, was one of the speakers at the meeting of Minnesota Pharmaceutical Association; his subject was "Quick Turn-over and the Relation It Has to the Present Day Drug Store."

Mr. Edward Morell Holmes, for fifty years curator of the Museum of the British Pharmaceutical Society, an honorary member of the American Pharmaceutical Association, was recently awarded damages (£1,000) for injuries sustained by being knocked down by an automobile, about a year ago. The injury necessitated the amputation of his left leg. Mr. Holmes is 79 years of age; he is well and favorably known to American pharmacists.

Simon N. Jones, Louisville, Ky., veteran member of the American Pharmaceutical Association, was run down by an automobile, February 6. In a letter of recent date Mr. Jones reports that he is recovering from the injuries sustained.



ROCKEFELLER PARK—CLEVELAND, OHIO—THE 1922 CONVENTION CITY.

Scene in Rockefeller Park, one of the natural parks in Cleveland. It combines boating and tennis with its beauty as a place to drive, walk or rest. It is part of the city's park and boulevard system extending around the city. Twenty parks with more than 44 miles of paved driveways and boulevards, comprising 2420 acres, make up this great system.