

## MEDICINE

**Girls Get More Warts**

► WARTS attack girls more often than boys, but no one knows why, Dr. Roy L. Kile of Cincinnati has found.

Neither does anyone know how they are acquired in the first place. They are caused by a virus. Some are more communicable, or catching, than others.

An effective vaccine of wart tissue has been devised for warts on cows, but not humans. The viruses causing warts on cows apparently are entirely different from those causing warts on humans, Dr. Kile said.

Warts can be transmitted from one part of the body to another by such methods as combing the hair or shaving. The spread from person to person is another question. There are probably many strains of virus, some of which may be more communicable than others, he said, and this may explain the variability in apparent communicability.

One outbreak Dr. Kile reported occurred among 58 girls in an orphanage. Fifteen, or 25.8%, developed warts in a period of one and a half years. Some had had warts previously and one or two had them when they arrived at the orphanage, but the majority acquired the warts after they arrived. No previous warts had been noted in these individuals.

The warts appeared on the hands, lip, legs, foot, great toe, ball of the foot, heel, index finger and thumb.

In answer to the question, "Should precautions be taken to isolate individuals with warts in institutions?" Dr. Kile had to be indefinite. Simple precautions may help prevent the spread, but such standards must await definite evidence on just how warts are transmitted.

Science News Letter, July 28, 1956

## PSYCHIATRY

**Comic Cartoon Used To Study Mentally Ill**

► THE COMIC CARTOON has found its way into the mental hospital as a tool for studying mentally ill patients.

"Comics" are not funny to psychotic patients.

They show up clearly the impairment of chronic schizophrenics, Dr. Rita Senf of Detroit and Drs. Paul E. Huston and Bertram D. Cohen of Iowa City, Iowa, report in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* (July).

The cartoons used in the investigation were selected from published collections of cartoons. They all depict simple, familiar social interactions. To see the humor of the cartoon, it is necessary to interpret correctly the situation shown.

Reactions of the chronic schizophrenics, who had been ill for an average of 12 years, were compared with early schizophrenics who had been ill for only one year, with

depressed patients with illness duration of nine months and with neurotics who had been ill for six years.

The cartoons were not funny to the chronic schizophrenics. They even misinterpreted the background scene in the cartoons. Thus, a cartoon showing a suburban street with husbands coming home from work was misinterpreted by a patient as a "movie set."

The early schizophrenics did better than chronic patients in interpreting the cartoon, but still the more complex situations were beyond their grasp. Evidently, the doctors conclude, ability to grasp the more complex aspects of interpersonal situations is impaired early in the course of schizophrenia.

Depressed and neurotic patients did not differ from each other in ability to see the joke in a cartoon, and both were better at it than the schizophrenics.

Science News Letter, July 28, 1956

## MEDICINE

**As Many Women Suffer Heart Attacks as Men**

► WOMEN are suffering as many heart attacks today as are men, Drs. Kyu Taik Lee and Wilbur A. Thomas of the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Mo., report.

Increased smoking and the fact women are reaching the older age brackets in greater numbers today are cited as two factors that have reversed what was once considered a man's disease.

Studies covering a 45-year period show the shift. Prior to 1940, twice as many men suffered acute coronary attacks as did women. Today, the doctors found, the ratio is approximately one to one. The sharpest increase was noted in women over 60 years of age.

In the *American Journal of Pathology*, the pathologists report the incidence of acute coronary heart disease increased 20-fold from 1910 to 1954. All age groups over 20 years were affected. Fatal attacks jumped from 0.5% in the 1910-1919 period to over 10% for the period 1945 to 1954. The study showed.

Acute attacks in women, they say, continue to rise steadily in incidence with age, while the incidence in men becomes stationary in the age group 60 to 80, then tapers off.

The doctors compared the U. S. statistics they collected with Japanese and East African studies, where coronary disease is "relatively rare." Significantly, they found, the current incidence of acute and healed disease in Kyushu, Japan, in 1954 compares with that of the U. S. during the period from 1910 to 1920.

"There are indications therefore," Drs. Lee and Thomas conclude, "that acute coronary disease in the United States has markedly increased in all age groups in recent decades, with the cause for this still a medical mystery."

