

METEOROLOGY

Rain Making Doubtful

► THE NATION'S leading weathermen still are dubious about the alleged benefits of rain making.

"The conditions most favorable for the artificial release of precipitation," says the Council of the American Meteorological Society, "are very much the same as those which usually lead to the natural release of precipitation."

Statistical analyses by independent agencies, the Council declares, have failed to show that monthly or seasonal rain over a selected target area has been significantly increased by ground-based silver iodide seeding. The studies suggest that any increase has been relatively small.

This opinion of the Council of the A.M.S. differs from that issued two years ago in that more is now known about the actual results from seeding clouds with dry ice, silver iodide, small drops of water or salt

particles. The Council says that seeding a supercooled cloud with dry ice will usually convert at least a portion of the cloud to ice crystals. Some precipitation may result under certain conditions, the members say.

Seeding warm clouds with water droplets or salt particles may, in some instances, result in light rains, the Council admits. Certain other seeding agents may, in some cases, dissipate warm fog or warm stratus clouds. Silver iodide may produce some rain from supercooled clouds, but the evidence from experiments with silver iodide is not as convincing as that from dry ice experiments.

The Council concludes that "present knowledge of atmospheric processes offers no basis for the belief that the weather or climate of a large portion of the nation can be modified by cloud seeding."

Science News Letter, May 23, 1953

GERONTOLOGY

Senior Citizens Month

► THIS MONTH of May, which started with Child Health Day on May Day, is also being celebrated in New York State as "Senior Citizens Month."

The state's joint legislative committee is sponsoring this month for the oldsters because, says committee chairman Thomas C. Desmond, "we have found that (a) the general public is unaware of the great potential that exists among our elderly for continued activity and service in industry, families and communities, and (b) one of the great problems in this field is to change cultural attitudes about our elderly in our high-pressure, speed-mad, youth-worshipping society."

The committee finds these are the main needs of older people: 1. a chance to be useful; 2. a chance to be active; 3. the need to be loved and wanted; 4. the need for a decent income; 5. a chance to be a free human being, with dignity and respect.

Instead of looking on old people as "old

fogeys," "old fossils," and the like, the committee suggests the following positive attitude toward the senior citizens:

"Understand that old folks are people, that some may be crabby, many are not; that some persons at 35 are grouches; that an old grouch was a young grouch. It is important that we realize many an old person is cheerful, an inspiration and works well in a team.

"Many a man of 35 is set in his ways, while many a man of 70 retains an alertness to new ideas. Many a youth resents supervision, but old age is tagged unfairly as being unable to take supervision. Old folks can learn. Frequently oldsters do not want to learn because the learning material is unimportant, not meaningful. We know now old dogs can learn new tricks if the teacher knows more than the dog, knows how to teach and there is a good reason for learning."

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PUBLIC HEALTH

Protection of Hearing

► LIKE THE person who complains that "they are using smaller print these days," when his middle-aged eyes need glasses for reading, is the person who complains that friends and relatives are "mumbling" and not speaking loudly enough when actually the complainer is suffering from a hearing loss.

Loss of hearing may come gradually but it may also come almost without warn-

ing. That is why the American Hearing Society makes the first rule for hearing protection: Have your hearing tested with an audiometer at regular intervals.

If the test shows a hearing loss, you should consult your doctor to find the cause, have it corrected if possible, and if not, to get advice on hearing aids.

The American Hearing Society is working to conserve hearing and to help those

with a hearing loss. Besides the advice for audiometer tests, the society gives the following ways for protecting hearing:

Keep ears clean without using match sticks, or paper matches, metal objects, or harsh materials. (Let your ear doctor clean out accumulated wax.)

At the first sign of ear pain, or discharge, see your doctor! (Many cases of hearing loss can be prevented if infection is caught early and properly treated.)

Avoid swimming in uninspected pools or stagnant waters. (Ear infection can start from water remaining in the ear.)

Avoid violent blowing of the nose. (This may lead to infection in the middle ear.)

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