

FORESTRY

NATURE RAMBLINGS

by Frank Thone



Foe Into Friend

► UNTIL quite recently, man has regarded the forest as his enemy. He who made a clearing was a benefactor to the community as well as an operator for his own gain; the new field increased the potential food supply, and added the resources of one family to the communal defense against a hostile world of savage beasts, and even more savage men, that lurked behind the leafy frontier. This culture-pattern of making a virtue of getting rid of trees in order to get at the land, is

of recent memory in this country; but it only repeated what happened a few centuries ago in Europe.

How completely this attitude toward the forest has been reversed is almost dramatically demonstrated in the recently issued U. S. Department of Agriculture Yearbook for 1949, which is titled, simply: TREES. The forest now is our friend—and suddenly discovered to be an old and rather ailing friend, needing sympathetic assistance of every kind to aid in recovery and restoration of helpful strength. In the scores of articles that fill its nearly 1,000 pages, the good we derive from the forest is rehearsed from every angle, the harm we do to it, wittingly and unwittingly, is set forth just as painstakingly, and possible cures or preventive for its many ills are described, each by a scientific specialist.

About the only prescription there was for the forest a century ago was the rough surgery of ax and saw and the harsh cauterization of reckless fire. But now we see planting dibbles and spades, pruning knives and shears, insecticides and fungicides, all solicitously applied in the infancy and youth of the forest, so that in its maturity the ax and saw (more judiciously wielded now) may have a measured harvest.

We see, too, the manifold kindnesses that man may win from this ancient friend, once looked upon as a foe. Our grandsires saw only logs for cabins, later boards and squared timbers for more pretentious houses, plus, possibly, some potash for the soapmaking and a few casual nuts and wild fruits. We still get these (though not in such abundance) but we have added the endless acres of newsprint we read every day, chemicals ranging from synthetic lacquer to synthetic liquor, protection for our cities' water supplies, pleasant places for camping, hunting and fishing, and other items quite literally too numerous to mention. No wonder we feel as if we had almost murdered Santa Claus!

Science News Letter, September 10, 1949

PSYCHOLOGY

Introduction to Person Affects First Impression

► YOUR first impression of a person you meet is governed a good deal by what you are told about him by the person introducing him.

This was shown by an experiment in which a substitute instructor was presented to three classes of college men who were asked to rate the instructor's personality.

Half the students were told that the instructor is "rather cold." The others were told that he is "very warm."

The students who were tipped off that the substitute was a warm person later rated him as more considerate of others, less formal, more sociable, more popular, more humorous, more humane and better matured, than did those who expected him to be cold.

The students who had the expectation that the substitute would be warm also participated more in class discussion than did the other students and so had more opportunity to get acquainted with him.

The experiment was reported to the American Psychological Association in Denver, Colo., by Dr. Harold H. Kelley, of the University of Michigan.

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AGRICULTURE

Herring Industry Subject Of International Meeting

► THE all-important herring industry, which supplies the world with great quantities of fish food each year, was the subject of an international conference at The Hague in the Netherlands, attended by representatives of the major fishing countries, including the United States.

The meeting was called by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, with headquarters in Washington, D. C. Invitations were sent to practically all countries of Western Europe, Greece, Poland, Yugoslavia and Canada, as well as to the United States.

The major subject of discussion was the economic problems related to the production and distribution of herring and allied species. It was expected that the meeting will iron out difficulties in individual nations which must be solved through international action, and would agree on a course of action for the solution of these problems.

The herring problem is of particular interest in America, coming into prominence in the past few decades. Herring fisheries in northwestern Europe are very old and have played an important part in history. In more recent years, herring species similar to those of Europe have become of importance to Canada, the United States and Japan. In the late thirties, these three countries together accounted for more than half of the world's total catch of herring and allied species.

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Words in Science—HEAT STROKE

► HEAT STROKE and heat exhaustion are two summer ailments which are not the same and require opposite treatments.

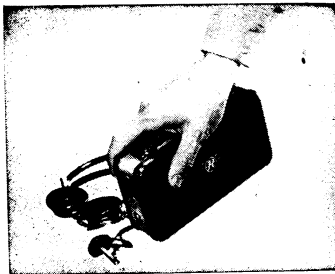
Symptoms of heat stroke are: Headache; red face; hot, dry skin with no sweating; strong and rapid pulse; very high temperature; usually unconsciousness.

Symptoms of heat exhaustion: Pale face; moist, cool skin with profuse sweating; weak pulse; low temperature; sometimes nausea, vomiting and giddiness.

What is commonly called "sunstroke" may be either of these two conditions.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1949

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