Science News Letter, July 28, 1956

**IN SCIENCE**

## CONSERVATION

**Revised Alaska Game Laws Ease Management**

► ALASKA'S FIRST new set of game laws since 1949, published in Washington, makes Alaskan management practices more like those in many of the 48 states.

Under the revised system, Alaska is divided up into 26 separate areas. Different regulations apply to each region.

Called management units, the divisions permit control of game according to local conditions. Hunting seasons and bag limits may vary in each unit. The system, which replaces the former division by mountain ranges, is also in use in many of the 48 states.

There are no radical changes in length of seasons or bag limits. However, sections of highways will be closed to hunting during periods of mass migration. Wildlife officials say this measure is designed to protect people and vehicles as well as animals. Hunting will be prohibited in closed areas long enough to give free access to the traveling animals.

Alaska's game laws have not been completely revised since May 11, 1949. During the intervening years amendments were added, but not efficiently incorporated into the existing body of statutes. The new laws are reorganized and reworded to promote better understanding.

A map of the 26 management units is available to the public from the Department of Interior, in addition to copies of the new regulations.

Science News Letter, July 28, 1956

## BIOLOGY

**Three-Horned Chameleon Added to Smithsonian**

► A VICIOUS-LOOKING, dragon-like little animal that seems tougher than it is has just been added to the reptile collections of the Smithsonian Institution.

Called a three-horned chameleon, the brightly colored, 12-inch creature tries to frighten its enemies by puffing itself up so its loose skin is drawn tight. Actually harmless to man, the reptile has convinced the natives near its home in Uganda, East Africa, they will die if they see it enraged and hissing.

The animals have been called miniature versions of the extinct monster dinosaur Triceratops, which died out about 75,000,000 years ago. They are not directly related, however.

Most three-horned chameleons live in dry areas with low shrubs. They can leap two feet from branch to branch.

Science News Letter, July 28, 1956

# CE FIELDS

## BIOLOGY

### Second Litter Arrives Without Rodent Father

➤ A FEMALE RODENT that gave birth to a litter of eight although kept isolated from males for nearly a month is reported in *Science* (July 13).

It is the fifth sure case of this unusual kind of birth among animals, say Drs. E. Pratt Yule and J. D. Sylvester of the psychology department, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

Since the litter contained both male and female baby rats, the case is not one of "virgin birth," or parthenogenesis. Offspring from parthenogenetic birth could only be of one sex.

The albino female rat bore a litter of seven, then 23 days later produced the litter of eight. For at least six days before the birth of the first litter, the rat was securely isolated, and was segregated from all except the immature offspring until birth of the second litter.

The four other cases of similar strange births involved another rat, two mice and one guinea pig.

*Science News Letter, July 28, 1956*

## ENTOMOLOGY

### Nighttime Best For Wasp Riddance

➤ IF YOU have wasps around your home, get rid of them at night. Use an insecticide dust or spray on the nests after the wasps have gone inside for the night.

If you need a light to see, a flashlight placed on the ground and beamed toward the nest helps to locate its opening, but work fast before the light wakes the wasps. Remember it takes time for the insecticide to kill, so stay away from the nest for a day or two after treating it.

Put plenty of insecticide on the opening of the nest so the wasps are sure to come in contact with it. U. S. Department of Agriculture entomologists advise insecticide dust containing about five percent chlordane or five to 15% DDT, or spray containing two percent chlordane or five percent DDT. Look on the container for the list of ingredients.

Choose the spray according to the location of the nest.

An oil solution spray may be used on porches, under eaves or in attics, wherever there are no shrubs, trees or plants that would be injured by the oil. An emulsion or suspension spray may be used safely near foliage, but will leave white stains on walls or woodwork.

Only about 50 of some 2,500 species of North American wasps are likely to sting.

These include the hornets and yellow jackets, the Polistes and mud daubers.

When one of these wasps sting, it injects a venomous fluid into the flesh. So if wasps build nests too close to the house or in shrubbery where children play, they should be destroyed.

The hornets' and yellow jackets' nests, made of a paperlike material, are large and globular and are usually found in trees and shrubbery and on gables. The Polistes build a circular comb of cells that open downward. The mud daubers construct their nests from mud clay. They may be located inside or outside of buildings and sometimes in stored machinery and equipment.

