

the same way it would cause instant death. Its effects are limited to most of the striated muscles, those which are attached to the bones.

Succinylcholine has an important advantage over curare and curare-like drugs in that it will easily relax throat muscles.

The larynx remains tense even after a person has been put to sleep with Pentothal. In fact, Pentothal seems almost to sensitize the laryngeal muscles so that any irritation may set off a spasm of the vocal cords. This tendency can be counteracted by giving other drugs before Pentothal, but once in a while a laryngospasm will occur. Succinylcholine can quickly relieve such spasms. It is also useful in relaxing the throat so that a breathing tube may be inserted.

Curare drugs can be used to relax the throat also but they take longer to act and must be used in heavier doses.

Succinylcholine is remarkably free of any bad side effects, perhaps because its extraordinary power has limited its use to only highly trained anesthesiologists.

In their hands, this powerful paralyzer means a much safer operation and a faster, easier recovery from the anesthetic.

Science News Letter, February 1, 1958

ENTOMOLOGY

Humidity Affects Insect Mortality

➤ MOSQUITOES may be more susceptible to a killing dose of DDT when the weather is dry.

In contrast to some earlier experiments, two Indian scientists found humidity has an inverse relationship to insect mortality. Using two controlled humidity levels, approximately 49% and 88%, they found that mosquito pupae grown in the lower humidity were more likely to be killed when exposed to varying doses of DDT as adults. The lethal dose for these mosquitoes also was lower than for those kept at high humidity.

T. Koshi and S. K. Ranganathan, Technical Development Establishment Laboratories, Kanpur, India, explain their results as indicating a difference between the effects of insecticide availability and the variations in insect susceptibility due to humidity. Earlier reports of greater mortality following greater relative humidity may have simply represented more available insecticide.

The new research is reported in *Nature* (Jan. 18).

Science News Letter, February 1, 1958

METEOROLOGY

Bureau Will Use New Storm Warning Signals

➤ THE WEATHER BUREAU has begun using a new, simplified system of flags and lights for warning of storms along the sea-coasts and the Great Lakes.

The system requires only four separate flag or light signals instead of the previous seven.

Explanation of the new signals:

Small Craft Warnings: One red pennant

displayed by day, and one red light above one white light at night to indicate that winds up to 38 miles per hour and/or sea conditions dangerous to small craft operations are forecast for the area.

Gale Warning: Two red pennants displayed by day, and one white light above one red light by night to indicate that winds ranging from 39 to 54 miles per hour are forecast for the area.

Whole Gale Warning: A single square red flag with a black center displayed by day, and two red lights at night to indicate that winds ranging from 55 to 73 miles per hour are forecast for the area.

Hurricane Warning: Two square red flags with black centers displayed by day, and one white light between two red lights at night to indicate that winds 74 miles per hour and above are forecast for the area.

Introduction of the new system is reported in the *Monthly Weather Review*, a Weather Bureau publication.

Science News Letter, February 1, 1958

RADIO

Saturday, Feb. 8, 1958, 1:30-1:45 p.m., EST. "Adventures in Science" with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over the CBS Radio network. Check your local CBS station.

Mr. George E. Probst, executive director, Thomas Alva Edison Foundation of New York, will discuss "Edison's 111th Birthday."

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