

MEDICINE

Child Safety Low

Children are particularly accident-prone during the summer months, when motor vehicle accidents, drownings and poisoning take a huge toll in lives lost.

► SUMMERTIME is the most favorable season of the year for children's accidents.

The frequency of accidents among children increases directly in proportion to the rise in temperature.

Accidents cause approximately 13,000 deaths among children between the ages of one and 14 each year in the United States. In addition, between 40,000 and 50,000 are permanently injured and it is estimated that more than 1,000,000 are brought into the doctor's office as the result of accidents. These figures are reported by Dr. Neil F. Duncan of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* (April 15).

A study based on children's accidents in Alberta revealed that the number of accidents rose during the summer months. Fatal accidents occurred most frequently among the under-one-year age group while non-fatal accidents were highest in the one-to-two-year age group.

More boys than girls suffer accidents except in cases of poisoning. Motor vehicle accidents and drowning took the highest toll, especially during the summer recreation months.

Forty-four percent of all accidents occur between 12 noon and 5 p.m., while 26% occur between 6 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Dr. Duncan cited a small study which revealed accident repeaters were of three main types. The first is the overactive,

restless child who tends to be impulsive. The second is the more immature child who lacks parental supervision and insists on autonomy. The third type is the hostile child who comes from a bleak and dreary home.

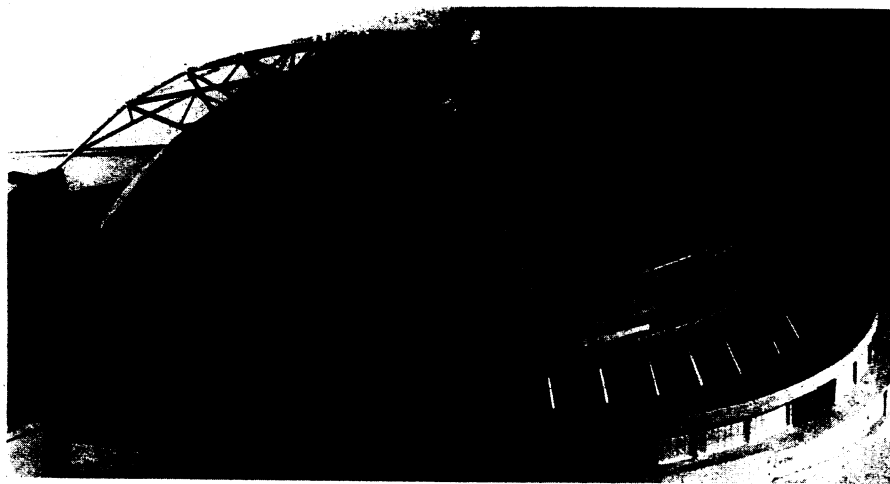
In contrast, the children of an accident-free group tend to be very timid, submissive and controlled.

But the main offenders, Dr. Duncan says, are the parents who leave turpentine in "coke" bottles, poisonous medicines within the reach of the small child, and unlabeled bottles on the shelf. They are the ones who "do not see" the child that runs across the path of the car.

Recommendations have been made to establish safety standards for the inflammability of textiles for children's clothes, the labeling of paints and other coloring materials to minimize the use of toxic substances on toys and furniture, the design of sleeping garments to avoid strangulation or suffocation, and the redesign of toys and furniture to minimize the possibility of injury.

Another positive step toward reduction of children's accidents has been the establishment of poison control centers in many cities in Canada and the United States. Their purpose is to minimize the damage from potentially toxic substances by improved methods of prevention and better treatment of poisoning.

Science News Letter, June 28, 1958



LARGEST DOME—This architect's model of the Pittsburgh, Pa., civic arena shows the stainless steel dome in its retracted position. The roof consists of eight sections, six of which are movable. The open air stadium will have the largest movable dome in the world, 415 feet in diameter, that can be converted to a weatherproof auditorium "at the press of a button." Estimated cost of the roof is \$890,000. The auditorium, including mall and parking area, will occupy some 20 acres and seat between 7,500 and 14,000 persons depending on the event being held. The entire civic arena, described as a \$20,000,000-structure, is part of a city redevelopment program.

● RADIO

Saturday, July 5, 1958, 1:30-1:45 p.m., EDT "Adventures in Science" with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over the CBS Radio network. Check your local CBS station.

Dr. Gerald Laxer, director of science and technology, The Wool Bureau, New York, will discuss "Wool, Fiber of Past and Future."

PHYSICS

Nature "Whistling" At Earth Inaudibly

► NATURE is "whistling" at us but in such a low key it cannot be heard without special equipment.

The subaudible electromagnetic radiation has been detected by four Canadian scientists. It has a frequency range of from one-tenth to 30 cycles per second, whereas the lowest tone at all audible to the human ear has a frequency of 15 cycles per second.

The radiation is recorded on a magnetic tape that moves at 15-thousandths of an inch each second. The tones are then made audible by playing back the record at 15 inches per second. They are heard as whistles, rising or falling notes lasting for many minutes on the original record, the scientists report in *Nature* (May 3).

The whistles are particularly prominent during geomagnetic storms, when the earth's magnetic and electric fields are seriously disturbed by bombardment of charged particles believed to come from the sun.

Drs. H. J. Duffus, P. W. Nasmyth, J. A. Shand and Charles Wright of the Pacific Naval Laboratory, Esquimalt, British Columbia, report their work on the subaudible electromagnetic radiations is being extended with the aim of finding the source of the mysterious "noises."

Science News Letter, June 28, 1958

EVOLUTION

Missing Turtle Albumin Aids Evolution Study

► SEVERAL SPECIES of turtles apparently lack certain proteins found in human and other mammalian as well as amphibian blood, two researchers report in *Science* (June 13).

These "provocative" findings may help scientists better understand the processes involved in the development and evolution of vertebrates.

Using paper electrophoresis techniques, Elias Cohen and Gunnar B. Stickler of the Roswell Park Memorial Institute, Buffalo, compared the blood sera of humans and turtles. Blood serum is the clear, slightly yellowish fluid that remains when blood clots and the blood cells and fibrin are removed. They could not find the albumin-like components, or proteins, in any of three major families of turtle.

Analysis of turtle sera showed "marked differences" compared with snake, alligator, rat and human sera. Turtle sera contained less than half the amount of total protein in rat and alligator sera.

Dr. Stickler is now at the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn.

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