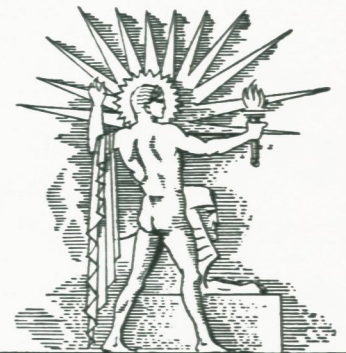


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SCIENCE NEWS LETTER

THE WEEKLY SUMMARY OF CURRENT SCIENCE ●



JANUARY 2, 1937

"Translucence"

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A S C I E N C E S E R V I C E P U B L I C A T I O N

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DO YOU KNOW?

Negroes are practically immune to cancer of the skin.

It is reported that Japanese scientists have found a serum to combat sleeping sickness and are using it experimentally.

For a given temperature increase, mercury expands seven times as much as glass.

A new circular on silver by the National Bureau of Standards brings together practically all accessible technical information on silver.

The famous Botanic Garden in Java, at Buitenzorg, contains a panorama of thousands of plants from all parts of the tropics.

To learn how much weight various types of bridges can carry, British scientists are loading a number of existing bridges with pig lead until they collapse.

The library of the American Entomological Society, consisting of some 6,000 volumes on insects, is the oldest purely entomological library in the United States.

The water level of the ocean is practically constant.

Lactic acid used in tanning hides is being manufactured from molasses.

The picturesque Joshua tree of the desert, which grows to a height of 60 feet, belongs to the lily family.

Gardeners find it effective to combine dogwood and redbud trees, as they flower in close sequence.

Smallest of monkeys is the pigmy marmoset, weighing full-grown about four ounces.

There are only about half as many apple trees in the United States now as there were 25 years ago.

In the low, flat tidewater section of North Carolina, the soil near streams and bays is sometimes so marshy that roads sink from sight.

The muskrat plague in Germany is so serious that the government has placed a bounty upon muskrat pelts, and cities have special squads to fight these rodents.

WITH THE SCIENCES THIS WEEK

Most articles are based on communications to Science Service or papers before meetings, but where published sources are used they are referred to in the article.

ANTHROPOLOGY

How many wives may an African chief have? p. 13.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Did Florida Indians, like Eve, pick clothing from the trees? p. 9.

What animals guarded the temple unearthed in Mexico? p. 7.

ASTRONOMY

What difficulty will astronomers encounter in observing the long eclipse of 1937? p. 10.

ASTROPHYSICS

What is the cause of magnetic storms that upset radio reception? p. 8.

BACTERIOLOGY

Does the germ which causes food poisoning also produce bone disease? p. 7.

BIOLOGY

Can unpollinated flowers bear fruit? p. 4.

How do insect hearts differ from human ones? p. 4.

CHEMISTRY

What new use has paper in the laboratory? p. 8.

ENTOMOLOGY

Is one wasp meaner than another? p. 8.

GEOLOGY

How long has life been on the earth? p. 14.

ICHTHYOLOGY

What are the signs directing salmon highway traffic? p. 14.

MEDICINE

How many large X-ray installations are there in American hospitals? p. 3.

Is any body cell capable of becoming a cancer cell? p. 8.

What is the new theory of how radiation damages cells? p. 5.

What new test has been developed for thyroid gland disease? p. 9.

METALLURGY

Are metals affected by their environment? p. 8.

PHYSICS

What is the largest number with a real meaning? p. 3.

PLANT PHYSIOLOGY

Are plants incompatible, too? p. 9.

PSYCHOLOGY

Mechanically, how does the test scoring machine work? p. 4.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Is America likely to realize the wishes for good health in 1937? p. 6.

ARE NOSE DROPS SAFE?

During 1937 and the coming years many thousands of children will die of pneumonia. Hundreds—perhaps thousands—of these deaths will have been caused by nose drops.

These statements are from a report on nose drops in the December issue of *Consumers Union Reports*, monthly publication of Consumers Union of United States. Naming widely-exploited brands by name, this article warns of the danger of giving children certain types of nose drops for colds. It presents medical evidence to show how many children are being killed by these medicines which manufacturers are advertising as safe cold remedies.

Did You Lose \$300 Last Year?

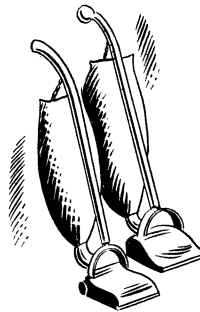
Most American families lose amounts ranging from \$50 to \$300 or more every year because of their lack of real knowledge about the everyday products they buy. For example: Hundreds of thousands of families use a widely-advertised brand of laundry soap which sells at 30 cents a pound—yet their clothes can be cleaned equally well with another well-known brand selling for only 18 cents a pound.

