

Washington Digest

Disturbed About World? Sun Spots May Hold Clue

By BAUKHAGE
News Analyst and Commentator.

WASHINGTON.—If you were disturbed over the mayhem and misunderstandings rampant in the month of July, relax, there may be a scientific explanation. Sun spots.

For the first time in 11 years, there is a maximum number of ultra violet rays about, released by eruptions on the surface of the sun-rays which may cause tempers to flare, emotions to get off balance, glands to be affected so that abnormal behaviour results. This isn't fantasy. Medical science has revealed the effects of over exposure to the ultra-violet ray.

Sun spots may have been responsible for the disturbances you and I read about on just one single day last July—on that day in Haiti a publisher was assassinated by an otherwise gentle young poet because the bard had lost some kind of a scholarship; a 33-year-old painter who lived near the otherwise pleasant and peaceful New England home of House Speaker Joe Martin at Attleboro, Mass., did a dance



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when he heard his wife was dead—it seems he had shot her in the head; here in Washington, a 22-year-old husband knocked his wife down, tried to stab her with a butcher knife, attacked an innocent passerby and started a fist fight with a policeman; a vitamin plant blew up, a prisoner became ill of benzidine poisoning, a tanker in Chicago caught fire, Jimmy Roosevelt feuded with the other members of the California delegation and the Russians kicked up the usual fuss.

You and I probably had our own troubles—all perhaps due to nothing but the rash on Old Sol's physiognomy.

Scientists will tell you that sun spots were known by the Chinese before the telescope made them a comparatively familiar subject of astronomical concern. They are not uniform in size or shape and sometimes appear singly, sometimes in groups. A single spot may be large enough to take in our whole planet with room to spare. Groups extend over areas that may include millions of square miles.

Sun spots do not appear to have a definite duration. As a rule, they last but a short time, sometimes not more than a day. But one is recorded (in 1940-41) as having continued for 18 months. The number of sun spots varies greatly in a periodicity that is not strictly regular but that reaches an average of slightly over 11 years.

And last month Dr. Roy Marshall, director of Feis planetarium in Philadelphia, echoed an earlier suggestion made here in Washington. He said that sun spots could have a definite effect on the behaviour of people. And he reminded us that sun spots reached their last maximum frequency (before July, 1948) in 1937—when Hitler started his blitz.

It was several years ago that no less an institution than the conservative and careful Smithsonian, the capital's great scientific organization, speculated on the possibility that there might be a relationship between sun spots and wars, as well as sun spots and weather. Weather affects crops, crops affect economic conditions. Sun spots which release ultra violet rays which affect emotions might, an official report to congress suggested, disturb negotiations between individual leaders which might involve nations in war—that's the reasoning, anyhow.

Some may think it far-fetched. Shakespeare did when he said: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves." Poets are frequently right but not, perhaps, immune to the violence of the violet ray. (Witness the Haitian poet who shot the publisher.)

At any rate, the Smithsonian listed considerable technical data showing that sun spot activity frequently had preceded wars.

Some scientists say sun spots may have good effects, too—resulting in heavier foliage, better crops, more rains—as well as their evil tendencies to disturb interpersonal relations, not to mention radio communications.

However, there is little we can do about it, for as far as we know the sun is like a leopard—it can't (or won't) change its spots.

One 'Free' Book Is Not Wasted

If you are one of the lucky farmers who wrote your congressman promptly, asking for a copy of the Department of Agriculture 1948 Year Book, you have a treat in store for you. The first copies already have come from the government printer but it will be some time before the bulk of the printing is ready for delivery.

This year's topic is a live one: GRASS.

It deals with the general subject of grassland agriculture and there

is something in it for virtually every farmer and, if there were enough books to go around, could be utilized by everybody who raises a lawn, not to mention people who run airports or playgrounds, or any other enclosure of greensward.

There is a growing interest in this subject. One member of the department of agriculture called it "a big swing to grass" on the part of farmers over most of the country. Not just as feed but for many purposes and functions. One farmer near here, for instance, said to a friend of mine recently that he had quit growing corn for silage. He uses grass entirely.

In case you have forgotten, you have a chance to get a Department of Agriculture Year Book because of a law passed in Abraham Lincoln's time. Congress every year appropriates a sum of money; the department prepares the book, (under the incumbent editorship of Alfred Stefferud) the government printing office prints, binds and delivers 241,000 copies to members of congress. They pass them around as far as they go. That's the law.

