



STONE AGE DEITY

A figurine of the "mother goddess" worshipped when man was only just emerging into civilization.

as many windows closed, as possible, during the other hours of the day.

In other words, let the cooler night air work for you during the hot daytime. Moreover, keep the attic door open during the night and the windows in the attic open so that the natural chimney thus created will help suck up the hot air in the lower levels of the house.

Have awnings on the windows on the three sunny sides of your house for extra comfort. If you actually had an air conditioning system in your home you would find that awnings so used would reduce the cooling load on the equipment by 20 or 30 percent.

Science News Letter, June 5, 1937

NUTRITION

Vitamin B Prevents Hair From Graying—In Rats

ONE more compelling, if unimportant, reason for eating plenty of vitamin B is that it may keep your hair from turning gray. This appears to be one implication of research reported by Drs. Agnes Fay Morgan, Bessie B. Cook and Helen G. Davison, of the University of California, at the meeting of the American Institute of Nutrition. The implication is not made by the scientists, who content themselves with reporting

observations of graying hair in rats deprived of one part of vitamin B.

Vitamin B is extremely complex. It has been split up into six or more vitamins, each with slightly different effects on the body. One of these protects against the severe nervous disease, beriberi. Another protects against the hard-times disease, pellagra. This part of the vitamin B complex, as it is now known, has been split again, one part of it protecting against the skin inflammation of pellagra.

A vitamin B preparation made from rice bran filtrate is concerned with graying of hair, at least for rats. Rats which did not get this "filtrate factor", as it is called, turned gray. Adequate doses of the filtrate factor prevented or cured the condition.

This filtrate factor is found in cornstarch, which is surprising because corn is supposed to be one of the causes of pellagra, Dr. Morgan points out, since it is found in the diets of most pellagra patients. The filtrate factor, however, is

not only found in cornstarch but has been thought to be the pellagra-preventing part of the vitamin and the same preparation has actually cured pellagra.

This filtrate factor, whatever its function will prove to be, cannot apparently be formed in the body but must be supplied in the diet. Two closely related vitamin B factors, however, can be formed in the rat's body when lactose or milk sugar forms a considerable part of the animal's diet.

Females Use Iron

Female rats make better use of iron in the diet than males, it appears from research reported at the same meeting by Dr. Mary S. Rose and Helen J. Hubbel of Teachers College, Columbia University. Rats made anemic by milk feeding were fed milk plus iron and copper until the hemoglobin content of their blood reached a certain level. Analysis at this point showed that the females had larger amounts of iron in their bodies than the males.

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PHYSICS

Transmutation of Elements Changes Chlorine Into Argon

A NEW transmutation of the elements in which the chlorine atoms in common table salt are changed first to potassium and then into the inert gas argon is reported by Princeton University scientists. The transmutation is one of the first achieved with the new cyclotron apparatus now in operation after a year's construction period. Ionized helium atoms are the bombarding source of energy which brings about the elemental change.

Prof. Henry D. Smyth, chairman of the physics department at Princeton, made announcement of the work by the four-man research team of Dr. Milton G. White, Drs. Malcolm C. and William J. Henderson and Dr. Louis N. Rideour.

The form of potassium created, indicated Prof. Smyth, lacks one neutron and exists for a brief interval. Its average life is 10.8 minutes.

A feature of the Princeton cyclotron is that it employs the heavy, electrically-charged helium atoms as bullets to bombard the element chosen as target.

Helium gas of the same kind which is used in inflating airships in the United

States is passed into a special vacuum chamber where it collides with a strong electron beam. In the collision the helium atoms lose their outer electrons and become helium ions.

These helium ions, known as alpha particles, are inserted into the intense magnetic field of the cyclotron at its center and go round and round in ever-widening circles for 100 revolutions. At each trip they are accelerated faster and faster by an electric field until they attain velocities of about 15,000 miles a second (about 1/10 the speed of light) just before they are shot at a target.

Bombarding atoms involves considerable chance for about 1,000,000 helium bullets must be driven at a chlorine atom before one hit is made.

The new form of potassium, created as an intermediate step in the chlorine-argon transmutation, is an isotope of natural potassium. In passing over by spontaneous disintegration into argon it liberates energy equivalent to 3,000,000 electron volts in the form of fast-moving positrons.

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