ASK THE SCIENTIST

If you have a question to ask the scientists, mail it to the New York Press Association, The Castle, Syracuse, 10, New York. The Science Board of the Radio Workshop at Syracuse University will answer each week in the Andover News those questions considered most interesting and timely.

Question 1. I have recently read about a new seasoning which may someday be found on the table beside our salt and pepper. What is it?

ANSWER This was once a rare compound known to the chemist as mono-sodium glutamate; however, it is far from being new, as you imply by your question. It has long been known and used by the Chinese, particularly by the Buddists and other vegetarians in the Far East, to impart a meaty flavor to their meatless diet.

Mono-sodium glutamate is a salt of one of the many so-called amino acids which are produced when either animal or vegetable protein is broken down chemically—as it is, for example, in the digestive processes.

Commercially, it is made from wheat or soy bean proteins, but animal protein such as lean meat or fish are equally good as a source. The Buddists, however, will use only that which has a vegetable origin.

It is a white soluble powder with a distinctive meatlike flavor. This flavor is exceedingly intense. It requires fifteen times as much sugar as mono-solium glutamate in a cup of water to be preceptible to the taste. This does not mean that it is sweet, but only that its taste is intense and therefore very little is required to flavor the food.

Its value is somewhat decreased by use of an excess of salt or vinegar in the food so that its value may be lost to one with a heavy hand on the salt shaker. I am not sure that it is generally available as yet on the market but expect it will be soon.—Dr. Aden King, chamist.

Question 2. Are seedless oranges really seedless? If so, how do they keep the species growing?

ANSWER. Some varieties of oranges are seedless. Many plants do not produce seeds. The orchard grower takes twigs from trees and grows plants from the twigs, or parts of the plant take root. In fact, he might not get such good oranges from seeds. If you buy oranges labelled seedless you may find a few seeds in the oranges, but most oranges have a great many seeds and "seedless" is a relative statement.—Dr. Ernest Reed, geneticist.

Question 3. I read in the book "Journey Into the Fog," of the discovery in a northern bay of a unique animal called "Sea Cow." It lived in shallow water and was unable to move into deep water or to live on land. Were these "sea cows" and is any more known about them?

ANSWER. They might very well have been sea cows, for there are such animals. I do not know what part of the world the book mentioned deals with, but sea cows occur in the warm coastal waters of Florida, the West Indies, Brazil, West Africa, India, New Guinea, and Australia.

Sea Cows are more commonly called Manatees and Dugongs. They are large, heavily built aquatic mammals, with robust rounded bodies, blunt grotesque heads and thick pendulous lips; the forelimbs are modified into broad flappers; there are no hind limbs; the tail is broad and flat; the skin is rough and practically without hair except for stiff bristles around the mouth and nostrils. They are from 7½ to 14 feet long, the larger ones [illegible] pounds. They are harmless, gentle creatures, quite sluggish and almost helpless on land. They live their entire lives in a restricted area of shallow water along coastal rivers and bays, never venturing out into the deep waters of the ocean.

Their food consists entirely of acquatic plants. During the early life of the young, the mother raises it out of the water at 3 or 4-minute intervals to permit it to breathe, for like all mammals they breathe by means of lungs. Their upright attitude in the water, together with the rounded head and fishlike tail is supposed to have furnished the basis for the belief in mermaids. The group is in serious danger of extinction because their rarity encourages hunters.—Prof. Ralph King, zoologist.

WATER PUMPS & SYSTEMS

—See—

Higby Electric

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Elm Valley

Mrs. Charley Cole, Reporter

Feb. 28.—Mrs. Laura Ellis entertained a group of neighbors and friends Friday, honoring the birthday, February 24, of her mother, Mrs. Minnie Kenyon, including guests from Wellsville, Olean, and Andover. Refreshments were served by the hostess with two gift birthday cakes. Gifts were presented to the honor guest.

Sam Grastorf, recently discharged from a Rochester hospital, was calling on friends here Tuesday.

Mrs. George McAndrew is passing the week in Lockport, called there by the illness of her daughter, Mrs. Lloyd Hollenbeck.

Gilbert Barrett of Wellsville is moving his family into the former C. H. Burdick downstairs apartment.

Word has been received by relatives of the promotion of Vincent McAndrew from Second Class to First Class Petty Officer.

Pvt. and Mrs. Harold Payne and little sons of Knoxville, Pa., and Mr. and Mrs. John Payne of Woodhull were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Payne Thursday night. Pvt. Payne, who has been stationed in Texas, left on the morning train Friday for California.

Buy more Bonds:

Over 700,000 kinds of war items require paper. Burning paper is burning war supplies. Save all string and tie paper in separate bundles. Put out on curb on trash day or give to any school boy or girl.

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WANTED—Live poultry. Will pay ceiling prices. Stearns Poultry Farm, Phone, Alfred 88Y21, Alfred Station. 10p

LOST

LOST—Ration Book No. 4.—Finder please return to Miss Margaret Hart. 9

Total Food Rationing In Japan

All food and clothing in Japan is rationed, as well as matches, medicines, gasoline and fuel, the Office of War Information states in a comprehensive report on conditions within Japan. Food is distributed to Japanese consumers through neighborhood associations, which issue the rations. Each association serves 10 families. A local chairman is appointed by the police. Local food corporations deliver food rations to the consumers at their doors.

