

growing trees; at controlling losses of trees to fire, insects, and diseases; and at using more of each tree in the mills. They are also attempting to speed up reforestation of idle, burned-over, and harvested areas by planting trees.

Research efforts are already paying off. For example, forest fires in the past few years have been declining sharply. We now have hybrid trees that mature and are ready

for harvest in one-third the usual time. Most modern mills use 80% of the tree whereas older mills used less than 50%.

No matter how successful this research becomes, however, we must never lose sight of the fact that foresters must have a given amount of commercial forest land available to work with. We must guard our commercial forest lands.

• Science News Letter, 82:210 September 29, 1962

MEDICINE

Doctors Are Reading—

Early Cancer Detection

► A SIMPLE TEST for kidney and bladder cancer in the early stages offers a chance for cure, physicians will be reading in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 181:972, 1962.

Nearly one-half of such cases are now recognized when it is too late for attempting curative treatment, according to the leading editorial of the medical journal (p. 990).

Healthy persons undergoing their annual physical check-up could have this new screening test as a routine part of their examination, Drs. Warren E. C. Wacker and Lionel W. Dorfman of the Harvard Medical School reported.

The test involves the measurement of the increase and activity of a zinc enzyme, lactic dehydrogenase (LDH), in the urine. LDH is a large protein molecule that oxidizes lactic acid and affects the carbohydrate metabolism of the body.

Eye Loss in Childhood

A study of 402 children under 15 years of age who had an eye removed showed that 222, or 55%, resulted from an injury (p. 948). The greatest number occurred between the ages of five and eight, at the time the children begin going to school, Drs. Leonard Apt and L. K. Sarin found from studies at the Wills Eye Hospital, Philadelphia.

A rubber band and a toy airplane were among the objects causing loss of an eye, but more lethal agents included an arrow, knife, bullet, dynamite and pieces of glass and stone.

The atom and space age will probably contribute additional hazards with manufacture of toy missiles, rockets and atom pistols, an editorial pointed out. It said there is need for frequent campaigns of safety education directed at parents, teachers and baby sitters as well as toy manufacturers (p. 991).

Disease Blamed on Pillow

Chicken feathers in a 30-year-old pillow brought from Hungary 13 years ago were blamed for a case of histoplasmosis in a three-month-old boy (p. 999). Histoplasmosis, a serious disease that often ends fatally, is caused by the fungus, *Histoplasma capsulatum*. The only source investigated that yielded this fungus was the pillow feathers.

Usually it is soil that is contaminated by the fungus which causes the disease in older persons, but cultures of 10 soil samples from the family yard and flower pots in the house were negative.

Drs. Hugh E. Evans and John P. Utz of the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Md., assisted by Charlotte C. Campbell of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D. C., reported the study. The investigators also made skin and blood tests on eight family members and skin tests on the family pet dog, all of which were negative.

They said the intimate and prolonged exposure to the pillow indicated that this was the mode of infection, and they suggested that further studies be made of feather pillows and other similar material in cases where the source of infection was unknown.

Body Image Is Disturbing

The relationship between obesity and mental health was investigated among 1,660 New York inhabitants, showing not only a disturbance over the "body image" because of exaggerated self-consciousness, but also suspiciousness (p. 962).

The prevalence of obesity was seven times higher among women reared in the lowest social class as compared with those of the highest category.

Drs. Mary E. Moore and Albert Stunkard of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, and Dr. Leo Srole of the State University of New York, Downstate Medical Center, Brooklyn, reported the findings.

• Science News Letter, 82:211 September 29, 1962

Questions

FORESTRY—Is the United States now growing more wood than it is harvesting? p. 210.

GENERAL SCIENCE—How many students were selected for honors by state science talent searches in 1961-62? p. 213.

MEDICINE—How many amino acids are essential to life? p. 203.

PHYSICS—What is a "Regge pole"? p. 207.

Photographs: Cover and p. 207, National Aeronautics and Space Administration; p. 203, U. S. Air Force; p. 205, McDonnell Aircraft Corporation; p. 206, Ryan Aeronautical Company; p. 210, American Forest Products Industries; p. 214 (top), Siouxland Trade; p. 214 (bottom), George A. Smith.

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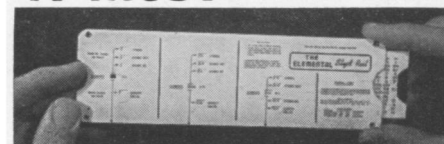
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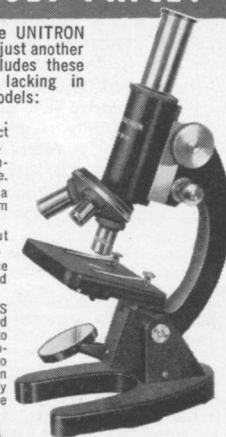
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