



### 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 now been reversed! 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. The good we derive from the forest is being studied from every angle, the harm we do to it, wittingly and unwittingly, is being investigated as painstakingly, and possible cures or preventive for its many ills are being found, 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, December 5, 1953

### MEDICINE

## Leukemia Protection

► THE START of leukemia in mice can be delayed by a period corresponding to nearly 20 years in the life of a human by treatment with cortisone, Dr. George W. Woolley and Betty A. Peters have found in experiments at the Jackson Laboratory, Bar Harbor, Me.

Dr. Woolley also carries on cancer research at Sloan-Kettering Institute of Memorial Cancer Center, New York.

Dr. Woolley and Miss Peters worked with a strain of mice that develop leukemia with almost clocklike regularity at about eight months of age. The leukemia is rapidly fatal, killing the animals in one or two weeks.

By treating these mice with cortisone, anti-arthritis hormone of the adrenal cortex, from the time they are one month old, Dr. Woolley has delayed the onset of leukemia until the mice are about 14 months old. That would be tantamount in humans to postponing a fatal disease from 23 years of age until about 40.

## Questions

GENERAL SCIENCE—How many member nations are in the largest UN agency? p. 358.

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PHYSICS—How can an electronic "brain" be forced to play music? p. 357.

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PSYCHOLOGY—What are the main effects of combat on the soldier? p. 362.

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SURGERY—How can refrigeration take the place of an artificial heart? p. 361.

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TECHNOLOGY—What is the yearly oil loss due to evaporation estimated to be? p. 360.

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