This volume is probably one of the few "free" books which is not wasted for it goes almost exclusively to people who want it and use it—in this order—(1) farmers, (2) state agricultural colleges, (3) other colleges for G.I. courses, (4) some high schools.

Later on I shall give you an idea of the contents of the current volume which deals comprehensively with the subject of grass (including legumes and associated plants) beginning with the history from colonial days, the place of grass in building soil and feeding livestock, specific information applying to 10 sections of the United States and pictures and descriptions of a 100 different grasses and legumes.

Guard Your Liberty—Know Dates at Least

It's almost impossible to believe that any American would not know the meaning of the approaching V-J day. But will Americans, 172 years from now, remember that September 1 marked the official end of the bloodiest war in history?

Perhaps this sounds absurd to you. It wouldn't if you had read the results of one of a series of polls taken by the Washington Post. Just before July 4, the Post interviewers asked a number of individuals: "Fourth of July is almost here. Can you tell me why we celebrate it?" Eighty-five per cent of all persons asked had the right answer.

Twelve per cent had no idea why the Fourth is a holiday, and 3 per cent thought it was the anniversary of Armistice day, the end of the Civil war, emancipation of the Negroes or some other event. One of those who had no idea at all on the subject was credited with a college education.

Asked what the day meant to them, 39 per cent said, in various ways, that it meant national freedom; to 18 per cent it spelled personal freedom and liberty in general; 11 per cent said it didn't mean nothin' nohow but a holiday.

How many of us who admit that liberty—freedom—is our inherent right, know what freedom is? Few, unless they have lived in a country where one practices that quick, apprehensive look to right and left, before he dares comment. It's a depression gesture. I've seen it and shuddered.

I have quoted W. E. Woodward before. In his "New American History," he says:

"Liberty implies responsibility and the vast majority of mankind has always hated responsibility worse than death. So in all ages, men have run around, holding it out before them as one holds a golden vessel, offering it to anyone who possesses enough vulgar enterprise to take it away from them."

This "vulgar enterprise" is afoot today, snatching liberty, right and left and tossing it into a totalitarian limbo of the things mankind really loves—loves but does not always cherish except in memory.

One might paraphrase an ancient proverb: "A fool and his liberty are soon parted." Folly is not incurable. It can be exchanged for wisdom. Perhaps some of the "realists" who scorn such abstract subjects as political science and history would do well to encourage study of our liberty, how we came by it and why it is worth keeping.



Storage of Surplus Fowl Is Profitable

Poultry Held in Locker For Sale at Price Peak

To assure that poultry of various classifications is properly held in locker plants or freezers, it is advisable that the fowl be wrapped in water-proof, moisture-proof paper.

Latest scientific methods call for enclosing the fowl in a strong mesh fabric, known as stockinet, which keeps the prepared locker paper tightly pressed around the chicken, thus eliminating all air pockets inside the wrapping and preventing the paper from becoming loose at any time.

Poultrymen and farmers with a surplus of poultry have found it



profitable to place some of the birds, as well as game fowl, in storage for their own consumption as well as for sale to local markets when prices become higher.

Considerable demand has been found for ducks, geese and turkeys as well as for chickens.

During the past few years some poultry raisers have found an excellent market for smoked fowl and a most satisfactory market price.

Only quality fowls should be so stored and handled, and then only when proper wrapping material is utilized and proper storage facilities are available.

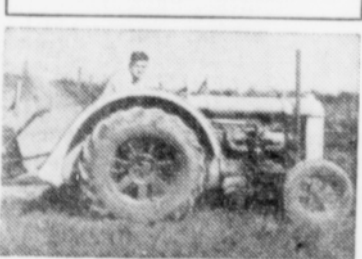
Modern Agronomists Debunk Copybook Line

"Hay is dried grass." That line invariably appeared in copybooks handed out to pupils in old-time writing classes, but agronomists at Ohio State university claim the copybook publishers apparently knew considerably more about teaching pupils to write than they did about haymaking.

Some dried grass is excellent livestock feed but other cured grass is just fair quality bedding, agronomists insist.

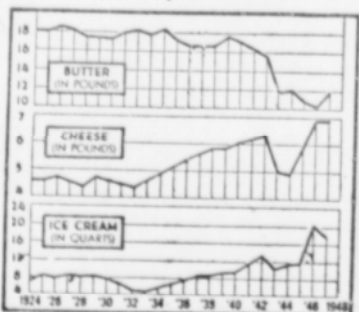
The best time for cutting hay is when plants have made almost their greatest growth in weight but still contain a high percentage of protein. For red clover, the recommended cutting time is when the plants are in the half bloom stage. The most hay of high quality will be hauled from the alfalfa field if cutting is started before the half bloom period.

