

through another oil plant that also came from China, the soy bean. Soy bean oil is now being produced in considerable quantities, with the principal center in Illinois and neighboring Corn Belt states. The oil is in considerable demand for food uses and in the manufacture of soap, but its greatest potential market is as a paint ingredient.

Used alone in paint, soy bean oil is that thing anathema to all good painters, a slow drier. But if the proper proportion of heat-treated tung oil is added, the performance of the paint is very greatly improved. American production of soy bean oil is away out in front at present; it is up to tung oil to catch up.

America is not the only country where tung trees are being cultivated. In the warmer lands of the vast British Empire—India, South Africa, Australia, the Pacific islands—large-scale experiments are going on. Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil are among the potential tung-oil countries in South America. And latterly the Soviet Union has had delegations of experts visiting our plantings in the South, with a view to setting out trees in the warmer lands of interior Asia.

Tung oil, it would appear, is about to step out.

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Science News Letter, July 17, 1937

EDUCATION

Deafness Is Handicap In Learning To Write

DEAFNESS, known to be an almost insuperable obstacle to the learning of speech, now appears also to be a handicap in learning how to write good English. At the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Prof. William H. Thompson of the University of Omaha reported a study of 16,000 school assignments by 800 deaf children, which lend strong support to this thesis.

Of the children studied, 47 per cent. were born deaf, 21 per cent. became deaf before the age of five years, and 32 per cent. after five. All the children had more difficulty in learning written English composition than normal children would have had. Children who had once been able to hear averaged better than those born deaf. The errors of those who lost their hearing after the age of five closely resemble the errors of normal public school children.

Science News Letter, July 17, 1937

BOTANY

Arctic Botanist Gathers Poppies Through Snowbanks

Pere Arthème Dutilly Does His Botanizing During The Long Cool Days of the Arctic Summer

FAR in the northernmost Canadian lands, where the cold polar sea laps coasts that are mostly sullen and inhospitable, the long day of the Arctic has brought spring at last. In the thin layer of soil that thaws above the ever-frozen level at a few inches beneath, flowers are beginning to bloom—delicate harebell, bold dandelion, Indian paintbrush that is a brawl of color, flaming Arctic poppy, and a whole constellation of others.

To this, his high-latitude botanic garden, now returns the Botanist of the Oblate Missions. He has been away from his Arctic for a winter and spring, while he worked up his collections and notes in the laboratories of the Catholic University of America in Washington, D. C. Now he is buckling up his last straps, and in a few days will be on a small steamer nosing its way along Labrador's forbidding face.

This summer he will botanize the region around the northern end of Hudson Bay. It is familiar territory; he has been there before. Pere Dutilly's botanizing trips have taken him along all the Arctic coasts of Canada: around Labrador, in Baffin Land, on the Keewatin Peninsula, across the long coast of the Northwest Territories, up the Mackenzie and Slave rivers. He has plucked Arctic poppies growing through the snow at Latitude 76 North on Ellsmere Island, and pulled up trees by the roots alongside the Alaskan boundary.

(That latter feat, by the way, was no Paul Bunyan exploit; the birch and willow trees of the Arctic coast never grow more than six inches high.)

Four years Pere Dutilly spent in the Arctic before he "came out" to where he could get at library and laboratory facilities, arrange his specimens and send them to the herbaria that are to house them, and get the Eskimo kinks out of his tongue with a little French and English conversation. He will come back again next fall, for he still has a lot of work to do in Washington.

He expects to write a book on the

plant ecology of the Arctic—ecology tells not merely what plants, but how they get along with the climate and their relations one to another. He has seen some interesting things that still await telling.

For example, there is the matter of foliage color. Arctic plants tend to be purple instead of green. The higher the latitude the deeper the color. Pere Dutilly can tell, from looking at another man's specimens, about how far north they grew. His rule might be summed up: "The norther, the purpler."

Plants, however, are not the whole of Pere Dutilly's interest. After all, he is a missionary, and a human being too. He loves his Arctic and the Eskimos among



SUMMER GARB

Pere Arthème Dutilly showing what the well-dressed young botanist should wear this summer when he goes flower seeking in the late Arctic afternoon (about 11 p. m. and still daylight).