

## "Ideal" Polio Vaccine Still to be Found.

"Difficult Problems" Created by Virus.

IN THE ABSENCE of an epidemic, poliomyelitis is not a disease which, at any rate with the methods at present available to us, is susceptible of quick detection and early stamping out.

Sir Weldon-Dalrymple-Champneys, Bt., Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health, told members of the Royal Society of Health in London on December 14th.

He said that the polio virus of which three main types had so far been recognised set "peculiarly difficult problems."

"But a large number of so-called 'wild viruses' have been described, and many virologists believe that a definite fourth type may well emerge soon."

After saying that the contamination of food (including water) was probably the predominant factor in the spread of polio, the speaker advised personal cleanliness as well as the avoidance of crowded places during an epidemic.

He described the ideal vaccine as "one injection or one course of which would give life-long and complete protection against paralytic polio."

It was too soon, however, to tell whether any such vaccine so far devised would give such a high and lasting degree of immunity.

The speaker who was present in the United States when the trial of the Salk vaccine took place, said that neither Dr. Salk or his co-workers had ever claimed, as a considerable portion of the American Press had implied, that they had obtained a "final conquest of the dread disease of polio."

It had to be recognised that results both good and bad might attend the using of vaccines whether they were of the "live" or "dead" type.

The chief advantage claimed for the "dead" vaccine was that they were "safe."

"The cases of paralytic polio following the injection of Salk vaccines are believed to have been due to the survival of some virus of the Mahoney\* strain in certain batches prepared by one of the manufacturers in spite of the formalin treatment.

"By tightening up the testing of the Salk vaccine the U.S. Department of Health believe that they have reduced the risk of such an occurrence being repeated to negligible proportions and are strengthened in this opinion by the absence so far of any further catastrophes."

Continuing, Sir Weldon said that an important consideration with the Salk, as with many other vaccines, was sensitisation. If only two or three injections were required, they could possibly ignore the small quantity of protein contained in the Salk vaccine.

"But if it should prove that one or more booster doses are required during the following years to keep up the level of immunity, then this sensitising action might become important."

Concluding, the speaker said that there was some evidence that if a person already infected with the polio virus was given an injection of diphtheria toxoid or whooping cough vaccine, he might develop paralytic polio with the paralysis predominating in the injected limb. "In view of this experience there would seem to be at least a possibility that injection of a polio vaccine into an already infected person might have the same effect."

\*NOTE: Mahoney. A strain of Type I virus.

## Male Nurses Urgently Needed.

Trainees Can Get Deferment of Call-up.

THERE ARE OVER 4,000 vacancies for male nurses in hospitals in Great Britain. Of these, 2,500 are for men to train as nurses. The greatest need for student nurses is in the mental and mental deficiency hospitals, where there is a serious shortage of nursing staff. This was stated recently by the

Ministry of Labour and National Service, whose Nursing Appointments Service is making special efforts to fill the vacancies.

The Ministry point out that young men can obtain deferment from National Service during their training as nurses if they start training before they are 18½ years of age or within three months of leaving school, whichever is the later. They may train for registration on the General, Mental or Mental-Deficiency parts of the Register, for the Certificate of the British Tuberculosis Association or for enrolment as Assistant Nurses. The possibility of deferment in these circumstances, which may not be widely appreciated, has been brought to the notice of hospital authorities by the Ministry of Health.

After completing their nursing training the young men will have the opportunity of being employed on nursing duties while they perform their National Service.

Any young man interested in nursing as a career can get particulars of vacancies and information about conditions and rates of pay during training and after qualifying at any local Nursing Appointments Office or local Employment Exchange. A special leaflet (N.R.L.18) is available at these offices, giving details of the opportunities offered.

## World Health Organization.

### Conсорcia Stays at Home.

By Perry O. Hanson, jun.,

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CONSORCIA is nine years old. She lives with her parents and five brothers and sisters in a nipa-thatched hut about a mile from any road. Her village is three miles from the school where she is enrolled in the second grade, and to which she walks twice a day when it is not raining too hard.

Conсорcia's father has a difficult time keeping his family of eight fed and clothed. He goes to town on market days twice a week in the hope that someone will hire him as a *cargador* to carry baskets of fish, or bundles of fuel. On other days he is available as a farm-hand, but this work depends on the seasons.

A year ago when work was scarce it became increasingly difficult for him to provide for his family. When a distant relative from the island of Negros offered to take one of the girls to train as a maid, there seemed to be nothing else to do but to accept the offer and little Conсорcia was chosen as the one to go.

Homesick and lonely in Negros, Conсорcia nevertheless had one advantage over her brothers and sisters at home; she was sent to school for the first time. Back home her parents deeply felt the loss of their daughter, and, after times had improved a little, they asked for her return.

So Conсорcia came back, delighted to be home again, but pleading to be allowed to go to school. The parents finally gave in and Conсорcia happily joined 50 other children in the second grade class of the crowd *poblacion* school, three miles from her home.

When Dr. Rodriguez and I entered the room where the WHO/UNICEF assisted team was holding its skin clinic, Conсорcia was the first child I saw. She stood barefooted and alone in the middle of the room, her solemn brown eyes fixed on the nurse who had just examined her, and a look of bewilderment on her face.

Dr. Rodriguez was asked by the physician in charge of the team to confirm their findings. The clinically unmistakable patch was there. When the test-tube, warmed with hot water, and a needle were applied gently to the spot, Conсорcia could feel neither warmth nor pain. Leprosy.

A short time ago this diagnosis would have meant tragedy and great suffering for Conсорcia. She would have had to leave school, and her new-found friends and teachers. Once more she would have had to leave her home and family. It

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