

the unfortunate victim is pinned on its side and in less than ten seconds emasculation is effected.

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### FOREIGN JOURNALS IN THE USSR

IN the article on "The Fifteenth International Congress of Physiology: The Congress and Russian Physiology," printed in the issue of *SCIENCE* for September 13, I stated that our Russian colleagues in physiology are being, to some degree, intellectually starved, owing to their inability to buy foreign journals; and I appealed to their Government to help them by providing the "exchange" necessary to buy more. Here are some facts concerning the total number of copies of three British journals sent to the USSR and, for comparison, to the U. S. A.:

	USSR	U. S. A.
<i>Journal of Physiology</i> .....	27	241
<i>Journal of Experimental Biology</i> ...	7	130
<i>Biochemical Journal</i> .....	47	374

That the "exchange" is available is shown by the fact that the Government of the Soviet Union is spending a large sum of money in buying Professor Kapitza's apparatus from Cambridge University: a sum large enough to pay for 100 subscriptions to each of these journals for 15 years.

These figures show the situation rather clearly. In the USSR, it is frequently and loudly announced that the Government is far more concerned in helping science than is that of any other country; the net result,

however, is that in the United States government and private effort together buy nine times as many English journals in physiology and its two allied sciences as does the Government of the USSR. If this fact can be brought to the attention of the authorities in the Soviet Union it may stimulate them to do better, and so considerable advantage may result to our colleagues there.

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### MISTAKEN IDENTITY?

MY attention was recently called to a brief, center-page article in *Liberty* for November 16, 1935, on "Not one in a thousand knows, sometimes air is heavier than water," by E. G. Conklin. There is a cartoon of a mythical professor at a laboratory table, and I am wondering if the announced author of the article is also mythical. As I have never written or spoken a word on the subject discussed, I am taking this means of disclaiming any responsibility for the article. I do not know of, nor can I find in any of the biographical dictionaries any other E. G. Conklin than myself, and I have asked the editors of *Liberty* to inform me who the reputed author of this article is, but the editorial secretary writes in reply: "I am sorry that I can not give you the address of our Mr. E. G. Conklin, who is the author of 'Not One in a Thousand Knows.' But if you wish to send a letter to him in our care, I'll be glad to see that it is forwarded to him promptly. Strange enough, the author of this feature is also connected with one of our large universities."

E. G. CONKLIN

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## SPECIAL ARTICLES

### A HIGHLY ACTIVE PRESSOR SUBSTANCE FROM CEREBRAL VENTRICULAR FLUID OF HUMAN BEINGS

PAGE<sup>1</sup> has reported that human blood, cerebrospinal and ascitic fluid yield extracts with alcohol which are vasopressor. They differed from other extracts by the fact that activity is dependent on the functional intactness of the central nervous system. Destruction of the central nervous system below the mid-brain abolishes their effectiveness in elevating arterial pressure in anesthetized cats.

Clinical observation of patients suffering from essential and malignant hypertension suggests that in some of them signs and symptoms occur simulating those following irritation of centers in the diencephalon. This "diencephalic syndrome" has been

recently described by Page.<sup>2</sup> Search was therefore made to ascertain whether the fluid which bathed this portion of the brain contained substances which might stimulate it.

Ventricular fluid was secured at autopsy and alcoholic extracts prepared. After removal of the alcohol and precipitate they were injected intravenously into cats anesthetized with ethyl urethane.

Arterial pressure fell slightly and rose sharply to a high peak. Similar extracts prepared from plasma cause arterial pressure to rise more slowly, but the elevated pressure is maintained for much longer periods (10 to 30 minutes) (Fig. 1). Destruction of the central nervous system abolishes completely this action, in this manner resembling extracts of plasma. Removal of the adrenal glands one-half hour before injection does not abolish the extract's action, hence

<sup>1</sup> I. H. Page, *Jour. Exp. Med.*, 61: 67, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> I. H. Page, *Am. Jour. Med. Sci.*, 190: 9, 1935.