

years old. Already greatly improved, it is a system from which much may be expected in the future.

Within the next decade or so, greatly increased speeds in civilian transportation by air may be expected. Turbo-jet, ram-jet and rocket engines will be responsible. The so-called unbreakable sonic barrier, related to the elasticity of air which limits

the speed of sound, has already been broken. New designs to permit fast traveling and to withstand the air shock waves encountered may alter the general appearances of supersonic planes. And along with these developments the "everyman's" helicopter may be simplified and become a familiar sight in millions of backyards.

Science News Letter, December 11, 1948

or direct to Science Clubs of America, 1719 N St., N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

Science News Letter, December 11, 1948

GENERAL SCIENCE

Adjustable Laboratory Featured in New Building

► LABORATORY SPACE tailored to fit the needs of individual experiments can be arranged in the \$8,000,000 first section of General Electric's new research laboratories near Schenectady, N. Y., which has just been dedicated.

Standardized steel partitions in the building can be set up or taken down in a few hours to create different room sizes. Pipes and conduits in the laboratory will supply the researchers with direct and alternating electrical current of various voltages, city water, distilled water, illuminating gas, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, compressed air, vacuum and steam.

Science News Letter, December 11, 1948

CHEMISTRY

New Synthetic Detergents Have Advantages Over Soap

► ONE POUND of synthetic detergents is now sold for every five pounds of soap, and these newer cleansing agents boast several advantages, the American Oil Chemists' Society meeting was told in New York.

Foster Dee Snell of Foster Dee Snell, Inc., said that the synthetics usually work better in hard water than in soft. On the other hand, more than half of the soap used in your household probably goes to soften the water so that the rest of the soap can do its work. Development of synthetic detergents also may help the world food situation, he added. Soaps are made from fats and oils, while many of the detergents are made from petroleum.

Science News Letter, December 11, 1948

Hydrazine hydrate is an important ingredient in some rocket fuels.

GENERAL SCIENCE

Young Scientists Compete

Eighth Annual Science Talent Search is under way this month with 16,000 boys and girls competing for the \$11,000 in Westinghouse Science Scholarships.

► TEEN-AGE scientists all over the United States are sitting down for some pre-Christmas writing.

Their three-hour composition will be no letter to Santa Claus but it will bring 40 of them the best Christmas present they ever had—an invitation to the five-day Science Talent Institute in Washington and a chance to win a Westinghouse Science Scholarship.

Some 16,000 boys and girls began to take, on Dec. 1, a three-hour science aptitude examination in their own public, private and parochial schools as the first step in the competition for the \$11,000 in Westinghouse Science Scholarships offered in the Eighth Annual Science Talent Search, conducted by Science Clubs of America,

administered by Science Service.

The high school seniors, all of whom aspire to careers in science, will also submit scholastic and other recommendations and a 1,000-word essay on the subject, "My Scientific Project" before the competition closes at midnight, Dec. 27.

Judges to Name 40 Winners

The science aptitude examination, designed each year by Drs. Harold A. Edgerton and Stuart H. Britt, New York psychologists, is planned to reveal ability to think and reason rather than to measure acquired knowledge of science.

Only 40 boys and girls will be invited to the Eighth Annual Science Talent Institute March 3 through 7, 1949. For five days they will learn about new developments in science, listen to and talk with prominent scientists and be introduced to possibilities for their future in scientific research.

During their five-day all-expense stay in Washington one of the young scientists will receive the \$2,800 Westinghouse Grand Science Scholarship. Runners-up will receive scholarships ranging from \$100 to \$2,000. The \$11,000 in scholarships will be awarded at the discretion of the judges: Drs. Edgerton and Britt; Dr. Harlow Shapley, director, Harvard College Observatory; and Dr. Rex E. Buxton, Washington psychiatrist.

Honorable Mention For 260

The judges will name 260 other entrants in the Science Talent Search for Honorable Mention and Science Clubs of America will assist them as well as the 40 winners in getting scholarships at the colleges, universities and technical schools of their choice. Previous Honorable Mentions have received valuable scholarships and other financial assistance in this way to continue their education.

Entry materials and full details of the Eighth Annual Science Talent Search can be obtained by writing to Science Service

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