Or—to take another example—many car owners lose from \$40 to as much as \$100 in each 25,000 driving miles because they have equipped their cars with certain brands of tires instead of others. To illustrate—Brand A tires, costing \$10 per tire, averaged only 13,550 miles in actual road tests whereas Brand B, costing only \$8.50, averaged 27,051 miles. There is only one way to avoid this kind of loss—by relying on the advice of unbiased technical experts. Consumers Union of United States, a nation-wide, non-profit organization of almost 25,000 consumers, is set up to provide you with this advice.

WHAT IS CONSUMERS UNION?

Consumers Union is a strictly non-profit, membership corporation formed under the laws of New York State to give consumers accurate, trustworthy information—based on laboratory and actual use tests conducted by expert staff technicians and impartial consultants—on the comparative value of competing brands of widely-advertised products. Each month the findings of these experts are recorded in *Consumers Union Reports*—a magazine that has been called “the most valuable periodical in America.” Products are rated in these *Reports* by brand name as “Best Buys,” “Also Acceptable,” and “Not Acceptable.” The labor conditions under which many products are made are also described. These *Reports*—telling which brands of shoes tested wear longest, which makes of refrigerators are most economical, and which brands of other commodities are the best values—can save your family from \$50 to \$300 a year. The *Reports* also tell which food, medical and cosmetic products are safe and which can be dangerous to use.

They are available at the low fee of \$3 a year (\$1 a year for the abridged edition covering only the less expensive types of products). This fee also includes a yearly **BUYING GUIDE** which is now in preparation. The contents of the current issue of *Consumers Union Reports* are given at the right. You can begin your membership with this issue or with any past issue (see coupon at right). Simply fill out and mail the application blank—checking the month with which you wish to begin. For an additional 50c the *Reports* will be sent to you in a black cloth, gold-stamped binder.

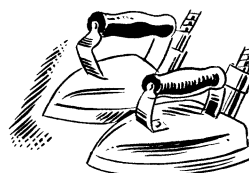


VACUUM CLEANERS

Do you want to know which vacuum cleaners will do the best job of cleaning? How rebuilt models compare with new ones in all-round value? How the different makes compare in construction and electrical insulation? Tested by unbiased engineers for cleaning ability, electric shock hazard, general engineering construction and other factors, 15 of the newest models of vacuum cleaners (including Hoover, Electrolux, General Electric and Eureka) are rated in the same issue of the *Reports* as “Best Buys,” “Also Acceptable,” or “Not Acceptable.”

FOUNTAIN PENS

Sacless pens, plunger pens, steel pointed pens, stylographic pens, and now pens to be loaded with ink tablets supposed to produce enough ink for a year's writing. Which brands are best? How much should be paid for a good pen? Only 3 out of over 20 makes tested by Consumers Union and reported on in this issue warrant top ratings as good, dependable fountain pens. Eleven are listed as “Not Acceptable.” Included in the ratings are such makes as Waterman, Sheaffer, CD, Camel and Parker.



ELECTRIC IRONS

On the basis of tests for heat distribution, temperature control, shock hazard, etc., 14 models of automatic electric irons are also rated in this issue. Some of the brands reported on are Magic Maid, Universal, Westinghouse and G. E. Hotpoint.

Other reports in this issue give money-saving information on leading brands of blankets, tomato juice, and other products, with ratings as “Best Buys,” “Also Acceptable,” and “Not Acceptable.”

To: CONSUMERS UNION of U. S., Inc., 55 Vandam St., New York, N. Y.

- I wish my membership to begin with the issue checked below:
- MAY**—Toilet Soaps, Grade A versus Grade B Milk, Breakfast Cereals
 - JUNE**—Automobiles, Gasolines, Moth Preventives, Vegetable Seeds
 - JULY**—Refrigerators, Used Cars, Motor Oils, Bathing Suits
 - AUGUST**—Oil Burners and Stokers, Hosiery, Black List of Drugs and Cosmetics, White Breads, Meat
 - SEPTEMBER**—Shoes, Tires, Whiskies, Women's Coats
 - OCTOBER**—Men's Shirts, Gins, Electric Razors, Dentifrices, Antifreeze Solutions
 - NOVEMBER**—1937 Autos, Radios, Toasters, Wines, Children's Shoes, Winter Oils
 - DECEMBER**—Vacuum Cleaners, Fountain Pens, Electric Irons, Blankets, Nose Drops.

I hereby apply for membership in Consumers Union. I enclose:

- \$3 for one year's membership, \$2.50 of which is for a year's subscription to the complete edition of **Consumers Union Reports**. Subscriptions without membership are \$3.50.
- \$1 for one year's membership, 50c of which is for a year's subscription to the limited edition of **Consumers Union Reports**. (Note—Reports on higher-priced products are not in this edition.)

I also enclose \$..... as a contribution toward a permanent consumers' laboratory.
I agree to keep confidential all material sent to me which is so designated.

Signature.....
Address.....
City and State..... Occupation..... LJ