BAL (BRITISH ANTI-LEWISITE)*

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In a recent issue of Nature, Professor R. A. Peters of Oxford has announced the discovery and development during the war years of an effective anti-arsenical, 2,3-dimercaptopropanol. This substance has been called BAL (British anti-lewisite). As its name suggests, BAL is of interest in war medicine as an effective therapeutic agent against both the local and systemic action of certain arsenical war gases. Clinical trials of BAL, conducted as a part of the program of war research, have shown further that the compound is of value in the treatment of types of arsenical poisoning encountered in civilian medicine. Beyond this direct clinical application, the study of the action of BAL has resulted, as stressed by Professor Peters, in an important advance in the understanding of fundamental biochemical mechanisms.

* Many of the investigations included in the footnotes have not been published in open literature and the date given is the year in which the work was carried out.

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