

ASTRONOMY

Saucers Elude Astronomers

Although cameras and telescopes all over the country are sweeping the skies, no trained observers have yet spotted the mysterious disks.

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► NOT ONE "saucer" has been reported as the result of astronomical observations.

Looking over all the stories in magazines and newspapers reporting flying saucers, this lack of astronomical data is impressive.

In spite of the fact that astronomical telescopes and cameras are working in all parts of the country every clear night, that thousands of meteors have been observed by radar, and that astronomers are regularly interviewing persons who have seen spectacular meteors, not one "saucer" has been reported in astronomical work.

The fact that each saucer has been reported from only one point suggests that most have been spots of reflected light. Sunlight reflected from bright surface produces, at the critical angle, a bright, silvery, round or oval spot, with no sign of the airplane, or bird, responsible. The best saucers reported to us have proved on investigation to be due to airplanes. (I have seen one beautiful set of such saucers.)

The fact that each saucer has been observed from only one point means that the heights and speeds are mere guesses. Without at least one pointing from a different location, the height is unknown.

It was pointed out years ago that the question of the reality of the saucers could be quickly answered by having each story investigated promptly, as meteor reports are now being investigated in parts of the country. Fact could be separated from fiction and fancy in this way, as it cannot be for these old reports. The sensational features of most stories would be quickly eliminated, and should a real object be found, its path, height, and speed could be easily calculated.

The fact that none of the magazine articles suggests that a real investigation of the stories be made as they are reported is evidence that the writers have little confidence in the reality of the interplanetary saucers. One suspects they are afraid that such an investigation, by producing commonplace explanations for the stories, would spoil material for good articles in the future.

Science News Letter, June 14, 1952

PSYCHOLOGY

Mind Dictates Food Foibles

► PECULIARITIES OF eating may be due more to the state of mind than to the state of the stomach, Dr. Sol Wiener Ginsburg of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, reported to the American Home Economics Association in Washington.

If you are scared to eat lobster and ice cream at the same meal or believe that raw onions do not "agree with you," it may be because of the care you received as a baby from your mother.

If you save your favorite tidbit to enjoy last, or if you gobble it up first of all, if you compare your wife's apple pie with "the kind Mother used to make," trace these habits back to emotional attitudes formed in early childhood.

The person who saves the favorite food, Dr. Ginsburg speculates, is more secure while the person who must eat it quickly is anxious and acts as though afraid it might be snatched away.

Dr. Ginsburg lists six different kinds of peculiar eaters, each with a distinctive emotional problem.

1. The anxious eater. A young woman patient of this type believed that she could eat only in the most expensive restaurants. She would not eat any fried food, cold soup, salad with roughage or any of a long list of foods that she was sure would upset her, but lived on a highly limited, colorless, bland diet.

2. The ritualistic eater. This is the person who must eat "on time" whether the hour is convenient for others or even for himself. He must eat at least one hot meal a day, never touch lobsters, never mix drinks and has a whole array of superstitions about food.

3. The substitutive eater. This is the person who uses food to take the place of love, affection and personal satisfaction. One such person will eat a two-pound box of candy or a couple of pounds of rich cookies as a between-meal snack.

4. The picky or "spoiled darling" eater. People of this type are considered "frail." They are constantly worried about food—its health features, preparation, ease of digestion, etc.

5. The irrational eaters. These are the persons who stubbornly defy doctor's orders on diet. The diabetic who sneak-eats sweets or the ulcer patient who surreptitiously eats forbidden foods.

6. The indifferent eater. This person goes through life following the childhood injunction to "just eat what is put in front of you and don't fuss so much about it." For him eating is a chore, an unpleasant necessity.

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MEDICINE

Chemical Stops Pain From Cancer of Bone Marrow

► TWO OUT of every three patients with cancer of the bone marrow are getting remissions through treatment with the chemical, urethane, Dr. R. Wayne Rundles of Duke University Hospital, Durham, N. C., announced in a report to the American Cancer Society.

The treatment is not a cure, Dr. Rundles emphasized. But in many cases patients were freed of pain and able to return to work and everyday routines without any symptoms of the disease.

The average lifespan of patients with this cancer, called multiple myeloma, is about 18 months. Urethane is doubling and tripling the survival of some patients, Dr. Rundles reports.

Multiple myeloma is characterized by great pain, enormous production of abnormal proteins and calcium depletion which often is so great that the bones have a punched-out appearance and may be broken by no greater strain than getting out of bed.

Patients must be regularly treated with urethane and unfortunately may sooner or later become resistant to the drug.

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VETERINARY MEDICINE

Cats, Too, Can Get Leukemia, Blood Cancer

► CATS CAN get leukemia, so-called blood cancer, as well as humans. Scientists at the National Cancer Institute discovered this when a "middle-aged," 7-year-old male house cat was brought to the Institute by its owner because the cat had been ill, listless and losing weight for six weeks.

Blood tests by Dr. Willard H. Eyestone showed that the cat had myelogenous stem-cell leukemia. The diagnosis was confirmed by examination after the cat's death.

The animal had no history of being exposed to X-ray or other possible cancer-producers. The case is believed the first on record of spontaneous development of this leukemia in a cat. The other types of leukemia have been reported in horses, dogs, chickens, pigs and cattle. Most research on leukemia has been with mice and rats.

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