

## ABSTRACTS

*Percutaneous Absorption and Routes of Excretion of Ditophal (Etisul).*

G. A. ELLARD\* and J. M. B. GARROD, and B. SCALES and G. A. SNOW. *Biochemical Pharmacology*, 1963, Vol. 12, pp. 271–281.

Ditophal (diethyl dithiolisophthalate, Etisul†) is the most active member of a series of derivatives of ethyl mercaptan in protecting mice against acute experimental tuberculosis. It is used effectively in leprosy and *Lupus vulgaris*. Since the usual routes of administration are unsatisfactory ditophal is rubbed into the skin, and has both a local and a general effect. Leprous lesions remote from the site of inunction respond satisfactorily to the treatment. In *Lupus vulgaris* some patients with bilateral lesions were inuncted on one side only; lesions cleared on both sides, although the inuncted side healed more quickly.

The fate of ditophal and some other esters of ethyl mercaptan has been studied in the mouse, guinea pig and rabbit. The compounds were administered orally or by subcutaneous injection and were rapidly eliminated together with their metabolites. Most of the dose was accounted for, and the nature of the principal metabolites of ethyl mercaptan in these animals was elucidated.

Attempts to follow the metabolism of ditophal in man by chemical methods failed. The drug was therefore labelled with <sup>35</sup>S and radioactivity measurements were used to follow its excretion. <sup>35</sup>S is an isotope with a half-life short enough to limit the radiation received even if it were retained in the body.

When <sup>35</sup>S-labelled ditophal is rubbed into the skin about 90% of the drug is absorbed in 1 hour. Excretion of <sup>35</sup>S occurs in urine, faeces and sweat and less so in breath. The greatest rate of excretion is at 6–24 hours after inunction, but excretion continues for several weeks. The principal forms of excretion are toluene-extractable material and sulphate.

*Leprosy and Mental Disorders.* L. P. VERMA. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 5, 1954.

The author studies the psychology of leprosy patients during the various stages of the disease. Leprosy is a great psychological stress and is likely to cause mental troubles, as it also makes the individual liable to various physical privations.

\*Present address: Department of Biochemistry, University College, London.

†Etisul is a trade mark, the property of Imperial Chemical Industries Limited.

Leprosy occurs in mental patients but usually it does not make any alterations in the mental picture. The author describes a case of schizophrenia who developed leprosy during the course of his mental illness, and in this patient there was a definite change in his mental condition. He became quiet and docile while formerly he used to be excited and boisterous. This is difficult to explain. There was a group of patients where leprosy seemed to act as a precipitating factor and led directly to the onset of mental disorder. Such cases were usually schizophrenics or manic depressives. With the improvement in their lepromatous condition, such patients recover mentally as well.