*Science News Letter, July 28, 1956*

## AGRICULTURE

### Lindane Changes Potato Flavor

➤ LINDANE sprayed on cucumbers can change the taste of potatoes grown in the same fields during succeeding seasons.

U. S. Department of Agriculture research has shown an off-flavor taste lingers on potatoes as much as three months after storage.

The off-flavor effects were noticed in three of five varieties of potatoes, according to a USDA report. Potatoes stored three months at 55 degrees Fahrenheit showed off-flavor in the same varieties, but the unpleasant taste was not increased by storage.

Food specialists, trained to recognize odors and flavors, judged potatoes that had been cooked and mashed under standardized test conditions.

The verdict: mature and immature Bliss Triumphs and Irish cobbles, and immature Pontiacs made the lowest scores. Judges said 28% to 30% of the samples tasted musty.

Cherokee and Sebago varieties were not appreciably changed.

*Science News Letter, July 28, 1956*

## MARINE BIOLOGY

### Exterminator Promises Big Savings in Oysters

➤ A MACHINE that kills screwborers, the worst enemies of Chesapeake Bay oysters, is being tested near Gloucester Point, Va.

Success may mean thousands of dollars saved for the oyster industry and millions more oysters for the public.

U. S. Fish and Wildlife officials are testing the exterminator, called a suction drill dredge, with brightly painted screwborers. The number of colored screwborers caught will show how well the dredge works.

James B. Engle, director of the Government project, says the device "will capture more oyster drills (screwborers) in a couple of hours than two men can remove in six weeks of trapping."

The dredge being tested is purely experimental. Several mechanical improvements have already been suggested.

*Science News Letter, July 28, 1956*

## ANIMAL NUTRITION

### Young Wheat Hay Found Better Feed Than Alfalfa

➤ SHEEP may get more nitrogen from young wheat hay than from alfalfa, according to recent experiments by scientists at the University of Adelaide, Australia.

Biochemists F. V. Gray and A. F. Pilgrim, reporting in *Nature* (July 14), found that much of alfalfa's nitrogen is absorbed in sheep's stomachs as ammonia.

The scientists fed an isolated group of sheep on alfalfa and another group on young wheat hay. The researchers then measured the amount of nitrogen that had reached each sheep's fourth stomach, or abomasum.

In the alfalfa-fed sheep, the percentage of nitrogen in the fourth stomach was much less than the percentage in alfalfa.

The sheep fed on young wheat hay and straw, on the other hand, had more nitrogen in the fourth stomach than was present in the fodder itself. The scientists suggest this may be due to additions of nitrogen to the stomach compartments from blood, saliva or gastric juice.

*Science News Letter, July 28, 1956*

## PUBLIC HEALTH

### Tropical Worm Diseases Spreading

➤ WORMY DISEASES once thought almost exclusively tropical may be spreading in this country, especially in the northern states, Drs. Carroll L. Birch and Basil P. Anast of the University of Illinois College of Medicine, Chicago, have warned. Scientists call these disease parasitic diseases.

Tourists, servicemen and workers returning from areas of the world where certain types of parasitic diseases are naturally prevalent have brought them home.

Immigrants from infested regions, especially the West Indies, have also introduced some parasites to this country. Political unrest, economic aid to underdeveloped countries and businesses have required many Americans to remain in regions where parasites are endemic (naturally prevalent).

Formerly the most common harmful parasites in northern cities were *Endameba histolytica*, which causes amebic dysentery; *Giardia lamblia*, which causes a type of diarrhea, and *Enterobius vermicularis*, commonly called the pinworm.

Now from the southern states three intestinal worm parasites, *Ascaris lumbricoides*, hookworm and whipworm, have been added. From Puerto Rico and the West Indies have come *Schistosoma mansoni*, which causes a disease of the blood, and *Wuchereria bancrofti*, a round worm carried by mosquitoes which interferes with the functioning of the lymphatic system.

These diseases, the doctors said, could be eradicated if enough interest was taken, patients were treated and preventive measures applied.

*Science News Letter, July 28, 1956*