Renovated Tractor



This steel shod tractor was in good operating condition, so the farmer decided to adapt it for rubber tires. The tires, tubes and rims cost \$119. In addition to the new agricultural implements being purchased this year, many are being re-modernized.

U. S. Per Capita Consumption of Dairy Products



Thinning of Vegetables Assures Best Growth

Most gardeners make the mistake of not thinning their vegetable rows sufficiently. They hate to pull up part of their plantings and thus allow all of the seedlings to be crowded. Thinning should be done when the soil is moist and the seedlings are one to two inches tall. If taller than two inches, don't pull them up; cut them off at ground level for best results.



A CARGO of active Olympic flesh is now in London. It is part of the pageant of some 5,000 contestants from more than 60 nations where, as usual, it will be the U. S. against the rest of the planet, with the U. S., as usual, a hot favorite to win.

This is a strong U. S. team, ably coached and well trained. There is only one large fly in the sticky ointment.

In the eight running races from the 100 meters to the marathon, the U. S. will be lucky to win as many as two. After leaving the 200 meters behind, there will be dark clouds on the horizon for the other six running races unless Mel Whitfield can handle the 800 meter gallop. We should be O. K. in the hurdles and the jumps, including high and broad.

We have won every Olympic pole vault, with one exception—Gonder, France, in 1906. We have won every high jump with two exceptions. We have won every broad jump except one, Pettersen, Sweden, 1920. We have won most of the shot puts and the hammer throws. But in the last 40 years we have won only one race beyond the 400 meter mark. Finland has taken over the 5,000 and 10,000 meter runs and we haven't bagged a marathon since Johnny Hayes turned the trick in 1908.

A Nation of Sprinters

We have been largely a nation of sprinters, lacking the essential quality of stamina that is even more important than sheer speed. On this next occasion, Patton and Barney Ewell will have trouble overpowering LaBeach in the two shorter sprints.

We have no one to handle Herb McKenley of Jamaica, who has run the 400 below 46. Whitfield has a terrific battle on his hands in the 800 as the stamina-infested Swedes, headed by Lennert Strand, take over the 1,500 meter test. Any slight chance we ever had in this race, the best race on the card, vanished with Gil Dodds. And Dodds at his best was a long price. Whitfield can be the team's leading star.

We have heard every reason under the sun for our inability to develop a distance runner. The automobile? Well, the Finns and Swedes also have automobiles. Running time takes too long? It does for us. Lack of interest? Why? A marathon is a far bigger race to win than the 100 yard or 100 meter dash.

Do we develop race horses to run four furlongs or a mile and a half and two miles? Speed is important in a horse, but no more important than his ability to go the route.

The Kentucky Derby is a mile and a quarter. We have no derby types in our Olympic runners. They are from four to six furlong runners. Exactly they are from one-half to one furlong operators.

Plenty of Competition

When you have 61 nations and some 5,000 athletes no one can say what has taken place in the last 12 years since the Berlin games. There will be formidable competition from Sweden, Finland, Australia, England, Jamaica, also Czechoslovakia.

Young John Kelly should take care of the scullers and California should hold its own in the eight-oared race. We have not done so well at men's swimming since Johnny Weismuller started climbing trees and beating up gorillas. We have won the last five eight-oared races but haven't been any too hot at the four-oared types, with and without a coxswain.

One interesting feature of these games is the comparative times and measurements from 1896 to 1936—the first and the last.

For example in 1896 W. W. Hoyt won the pole vault with 10 feet 9 3/4 inches. In 1936 Earl Meadows won with 14 feet, 3 3/4 inches—a lift of nearly four feet.

