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CHEMISTRY

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PARASITOLOGY

Hookworm Disease Still Plagues Southeast U.S.

►HOOKWORM DISEASE is still prevalent in the southeastern United States, especially in Florida, South Carolina, Georgia and some parts of Texas, a tropical disease professor told an international meeting on parasitology in Philadelphia.

This parasitic disease is caused by the hookworm, a nematode parasite that penetrates the skin of the feet, enters the circulation and eventually fastens itself to the lining of the intestine. It sucks blood and can cause severe anemia, but there are few fatalities.

Dr. Paul C. Beaver, professor of tropical disease and hygiene, Tulane University, New Orleans, La., also reported parasitic diseases which children get from dogs and cats. One of these infections takes the form of a creeping eruption of the skin.

A frightening lung disease that requires surgery is carried to humans by mosquitoes from dogs that have been bitten. The mosquito carries a "heart worm" from dogs to people.

Dr. E. J. L. Soulsby, professor of parasitology, University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, who presided at the conference of the World Association for the Advancement of Parasitology, said that gastrointestinal nematodes are a major disease problem with sheep all over the world.

Young sheep, as well as humans, when a few months old, do not develop the right type of immunity to this disease.

"Even if we can develop a good vaccine," he said, "it would not affect the immunity mechanism in young animals."

Dr. Soulsby did his Nigerian work at the University of Ibadan and took blood samples from the people who visited the University hospital for polio vaccination and other reasons.

Visitors from Australia, England and other foreign countries took part in the conference, which was held at the University of Pennsylvania in honor of the bicentennial celebration of the School of Medicine.

• Science News Letter, 88:196 September 25, 1965

AGRICULTURE

Lethal Daisies Help Economy of New Guinea

►"PLEASE don't eat the daisies" takes on a new meaning in New Guinea, where insecticide extracts of a newly cultivated daisy-like flower promise to help make up a market shortage.

Pyrethrum, extracted from dried flowers of the chrysanthemum family to which daisies belong, has an instant killing effect not present in synthetic insecticides.

World supplies have hitherto come from Kenya, Tanganyika and Ecuador. With the shortage, however, the Department of Agriculture Stock and Fisheries at Port Moresby, New Guinea, is supervising cultivation of the flowers by local inhabitants, who have planted several thousand acres.

The local climate is excellent for growing the flowers, and the quality of the extract is reported good, the New Scientist 27:435, 1965 said.

• Science News Letter, 88:196 September 25, 1965

Questions

ASTRONOMY—Which of the five naked-eye planets will not be visible in October evening skies? p. 202.

BIOPHYSICS—What is involved in the new sonar technique for detecting osteoporosis? p. 201.

GEOCHEMISTRY—Approximately how many rare earth metals are found in all rocks and minerals? p. 195.

MEDICINE—What is one possible reason why children develop breast cancer at early ages? p. 194.

NATURE NOTE—How does the hydra reproduce? p. 206.

SPACE—What was stated as the biggest problem of the Gemini 5 flight by Astronaut Cooper? p. 197.

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