

the creation of life could have taken place on millions of planets traveling around suns (stars) other than our own and that perhaps life is being created all the time. One astronomer has estimated that the known universe could well contain as many as 100,000,000 earth-like planets.

Stars with planets located at such a distance that temperatures are not too hot or too cold might be just as capable of supporting life as is the earth. Other necessary factors for the existence of life are thought to be water and a suitable atmosphere.

The three planets in the solar system believed capable of supporting life are Venus, earth and Mars. However, since no evidence has been found of oxygen on either Venus or Mars, chances are very slim that higher life forms are present there.

Venus, about which very little is known because it is always shrouded in clouds, has been the subject of many conflicting theories. However, although atmosphere of Venus contains water, its surface temperature is estimated to be about 600 degrees Fahrenheit, virtually ruling out any form of life.

The possibility for life on Mars is somewhat better, but only for the lowest forms such as mosses and lichens. Observations of the infrared light reflected from Mars indicate that hydrocarbon-like materials exist

there. Color changes on the planet's surface suggest the possibility of some form of life.

The first experiment to find out if contact could be made with any possible outside intelligent beings was the Project Ozma, named for the queen of the faraway land of Oz in the fairy tale.

Radio astronomers led by Dr. Frank Drake listened to radio signals from deep space, hoping to hear definite patterns that would indicate a system of intelligent communication.

The 85-foot radio telescope at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory, Green Bank, W. Va., was used, but no signals sounding like any kind of a code pattern were heard.

In the past, scientists have reported hearing systematic-sounding radio noises. The inventor Marconi said signals he heard sounded like Morse code. Nikola Tesla reported in 1900 that he had heard signals suggesting "number and order" but was discouraged from publishing any data by public ridicule.

Dr. Drake said the Army has wax records taken of radio noises from space in the 1920's. The study of these records may yield new information about the possibility of life in space.

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#### GENERAL SCIENCE

## China's Science Behind

► DESPITE heavy propaganda alleging rapid progress, science and technology are still in their infancy in Communist China, and "the introduction of a metal plow is considered a scientific achievement and a technological advance."

The report comes from Leo A. Orleans, senior research analyst at the Library of Congress, who spent two years evaluating material on mainland China from Communist and other sources.

The words "science" and "technology" are used so freely by Red China's press and people that "one is just as likely to encounter them in connection with manure collecting and hog raising as with the construction of the much-talked-of atomic reactor," Mr. Orleans said.

The drive to bring "science" down to mass level goes to such absurd lengths as the Kuang-Ming Daily's 1958 description of recruitment efforts for 700,000 farm workers and 300,000 factory, mine and school workers as the building of "a one-million-man army of scientists" in Kiangsi Province.

Aware that China will not reach Western technological levels for many years, the Communists have stressed Chinese accomplishments while down-grading Western progress and influence. A vivid illustration is the fact that physicians trained in Western medicine "have been required to adapt many of the procedures and cures utilized by the old herbists" in traditional Chinese medicine, Mr. Orleans said.

The country's scientific effort is geared to meet immediate technological demands. The few scientists capable of high-level re-

search find it more expedient "to borrow existing knowledge from the more advanced nations and convert it to the special needs and the present level of Chinese technology."

Most of the serious scientific work in China is being conducted in the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Mr. Orleans said. The figures "most frequently encountered" show 170 scientific research institutes attached to the Academy as of 1958—compared with only 31 six years earlier. Total staff (1958) is listed as 28,300, including 5,900 engaged in research. Each institute has a Communist Party branch office whose secretary decides on finances and personnel.

"The rapid growth in the Academy's personnel has been concentrated in the total staff and not in the research personnel," Mr. Orleans noted.

He said the Chinese "rely heavily on their cooperation with the Soviet Union" in scientific and technological matters, but "hope gradually to decrease their dependence."

Generally, Communists are raising the educational base of the Chinese masses, and have made impressive progress toward increased industrial productivity, Mr. Orleans found.

His report is contained in the book, Professional Manpower and Education in Communist China, released by the National Science Foundation. (Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.) (See p. 316)

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#### TECHNOLOGY

## Shakespeare's Words Spoken by Computer

► SHAKESPEARE'S WORDS have been spoken by a computer. The machine also sang a song. It was all done electronically.

The synthetic speech was produced by instructing the computer to change the symbols for sounds, corresponding to the quotation from Shakespeare, into the audible sounds of speech.

The "talking" computer will say only what it is instructed to say by means of punched cards. The recitation and music were produced at the Bell Telephone Laboratories, Murray Hill, N. J.

Development of the artificial talker was reported to the Acoustical Society of America meeting in Philadelphia by Drs. John L. Kelly Jr. and Louis J. Gerstman.

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#### VIROLOGY

## Spherules in Liver Cells Thought Hepatitis Virus

► A VIROLOGIST in Nigeria believes he has visible evidence to support the theory that infectious hepatitis is caused by a virus. The cause of hepatitis is a medical mystery.

Dr. W. G. C. Bearcroft of the West African Council for Medical Research in Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria, found, with the help of an electron microscope, spherical bodies that are larger than any seen previously in infectious hepatitis cells. They are not found in normal persons.

These bodies, Dr. Bearcroft reported in *Nature*, 190:541, 1961, may be the causative virus.

Usually, he said, they are confined inside the liver cells, but occasionally they appear to be passing from the cells into the spaces that lead to the liver veins and are present in the blood serum.

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#### PHOTOGRAPHY

## 8mm Sound Film Picture Industry Boon

► EIGHT-MILLIMETER sound film is expected to extend the motion picture industry much as paper-bound books have enlarged the publishing field, the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers was told in Toronto, Canada.

John Flory, Eastman Kodak Company, Rochester, N. Y., predicted that by the year 1976 there will be 15,500,000 8mm sound-on-film projectors in use throughout the world.

An estimated total of 727,000 16mm sound projectors are now in use in the United States, whereas almost 4,000,000 8mm silent projectors are estimated to be in use in the United States.

Mr. Flory said every family in the U. S. with an income of more than \$5,000 per year should be a potential prospect for 8mm sound equipment.

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