

would be advantageous to consider the colour preferences of the various groups of insane in the decoration of sleeping quarters,

recreation rooms and sun rooms, and in the materials given out for vocational training.

A.G.N.

## Editorial Comments

### The Elixir Sulfanilamide-Massengill

In our last issue we called attention to certain toxic manifestations that may be attendant on the use of sulfanilamide, and advocated care in its administration. We also noted that a number of deaths had occurred in the United States from the use of sulfanilamide in the form of a certain elixir. Up to November 6th seventy-one deaths have been reported, and an active investigation of the affair has been in progress, both on the part of the United States Government and the American Medical Association. In the *Journal of the American Medical Association* for November 6, 1937, p. 1531, can be found a detailed and convincing presentation of the studies carried out by the Chemical Laboratory of the American Medical Association.

The preparation under test was the "Elixir Sulfanilamide" prepared by the S. E. Massengill Company, of Bristol, Tenn.-Va. This was found to be composed as follows:

	By volume
Diethylene Glycol (approx.) . . . .	72.0 per cent
Sulfanilamide (approx.) . . . . .	10.0 per cent
	weight/volume
Water (approx.) . . . . .	15.6 per cent

Studies on toxicity were conducted on rats, rabbits and dogs with pure diethylene glycol, pure sulfanilamide, Elixir of Sulfanilamide-Massengill, and with a "synthetic" elixir of sulfanilamide compounded by the American Medical Association Chemical Laboratory with pure substances in approximately the same proportions as are found in the Massengill elixir. The conclusion is arrived at that the sulfanilamide had no appreciable part in the toxicity of the preparation, though the report emphasizes the opinion that sulfanilamide should be used cautiously. The cause of the deaths was diethylene glycol in the doses given. Anuria was an outstanding feature of the fatal cases. Diethylene glycol is a decidedly toxic substance and cumulative poison. It should be stated that the elixir in question had not been accepted by the Council of Pharmacy and Chemistry of the American Medical Association.

A.G.N.

### The Canadian Journal of Comparative Medicine

Veterinary Science has not produced in Canada a great deal of journalism. In 1886 the *Agriculteur Canadien* appeared in Montreal but it had only a short existence. It was devoted to agriculture and veterinary practice. A second journal of this kind appeared in Toronto in 1920, entitled the *Canadian Veterinary Record*. This was published by the Ontario Veterinary College. It apparently did not live beyond 1925. Now we have before us the first number of the *Canadian Journal of Comparative Medicine*, published in the interests of veterinary science, by an editorial board of four:—Drs. T. W. M. Cameron, Chas. A. Mitchell, R. A. McIntosh, and A. A. Etienne. The foreword wisely emphasizes the importance of the link between medicine and veterinary practice, so constantly insisted on by Sir William Osler, and the value of such a journal in developing and enriching veterinary science itself is beyond computation. We wish our new companion success and continued life. H.E.M.

### A Warning as to Membership in C.M.A.

We have been informed that certain book and periodical salesmen are offering to accept fees for membership in the Ontario Medical Association and the Canadian Medical Association in conjunction with the journals which they sell. No agent has been authorized to solicit membership in either organization and physicians are earnestly requested to complete all details of membership only with the Central Office, 184 College Street, Toronto. It may be again stated that for practising physicians subscription to the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* is a prerequisite of membership in the Canadian Medical Association and the sale of subscriptions to this *Journal* by canvassers is fraudulent.

### Corrigendum

We regret that in our editorial in the November issue entitled, "The toxicity of sulphanilamide and allied compounds", an error has crept in on page 493, line 34, "Perrin and Bliss" should read "Perrin H. Long and Bliss".