

'Vast Range' of Standards Noted For Colleges

Philadelphia—(Science Service)—A "conspiracy of silence" covers the fact that college degrees granted in the United States are based on a "vast range" of standards, Dr. James Bryant Conant, president emeritus of Harvard University, told the American Philosophical Society meeting here.

He said this difference in standards was a "consequence of the American doctrine of equality of status" and that he did not condemn or discredit it. However, Dr. Conant emphasized, the existence of a range of standards for college degrees makes suggestions to raise entrance requirements over the entire nation "ridiculous."

Examinations Urged

Although the U.S. has never had the equivalent of European state examinations for determining university study ability and probably never will have, Dr. Conant urged that professional schools of law and medicine and graduate schools of arts and science require their candidates to pass a set of examinations.

These examinations should demonstrate that applicants have a "good reading, writing, and speaking knowledge of at least one modern foreign language; a knowledge of mathematics through the calculus; a knowledge of physics, chemistry and biology at the freshman college level; the ability to write a competent essay; a knowledge of American history and political institutions at a sophisticated level; and a knowledge of English and American literature at a corresponding level."

Dr. Hayward Keniston, University of Pittsburgh language professor, charged that the greatest danger facing U.S. higher education may be the wasting of available human resources. Among superior students, he said, are the creative minds who lead the next generation, and the intellectual life of the future may well depend on them.

Therefore, he urged that the faculties in the liberal arts and the professions unite on standards as they prepare their students for the tasks of life. Both undergraduate and graduate institutions must prepare a new generation of liberally educated young men and women who are also trained in some specialized field to meet the needs of society.

Sunspot Activity Expected in 1968

London (Science Service)—The next peak in the sun's 11-year cycle of sunspot activity, expected in 1968, will not be as high as that reached in 1958.

Calculations reported here by Dr. C. M. Minnis of the Radio Research station, Slough, Bucks, show that conditions for world-wide communications during the 1964-1974 solar cycle will be roughly like those during the 1934 through 1944 and the 1944 through 1954 solar cycles. The chances are only one in three that the 1968 peak will be higher than the 1958 one, he has found.

The 1958 high, which occurred during the International Geophysical Year, hit a record not previously exceeded since accurate observations of sunspot activity started more than 200 years ago. Solar activity rises and falls in an 11-year cycle, reaching a peak quite soon after the beginning of a cycle, then gradually dropping to its low.

Shaving Cuts Can Cause Skin Cancer

Mexico City, (Science Service)—A single razor cut may result in skin cancer within a month, Dr. Edmund F. Finnerty, Jr. of Tufts University Medical school told the Pan American Medical association meeting here.

"We have been able to isolate cases of carcinoma of the skin that were caused by a single razor cut. In each case the carcinoma appeared at the exact site of the cut that did not heal but crusted over repeatedly," he said.

Dr. Finnerty said skin cancer is now about 10 times more common than lung cancer.

Each of the 3,500 dermatologists in the U.S. is now recommending about 100 to 200 skin cancers a year, and surgeons and general practitioners are removing hundreds of thousands annually.

For his report, Dr. Finnerty surveyed members of the North American Clinical Dermatologic society, of which he is secretary.



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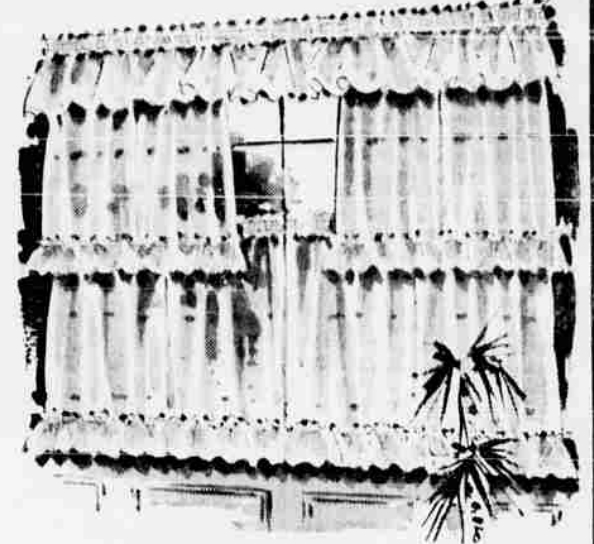
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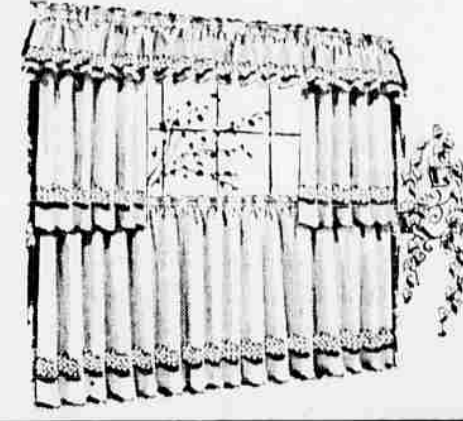
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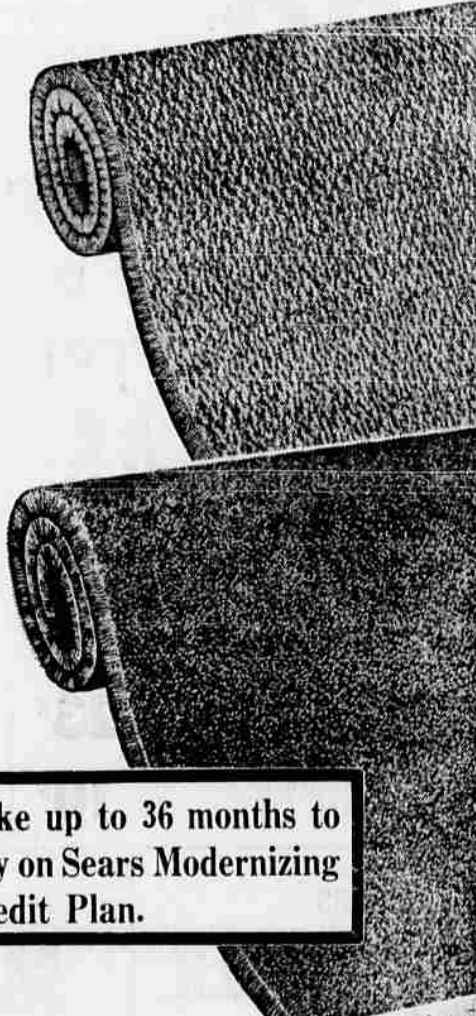


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