

# Questions

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MEDICINE

## Rashless German Measles

➤ YOU CAN have German measles without the telltale rash.

This has been long suspected. The first scientific proof of it is reported by Drs. Saul Krugman, Robert Ward, Kathryn Giblin Jacobs and Martin Lazar of New York in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (Jan. 24).

The proof is significant because cataracts, deafness, feeble-mindedness, congenital heart disease, abortions and stillbirths have been reported to afflict infants whose mothers had German measles during the first three months of pregnancy.

Since German measles is a very mild disease, it could go unnoticed if no rash appeared. Perhaps, the New York doctors suggest, these cases without the rash may have been responsible for many more pre-birth damaged babies than anyone can guess at.

Little girls could be immunized against

German measles long before they were old enough to become mothers. Then there would be no danger to their future unborn babies. Blood and nose and throat washings of German measles patients contain the virus of the disease during the first day of the rash and in some cases two days before the rash, the New York doctors found.

Injections of these materials in children under four years who had never had German measles produced typical cases in nine to 16 days. This "experimental" German measles is contagious. Two grown-ups caught the disease from two of the children who got it by the inoculation method.

Because of this contagiousness, it might be dangerous to immunize little girls in this way. It might start an epidemic in the community and pregnant women might get the disease when otherwise they might escape it.

Science News Letter, February 7, 1953

METEOROLOGY

## Theory on Jupiter's Spots

➤ A CREATURE on Jupiter with a powerful telescope would probably see the same kind of spots traveling over the face of the earth that we can see traveling across the face of Jupiter.

They are probably caused by the same thing, Dr. Yale Mintz, assistant professor of meteorology at the University of California at Los Angeles, told a meeting of the American Meteorological Society in New York. That creature on Jupiter would see large bright spots about one-sixtieth to one-twelfth the size of the earth traveling across the face of the earth on the north side of the equator.

There might be as many as six or seven in a row, Dr. Mintz said. These are the result of very high level storms in our tropics, he said, a phenomenon meteorologists have known about only in recent years. They are mostly above 30,000 feet and seem to have little direct effect on the weather at ground level right below them.

Similarly, dark spots travel across the face of Jupiter. Dr. Mintz said that C. E. Palmer of U.C.L.A. had found some relationship between the earth's spots, or high level clouds, and the bursts of activity on the sun. A few days after the sun has put out more ultraviolet radiation, Dr. Palmer thinks, more high level storms appear in our tropics. Dr. Mintz checked the records and found that there seemed to be peaks of dark spot activity on Jupiter a few days after peaks of ultraviolet radiation on the sun.

Mars has an atmosphere similar to ours in that the higher you might get in the air of Mars, the colder you would be. This is

the finding of Dr. Jean I. F. King of the Cambridge, Mass., Air Research Center. Studies of Mars, he said, showed that the temperature on the surface is about 240 degrees on the absolute scale. This is about 28 degrees below zero Fahrenheit.

The atmosphere on Mars, Dr. King reported, appears to be stable up to about four and a half times. At that height the temperature is believed to be about 200 degrees absolute, or about 100 below zero Fahrenheit.

Because the Martian atmosphere is believed to be lacking in both water and oxygen, measuring it is simpler than measuring the earth's atmosphere, since scientists do not know exactly how much radiation of what wavelengths is absorbed by the earth's outer envelope.

Science News Letter, February 7, 1953

Each farm rat eats about \$5 worth of food a year.

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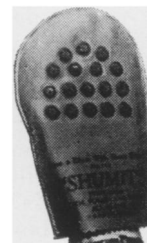
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