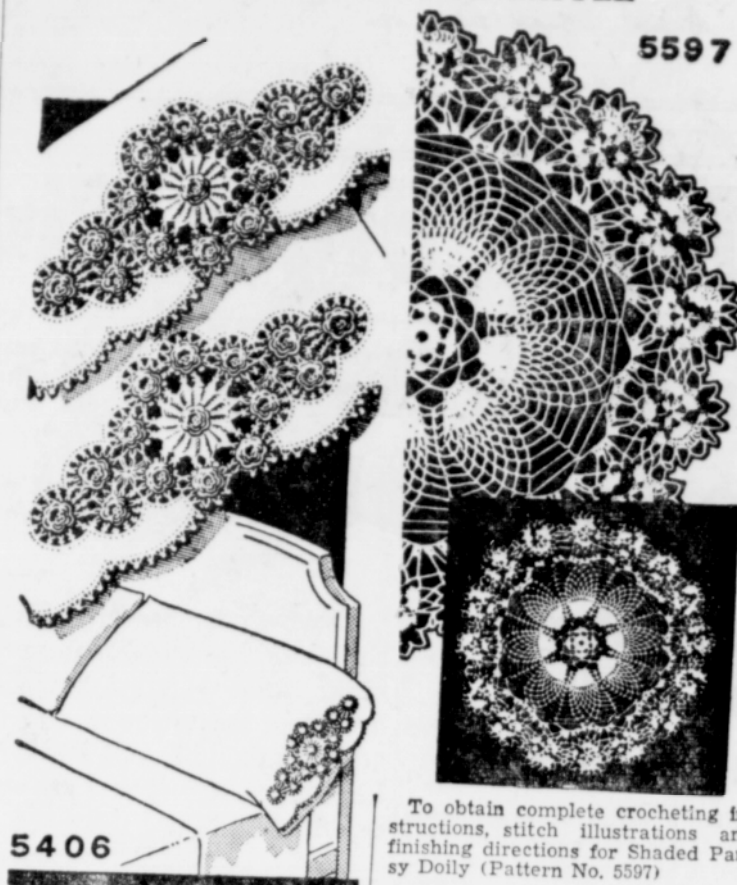
In 1896, E. H. Clark won the high jump at 5 feet, 11 1/4 inches. In 1936, Johnson won at 6 feet 7 and 15/16 inches—almost a foot higher. In 1896 Burke won the 100 meter run in 12 seconds. In 1936 Owen won with 10.3. The 400 meter run dropped from 54.4 to 46.5, nearly 9 seconds.

The 1500 meter run dropped from 4.33.4 in 1896 to 3.47.8 in 1936. This means a difference of more than 45 seconds. You wouldn't think it possible that such wide gains could be made in such a short period of time.

Races Improve

The point is this—if everything that can be measured or timed shows such a vast improvement, why should old-timers in other sports be rated even fairly close to modern stars in football, baseball, golf, etc? If you care to be logical about it, it doesn't make much sense. Certainly as far as sport is concerned the race is improving from year to year, getting better and better. If you bring up the matter of sanity we'll bow out.

CROCHETED IRISH ROSE DESIGNS SHADED PANSIES AND PINEAPPLE



5597

5406

Trousseau Gift

Lovely Irish crochet inserts on soft percale pillowcases make a most welcome trousseau gift. Easy to make, the roses are crocheted in shaded blue or pink cotton set in a background of lacy white.

To obtain complete crocheting instructions, stitch illustrations, actual size sketch of design motifs for Irish Rose Design (Pattern No. 5406)

Heirloom Piece

This dolly is pretty enough for an heirloom piece. Shaded pansies edge the cobwebby pineapple motif center. Use lavender or blue thread around a white center. Quickly crocheted, the finished dolly measures 12 inches in diameter.

Freeze in Garden Flavor In Moistureproof Cartons

To keep the most "garden goodness" in fruits and vegetables that are to be frozen, package them carefully. This point is stressed by Miss Frances O. Van Duyn, assistant professor of foods, University of Illinois college of agriculture.

Choose containers that can be sealed tightly and won't leak. Frozen foods are better when packaged in containers that are moisture-proof and vapor-proof, Miss Van Duyn explains. Otherwise the foods dry out and lose palatability.

Cartons come in a variety of types and shapes. Rectangular or square cartons may have inner linings or have a waxed plastic finish; some are made for use with cellophane bags. Most of these are sealable with heat—by pressing together edges of covering material with an electric iron or a hand iron. The cartons are generally easy to handle and store. Waxed cups are convenient, but the seal on the set-in lid isn't moisture- or vapor-proof.

Before sealing a filled carton or bag, wipe inside edges with a clean cloth to remove moisture that would prevent a tight seal. Also press out all possible air from top of bag, then heat-seal tightly. Or you may like the pressure tapes for sealing; they have an adhesive substance on one side so that they can be stuck on edges of bags and cartons.

To obtain complete crocheting instructions, stitch illustrations and finishing directions for Shaded Pansy Dolly (Pattern No. 5597)

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