Parasite Students

Psychology

The parasite student, who slips through college by cribbing information from more industrious or more brilliant students, has at last been made useful. Unknown to themselves, 30 successful cheaters at Colgate University were studied by Herbert C. Brownell and used as laboratory specimens showing the mental and emotional traits of college men who cheat at examinations—and get away with it.

Information about the 30 was obtained by underground and unofficial channels, Mr. Brownell states in reporting his investigation to School and Society. None of these cheaters were officially caught, even by a severe proctoring system.

Eighty per cent. of the group were more psychoneurotic, or emotionally unstable, than the campus average. More than half (*Turn to next page*)

Cold Good for Oats

Plant Physiology

Hardship in youth is good for oats, as it is said to be good for human beings. This grain of the North thrives best and ripens earliest when it is sprouted at a low temperature, experiments by Prof. N. Maximow, noted Russian plant physiologist, indicate.

Prof. Maximow exposed seed grain to temperatures of about 42 degrees Fahrenheit, only about ten degrees above freezing. The stalks from these seeds headed out earlier than those from seeds sprouted at a warmer temperature. This was true even when the early chilling period lasted only for a few days, and the two lots of grain were grown at the same temperature for the rest of their lives. It was found that this treatment held good for all plants that have a late ripening period.

The experiments give scientific point to an old Russian folk saying: "If you want to grow rich fast, sow your oats in the mud." It has long been held by the peasants that the best time for sowing oats is while the fields are still muddy (and hence chilly) from the melting of the winter's snow.

Another striking example of the effect of early influences was obtained by Prof. Maximow, working on the influence of light. He found that the effects of artificially lengthening or shortening the day for plants were just about as pronounced when the treatment was carried on for a short period during (*Turn to next page*)

Nature Ramblings

By Frank Thone

Natural History

Pokeberry

Almost all of our commonest weeds are foreigners; for it seems axiomatic that an ill weed thrives best away from its own home. But one American plant can claim the somewhat doubtful distinction of sometimes amounting to a troublesome weed on its native heath. This is the pokeberry, or pokeweed, also known simply as poke, and as scoke and garget.

Weed though it is, it is not without redeeming qualities. Prof. Liberty Hyde Bailey, who always has the right word when it comes to botanical description, calls it "a robust plant of heavy odor, but of good habit and clean." Right now, with summer flowers one by one folding up against the coming frosts, the pokeweed helps by gauding the corners with stiff bunches of berries that are so purple they are almost black.

Those same berries yield quantities of most amazingly purple juice, which children often make into ink for their own amusement and their mothers' despair. They might do for a dye, but the color has never yet been fixed. It is another case of a possible occupation for a vegetable gone because of aniline competition.

In earlier days, and to a certain extent still, the thick, asparagus-like shoots of the pokeweed furnished pot herbs. They were a trifle rank in taste unless taken in the very flush of their crisp infancy, but in the lack of asparagus would do all right. They were even cultivated once, but that has passed.

The roots of the plant are yellow and intensely bitter, yielding a violent purgative drug. Eaten by accident for horseradish, they have caused serious illness and even death. So that use is gone, too.

Robbed of all its possible occupations, is it any wonder that the pokeberry has become a vagabond and a weed?

Solomon's Stables

Archæology

One of the great stables of King Solomon has been uncovered by a field party of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, working at Armageddon. Preliminary dispatches had led James Henry Breasted, director of the Oriental Institute, who left recently to represent the United States at the 17th International Congress of Orientalists at Oxford, England, to suppose that the discoveries were Solomon's stables and the formal report just received indicates that he was correct.

The material thus far uncovered reveals the remains of what must have been a magnificent establishment.

"The newly discovered stables," reports Dr. P. L. O. Guy, field director, "where Solomon kept his horses at Megiddo, were laid out very systematically. The stalls were arranged in double rows. The horses therefore stood in rows of twelve, facing each other. Between each two rows of heads was a passage for the grooms and the keepers of the horses to control and feed them. In front of each horse was a stone manger and the rows of mangers were divided into sections by massive stone hitching posts, which still stand, containing the original tie holes for the insertion of the halter rope."

In commenting on Dr. Guy's report, Dr. Breasted said: "Among the many significant finds already made by the expedition, the discovery of the stables of Solomon, whose name is synonymous with the magnificence of ancient Oriental autocracy, is of the greatest historical importance. Few people are aware," continued Dr. Breasted, "that Solomon, true to the instincts of his race, was not only an Oriental sovereign but likewise a successful merchant (*Turn to next page*)

Films for Color Values

Photography

Amateur photographers with roll film cameras can now take pictures of colored objects in which light red objects appear light, while a dark blue photographs dark. A large British film manufacturing concern is now producing "panchromatic" roll films. These do not take pictures in natural colors, but they do reproduce color values correctly. With ordinary films red photographs black or very dark, while blues appear very light.

Panchromatic plates have been on the market for (*Turn to next page*)