

NATIONAL CAPITAL IS QUIET PLACE TESTS SHOW

The nation's capital, with half a million inhabitants and almost 90,000 motor cars, nevertheless goes on record as a quiet place, according to tests made around noon at eleven different points of the city recently. The noisiest spot discovered was at the U. S. Treasury where New York Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue meet, a corner famous nationally as the point where official parades turn to go down past the White House.

The survey, which was made by K. P. Royce, of the Graybar Electric Company, of New York, is similar to a noise survey recently made in New York City. The instrument used is known as an audiometer, which measures noise in sound units, and is frequently employed in testing the amount of hearing possessed by people who are partially deafened.

The Treasury corner registered 55 units of noise, as compared with 70 units at Manhattan's record breaking spot which is at 34th Street and Sixth Avenue, where the elevated railroad and downtown traffic combine to produce an almost deafening roar.

The quietest place in the capital is at the Lincoln Memorial, near the banks of the Potomac River, Mr. Royce reported. Here the noise record showed only five units, except when the wind blew, at which time the sound of the wind brought the noise up to 15.

The tour of the city took the investigators out to the embassy section, on Sixteenth Street. At the pink palace of the Spanish Embassy they paused, and found that in the street, close by the thin stream of traffic, the sound record was from 20 to 40 units. The region of the Library of Congress and the Capitol proved to be a particularly peaceful neighborhood. The audiometer registered only 10 units in a street facing the Capitol, where there is little or no traffic.

The White House, located in the downtown section of the city, is not so quiet as Capitol Hill, so far as the air itself is concerned. The survey showed that in the driveway of the White House the noise amounted to 30 units.

Mr. Royce concluded that noises in Washington are considerably less in volume and intensity than in New York. The quietest spot found by the investigators who surveyed New York was in Grove Street, between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, a narrow street in Greenwich Village. At this point the instrument registered 10 units of sound.

Considering the effect of noise on the physical and mental health of individuals, Mr. Royce said that "the damage done by noise in Washington is so small as to be classified as negligible."

BABIES TRY DRIED MILK AND GIVE IT O. K.

A small group of babies averaging three months old have been experimenting with a diet of dried human milk and have found it "acceptable". The tests, which were conducted by Dr. P. W. Emerson of the Boston Floating Hospital, are regarded as promising, and the Journal of the American Medical Association predicts that "dried milk may become a successful reality".

Commercial production and distribution of breast milk has for some years been carried on by institutions in a number of cities, so that mothers who have a surplus of milk can sell it for the benefit of young babies whose mothers cannot supply it.

Attempts to preserve this milk, so that its use could be extended, have been made, and experiments with animals show that dried human milk retains much of its nutritive value. The feeding experiment made by Dr. Emerson with the baby squad is the first practical application of the investigation.

Importance of the situation is indicated by the statement made by Dr. B. R. Hoobler, of Detroit, who has pointed out that the greatest percentage of infant mortality is among premature and sickly infants during the first one or two months of life. There seems to be no satisfactory substitute for breast milk so far as these young babies are concerned, he declared, and if breast milk were available many of these lives could be saved.

BLISTER RUST THREATENS SUGAR PINES OF THE WEST

The blister rust which has wrought such havoc with the white pines of the East is less than two hundred miles from the great sugar pine forests of Oregon and California. The western white pine and sugar pine are among the most valuable timber trees of the West, and the Federal Government, itself a large owner of these species in the national forests, is vitally concerned in their preservation from the pest.

S. B. Detwiler, in charge of the office of blister rust control, U. S. Department of Agriculture, stated that recent advances of the rust while greatly to be regretted were inevitable; The continued spread of the disease is to be expected until it reached the limits of white pine growth, but while it can not be prevented it can be materially slowed down.

The Bureau of Plant Industry has had under way a program of local control in the East since 1922. Through the cooperation of state forestry officials and state extension agents efficient measures have been in operation that have cut down appreciably the loss in the white pine forests of New York and New England.

Curiously enough, this parasitic menace of the white pine is eradicated by uprooting currant and gooseberry bushes in the neighborhood of the pine timber stands. The blister rust is a fungus with a complicated life history, part of which is spent on the leaves of the botanical Genus Ribes, a group which takes in all the cultivated and wild currants and gooseberries. It cannot spread from tree to tree like chestnut blight, but has to go from the pine to the leaves of the currant or gooseberry; and this gives the forester the means of control. Trees cannot be conveniently rooted up but bushes can; so all the currants and gooseberries must be eliminated, particularly the cultivated black currant, which has proved to be a host par excellence for rust spores from pine trees even as far away as a mile. For while the spores from pine trees cannot infect other pine trees the ones from currants can infect other currants so that the disease spreads rapidly through a whole patch, thus materially increasing the radius of the spores. The blister rust control agents, with the assistance of state and county officials as well as the general public, are clearing about a million acres of black currants a year in the forest regions of the Northeast.