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. Is there any poison for rat eradication which is not poisonous to pets and other animals?

ANSWER. In the course of a study of the psychology of taste by Dr. C. P. Richte at John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore a most interesting and valuable sideline developed. While testing a substance called phenylthiourea which tastes bitter to most animals but is tasteless to others, he applied some to the tongues of rats. The next morning the rats were dead. Further studies made by DuPont on a number of other closely related substances resulted in the development of the compound alphanaphthyl thiourea, which is a most active rat poison called ANTU for short. It is 100 times as poisonous to rats as is arsenic oxide. Its most interesting feature is that it is almost harmless to other animals, including humans. Although dogs may be made ill by it, it is not fatal to them. One pound properly administered is said to be sufficient to kill 300,000 rats. — Dr. Aden King, chemist.

Question 2. How far out of sea can we see; or how many statute miles away is the ocean horizon?

ANSWER. The distance in miles to the horizon can be determined approximately by the following formula: Distance in miles to the horizon is equal to the square root of three times the height of the eye in feet divided by two. — Dr. Earl T. Apfel, geologist.

Question 3. Is there any way the life of cut flowers may be prolonged?

ANSWER. The recent report made by investigators at the New York Agricultural Experiment Station shows that the life of many cut flowers may be considerably prolonged by replacing the air in the tissues by water. This was accomplished by placing flowers under water in a vacuum chamber. The vacuum pumps are started and the air bubbles out of the flowers. When the chamber is opened to the air, water rushes in to take the place of the displaced air. Some flowers treated in this manner last several times as long as the untreated flowers. — Dr. King.

Question 4. I have read that the Rhine River flows in a 'graben.' I understand that this means grave,' Does the Rhine River actually flow in a grave?

ANSWER. Graben is used to designate a part of the earth's crust which has sunk below the surrounding areas. Along the edges of the block which has dropped down there are faults which occur where one part of the earth's crust breaks loose from the adjacent part and slips into a new position. The Rhine River flows on top of such a block which dropped down from below the area both to the east and to the west of the lowland through which the river flows.

There are other garden areas which are famous. The Dead Sea lies in one. Death Valley in California lies in another. Lake Champlain along the eastern edge of New York State lies in a down-faulted block. This is one reason for the very steep side mountains which lie along the edge of the Lake Champlain valley. — Dr. Apfel.

Question 5. Do the new "plant hormone" types of weed killers kill all weeds?

ANSWER. During the past growing season studies have been made at many agricultural experiment stations on these new weedicides. They kill the weeds by causing abnormal cell growth in leaves, stems and roots, so that the plant is actually killed to its root tips. Most varieties of grass are unharmed, but the broadleaf plants suffer extreme damage.

A LOTTERY

"Is that picture one of the old masters you were telling me about?" asked Mr. Crumrox.

"Yes," replied the art dealer. "It is a genuine treasure; absolutely authentic."

"I'll buy it. I already have three just like it, and somewhere in the bunch I'm liable to hit the original."

GONE AGAIN

Absent-Minded Professor: "I have lost my umbrella."

Waiter: "But it is hanging on your arm."

Professor: "Thanks. If you hadn't drawn my attention to it, I should have gone home without it."

Keeping Cool Is An Art Says County Health Association

Keeping cool in the summer is an art. It's an art well worth cultivating when the rays of the sun beat down at their hottest in midsummer. It's an art which can be learned if one thing is kept in mind—moderation.

Moderation in eating, in play, in all types of physical exertion will make the summer heat spells more bearable. Getting all "het up" about the weather will only make us more uncomfortable. Since we cannot change the weather and many of us cannot move on to cooler climes, when hot days approach, it is just as well to resign ourselves to the heat and to try to be as comfortable as possible.

Here are some simple rules which, if followed, may help make the summer more pleasant.

1. Dress comfortably. Light clothes that are not too confining should be worn on hot days.

2. Eat sensibly. Heavy foods, difficult to digest, should be avoided. This does not mean living on sandwiches and salads throughout the summer. A well balanced diet is necessary at all times, and hot meals if well planned, will not add to the discomfort of summer. Rich, heavy foods, however, cause the body to work overtime in the digestive process and should be omitted from the diet in hot weather.

3. Drink plenty of water and fruit juices. Because the body perspires more in the summer than in the winter, it is necessary to consume an extra amount of liquids. Cool water and lemonade are particularly good on hot days. Extra salt is needed, too, because the body loses much salt in perspiration. This salt may be obtained by adding it to fruit drinks or by eating salt tablets.

4. Be careful to avoid overexposure to the sun.

Many people look forward to getting extra doses of sunshine during the summer, but too much sun may prove a health hazard. It may cause a painful sunburn or it may lead to sunstroke, which swiftly brings on unconsciousness and may cause death.

Sunstroke occurs most frequently among people exposed to the direct heat of the sun and who are too heavily clad. It is more common among men than among women and children. It may come on suddenly, but usually is the result of long exposure and may come on gradually. The symptoms are a pain in the head, dizziness, a feeling of oppression, the absence of perspiration and, sometimes, nausea and vomiting.

While a doctor is being summoned, the patient should be removed to a cool spot. His clothing shoud be loosened and an effort made to reduce his temperature. If he is conscious, he should be given salt and water to drink or fruit juices.

Moderation practiced during the summer months will make these months pass more pleasantly and comfortably.

Friend: "How many men work in your power plant?"

Chief Engineer: "Oh, about half of them I would say."

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Facts About Our State

The Barge Canal at Little Falls, N. Y., boasts a lock with the highest lift in the world.

Herkimer Homestead,, in Danube, N. Y., the home of General Nicholas Herkimer, hero of the Battle of Oriskany, is open for public inspection.

Herkimer in the Mohawk Valley is in the geographic center of New York State, midway between New York City and Buffalo.

Montgomery, N. Y. was named for General Richard Montgomery who fell in the attack on Quebec during early Revolutionary days.

Guy Park Manor in Amsterdam, N. Y., was the home of Guy Johnson, nephew and son-in-law of Sir William Johnson, the "Empire Builder."

Canajoharie is considered one of New York State's most distinguished smaller art centers.

It was thru Oneida County, N. Y., that cries of "Haul!" were first heard during the construction of the Erie Canal.

LIGHTNING CHANGE

A Chicago banker was dictating a letter to his stenographer. "Tell Mr. Soandso," he ordered, "that I will meet him in Schenectady."

"How do you spell Schenectady?" asked the stenog.

"S-c, Sc-er-er-er— Tell him I'll meet him in Albany."

HIS ERROR

Mother: "Louise, your hair is all mussed up. Did that boy kiss you against your will?"

Louise: "No, mother, positively not. He only thinks he did."

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