claw was found failed to reveal any sign of injury. It was impossible to identify the toe from which the claw had dropped. This strikes the writer as fair proof that the shedding of claws is a normal phenomenon. The claws of the rear feet are possibly lost as they become loosened, or they may be pulled out by the animal with his teeth. Cats are frequently seen to pull at their hind claws in a manner suggesting this.

The shedding of claws is most likely seasonal, as are the related phenomena in other animals. Why then should the cat carry on the scratching movements throughout the year? It is possible that a further function of the scratching may be that of keeping the claws from curving too much, consequently growing into and irritating the paw. The irritation caused by claws which are curved too much or by the itching or other annoyance of loose claws may be the stimulus that starts the scratching movements. In this connection a colleague, a zoologist, has called attention to a reaction of badgers. These animals frequently drop out of an intense fight, roll over on their backs and scrape the claws of their front paws by rapidly drawing the paws across each other, pads facing. In accounting for the continuation of the scratching activity throughout the year, however, the likelihood of this being a habit reaction must not be overlooked.

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF THE NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

TWO recent publications in the National Research Council's *Bulletin* Series should be of rather wide interest among scientific men. One (Bulletin 58) is entitled "Handbook of Scientific and Technical Societies and Institutions of the United States and Canada." The American section of this bulletin was compiled by Clarence J. West and Callie Hull, and the Canadian section by the National Research Council of Canada. The other (Bulletin 60) is entitled "Industrial Research Laboratories of the United States, including Consulting Research Laboratories, Third Edition." This bulletin was compiled by Clarence J. West and Ervye L. Risher. Both bulletins are the output of the National Research Council's Research Information Service, of which Dr. West is director.

The purpose of publication of the handbook is to present a ready guide to those scientific and technical societies, associations and institutions of the United States and Canada which contribute to scientific knowledge or further research through their activities, publications or funds. Only those government institutions are included which administer private funds. Organizations directly controlled by universities or colleges have been omitted because it is expected that they will be covered by the forthcoming publication, "American Universities and Colleges," to be issued by the American Council on Education. Seven hundred and nine American organizations and seventy-four Canadian organizations are listed in the bulletin. The address of the secretary, the date of organization, the major object of the institution, the character of membership and amount of dues, time of meetings and information concerning publications are given for each institution.

The bulletin on Industrial Research Laboratories lists 999 such laboratories in the country, giving for each laboratory the name and address of the supporting industrial or commercial concern, the makeup of the research staff, and a list of special subjects to which the research activities of the laboratory are devoted. The first edition of this bulletin was published in 1920 and listed about 300 laboratories; a second edition (first revised edition) was issued in 1921 and listed about 600 laboratories. The present edition (1927) is the second revision of the bulletin.

The difficulties of compilation in connection with both of these publications make it inevitable that some errors, both of commission and omission, have been made by the compilers. The director of Research Information Service (National Research Council, Washington, D. C.) will be glad to have his attention called to any such errors noted by any who may have occasion to examine the bulletins.

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SCIENTIFIC APPARATUS AND LABORATORY METHODS

PREPARATIONS OF STAINED DECALCIFIED BONE WHICH RIVAL GROUND SECTIONS

GROUND sections of bone, besides being difficult to prepare, are often unsatisfactory for student use either on account of their thickness or due to the fact that they have been mounted in thin xylol-balsam, resulting in the displacement of the air from the lacunar and canalicular spaces of the tissue. It is, however, possible to prepare decalcified bone in such a way that all the advantages of canalicular detail are obtained. Two methods by Schmorl,[1] the picro-thionin and the thionin-phosphotungstic acid

[1] 1909. Schmorl, G. "Die pathologisch-histologischen Untersuchungenmethoden." Vogel, Leipzig.