

## CLIMATOLOGY

# Alaska Warming Up

Records of past 50 years show some parts are getting steadily warmer. Ports formerly ice-bound all year now open in part of summer.

► THE ALASKAN icebox is slowly warming up and, in the process, giving Navy and commercial shipping a helping hand.

Records seem to indicate that over the past 50 years, some parts of Alaska have been steadily getting warmer. This has resulted in some ports which formerly were ice-bound the year round, now being open to navigation for short periods during the summer. Other ports, formerly open only for a few weeks, have seen this period extended.

Meteorologists disagree whether this is a trend or merely a random fluctuation. Dr. Sverre Pettersen, now with the Air Weather Service, thinks that changes in the intensity of heat and cold sources have affected the general circulation, thus accounting for the recent warming up.

Others see evidence of a trend in the behavior of glaciers. Most of the glaciers in Alaska seem to be receding. A minority, however, continues to grow.

One of these is called Taku. A party under the direction of the American Geographical Society under contract to the Office of Naval Research is now on the glacier. This spring, the fifth year trips have been made, the party is having exceptional difficulties with late snows, the Society has announced.

Another piece of evidence supporting the warming up theory is that the permafrost, the permanently frozen ground, seems to be receding and growing thinner. Members of the U. S. Geological Survey are making measurements of permafrost in order to check up on its rate of recession.

The situation may be reversed in the antarctic. Dr. H. C. Willett, professor of meteorology at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, going through records since 1885, finds a rise of one degree Fahrenheit per year in the northern hemisphere and indications of a fall in temperature in the antarctic.

Science News Letter, August 2, 1952

## NUTRITION

# More Summer Eggs

► THE HOPE that eggs will be more plentiful, and therefore cheaper, in future summers appears in the latest feat reported for the "golden wonder drug," aureomycin.

A feed supplement containing this mold chemical upped the egg production of some low-producing hens from 26% to 57%. John and Frank Etcherberry of the Pearl Poultry Farms at Montvale, N. J., have found.

The Etcherberrys used an aureomycin and vitamin-B-12-containing feed supplement, marketed as Aurofac 2-A, for hens that had fallen behind the rest of their flock in egg production. This feed supplement has been used for some time to increase growth and improve health of poultry, but few people apparently have paid attention to its effect on egg production.

The amount of feed supplement used by the Etcherberrys was two and one-half pounds per 100 pounds of feed, which is way above the recommended dose. In such dosage the cost for an entire flock would be prohibitive. So scientists at Lederle Laboratories, where aureomycin and the feed supplement are made, are running controlled experiments to see what results can be obtained with lower dosages for both culls and high-producing hens on low cost feeds. They hope they can find a dosage

which will be effective without running the cost too high.

Experiments show the summer molt is definitely being delayed in hens fed the pellets super-charged with aureomycin, so this may be the answer to the summer slack period in egg production as well as turning culls into producers. What with middlemen and other factors, however, Lederle people hesitate to say whether aureomycin can actually give consumers cheaper eggs next summer.

Science News Letter, August 2, 1952

## TECHNOLOGY

# Gigantic Scales Weigh Cargo on Crane Hooks

► A GARGANTUAN scale which can weigh up to 134 U. S. tons has been constructed by a British firm of weighing machine manufacturers.

Called a "Crane Weigher," it is primarily designed to fit on the end of a crane and to weigh huge objects of cargo directly as they are being lowered into or hauled from the holds of ships, thus combining hoisting and weighing in one single operation.

The scale has been certified correct by the British Board of Trade and shows ac-

curate weight on its clock-dial face in units of ten hundredweights (one-half British ton) to a maximum of 120 British tons. The British use the long ton of 2,240 pounds, compared with the U. S. short ton of 2,000 pounds.

The scale itself weighs almost a ton and a half and has an over-all length of eight feet and a width of two and one-half feet.

The casing is made of cast iron, usually regarded as a weak, brittle metal, but ingenious design has enabled the manufacturers to take advantage of the principle that although cast iron is weak on extension it is extremely strong on compression.

By anchoring the upright supports with outside bolts at the bottom at each side of the casing and having the downward pull exerted through the middle of the casing, the designers have achieved a compression effect which insures strength in the cast iron.

The particular instrument was made for an electrical manufacturing company to weigh complete transformers and alternators after construction so that certified weights for the items can be given to shipping authorities.

Science News Letter, August 2, 1952

# Do You Know?

The *cubit* is one of the earliest forms of measurement; it was the length of a man's forearm.

Over 85,000 square miles in western and northwestern Canada will be mapped with the airborne *magnetometer* this summer.

Contrary to popular belief, the largemouth and smallmouth bass are not true bass at all but belong to the *sunfish* family.

*Downy mildew*, a fungus disease, gets its name from the downy white growth that develops on grapes which suffer early infection.

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## TO THE BIOLOGY TEACHER, EVERYWHERE!

You can get better microscopic slides for less! Since comparative histology tells so much about the nature of man, this study should begin in high school, and be enlarged on in the liberal arts and teachers colleges, and in the university. Like English, it should be a required study for all students in every school of intermediate and higher education. The result would be a better citizenry: better parents, better teachers, better preachers, better physicians, a better man, and a much better society, which is the purpose of education. It should always be borne in mind that nothing can justifiably take the place of knowledge based on truth, and that no discipline can tell so much about the true nature of man as modern comparative histology. Premedical students should make comparative histology their biggest course, because the medical schools devote very little time to the study of this most important discipline. The medical students should realize that knowledge of cellular biology gives meaning to pathology, anatomy and physiology and is the natural and least costly approach to all medical problems. *Begin study histology in high school.*

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