

FORESTRY

Past Misuse of Soil Causing Death of Pines

➤ MISUSE OF the soil in the past is responsible for the decline diseases and death of southern pines.

This was reported by Dr. W. A. Campbell, pathologist of the U. S. Forest Service's Southeastern Forest Experiment Station, Athens, Ga., at the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Berkeley, Calif.

Dr. Campbell stated that a study of little-leaf, a disease of shortleaf and loblolly pines caused by a fungus, showed that this killer is only serious in areas in which the subsoils are poorly drained internally.

In the case of spot dieout, a disease that causes premature mortality in loblolly pine plantations from 10 to 20 years of age, this condition is associated with shallow topsoil and heavy, plastic subsoils.

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Oleander

➤ A FINE plant for winter blooming, better known to our grandmothers than to ourselves because they had real houses to live in instead of apartments, is the oleander.

Its disadvantage for present-day house culture lies in its ambition, for it likes to grow up into a little tree rather than remain as a small, compact shrub, and that requires a good deal of room. But anyone who can spare the space for an oleander tub will be well rewarded with gorgeous masses of pink or white bloom.

The reason for the oleander's success in

indoor culture lies in the paradoxical fact that it is at once a swamp plant and a desert plant. That is the situation most houseplants find themselves up against. Solicitous owners are apt to over-water them, and at the same time their tops are exposed to air that is like that of a desert in its dryness.

The oleander has been growing for ages in just such a habitat in its widespread native home in Mediterranean and Oriental regions. Its generic name, *Nerium*, comes from a Greek word meaning moisture, for in the wild it grows in wet soil. But at the same time its leaves are exposed to the hot sun and the drying winds of the warmer Levant. It is like a palm tree in this: its roots in a swamp and its top in the desert.

The stiff, rough, dark-green leaves are at once reminiscent of desert vegetation. They exude a milky juice when punctured. This juice is marked by its poisonous properties. It is reported that in the course of the Peninsular War some French soldiers died from roasting their meat on skewers made of freshly-cut twigs of oleander.

The Roman naturalist, Pliny, mentions its rose-like flowers and poisonous qualities, at the same time stating that it was considered serviceable as a remedy against snake-bite.

There are two species of oleander, very much alike in general appearance, but distinguishable by the fact that one has scented flowers, while the flowers of the other are odorless. Both varieties, however, exude the milky substance that is poisonous for both humans and animals if eaten.

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TECHNOLOGY

Women Sized Up

➤ THE UNITED States Government has sized up American women with the idea that one size, that of dresses, can be used to buy all female apparel.

Actual body measurements of a large number of women, scientifically sampled to include the predominant body types of the female population, were taken, a nine-year job.

The new sizing system, proposed by U. S. Department of Commerce's commodity standards division, "provides the means for fitting the maximum number of women with good-fitting clothes, without need for repeated try-ons and expensive alterations."

The same size designations will be used on underwear and outerwear, including dresses, coats, blouses, skirts, slacks, jackets, slips, etc. The customer will know that size will not vary because of price, type, producer or distributor.

The government is asking manufacturers and distributors to adopt the new commercial standard on women's apparel sizing.

The Mail Order Association of America, the Corset and Brassiere Association of America, as well as the National Bureau of Standards, the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, and the Army's Quarter-

master Corps participated in the research leading to the standard.

The four classifications of measurements are misses, women's, half sizes for shorter women, and juniors. The standard covers nine different body types, including the three height groups of tall, regular and short, and three bust-hip groups for each height. Size is associated with the bust. For each bust, there may be one or more hip types.

The hip types are slender, average and full, with slender designated by a minus sign and full by a plus sign. The sizes are designated by the size number and symbols, with tall, regular and short called T, R and S.

Thus, 14T- means size 14 bust, tall in height and slender hip type.

Looking forward to the day when merchandising will be more automatic, with women picking their clothes by punching buttons on display panels, the government experts foresee that the new size standards will be even more essential than they are now.

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Toads do give off a slightly irritating substance, but it is powerless to cause warts.