Red Cross War Fund Head Enlists Full Public Support

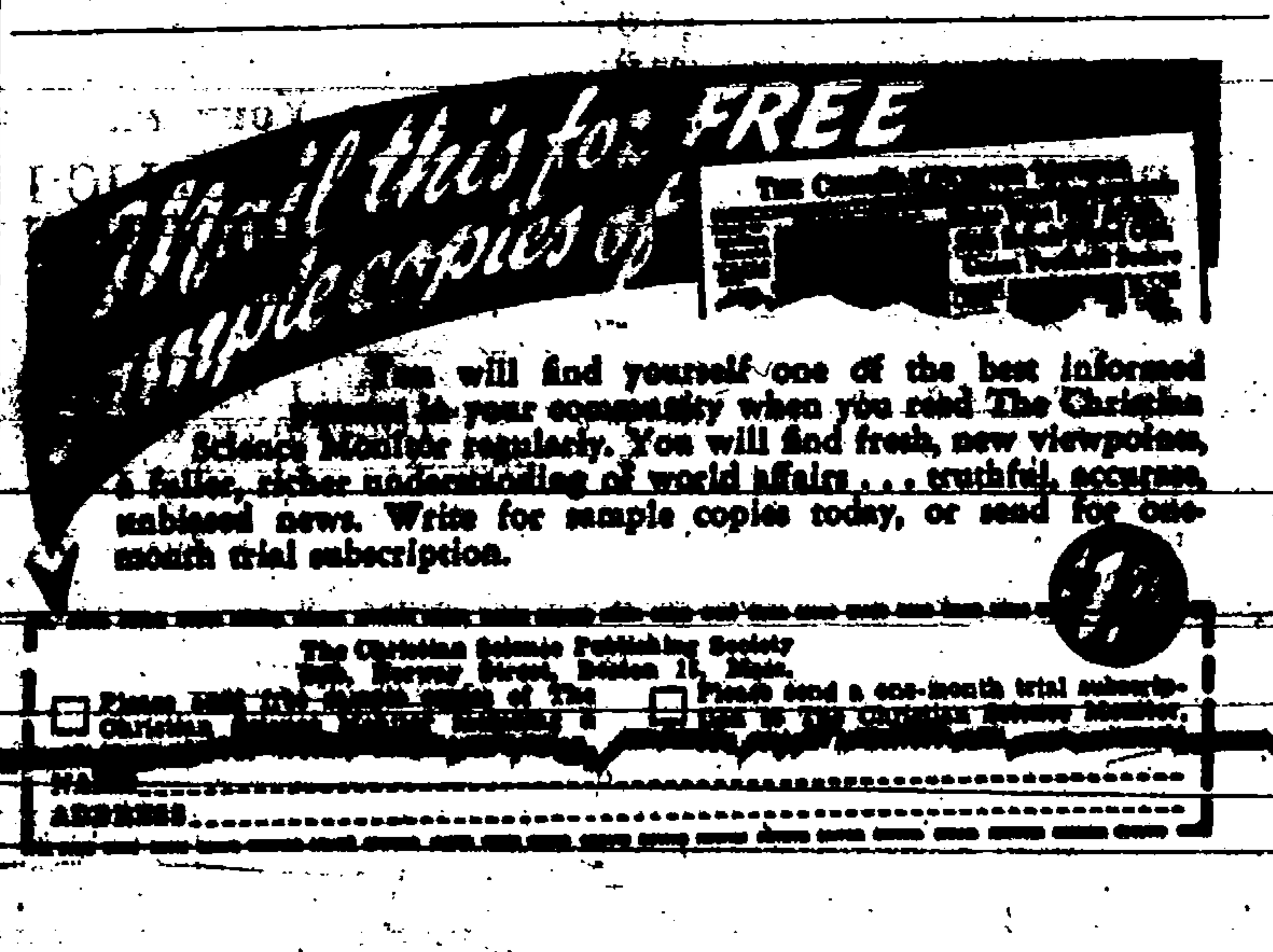
WASHINGTON, D. C.—Urging each American citizen to consider the Red Cross as his personal emissary to his particular serviceman, Colby M. Chester, chairman of the 1945 American Red Cross War Fund campaign, today asked all Americans to give to their fullest ability in support of the 1945 national goal of $200,000,000.

"Those of us who must stay at home and fight by doing our daily tasks as efficiently as possible," he said, "like to feel that though we are not beside John or Jim or Bob on the battle field, we do have a personal ambassador in each of the ten thousand Red Cross workers now serving with the troops overseas."

Opening March 1 and continuing throughout the entire month, the third Red Cross War Fund will not only fill intensified needs on advancing war fronts, but will provide needed services to those who have returned from action, their families, their buddies awaiting transportation overseas, and their friends and neighbors at home in time of natural or war-caused emergency.

More than 3,000,000 volunteer solicitors stand ready to aid in local collections in every American community. Each will devote his time and effort toward reaching the goal so that men and women in military service will know the Red Cross "is staying right with them, right up to and beyond the day of peace and victory," Mr. Chester explained.

Without personal gain or remuneration, the 3,000,000 men and women volunteer canvassers will represent 3,756 Red Cross chapters throughout the nation. Seeking from door to door those contributions which will not be made through factory, office, school or theatre, each will carry an official identification card for the protection of the householder. For the most part, however, such identification will be unnecessary because the solicitor will be a neighbor or friend. To each contributor, he will give a red, white and blue window sticker bearing the well-known Red Cross emblem.



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