

crystallized as a nucleo-protein of high molecular weight was the virus that causes tobacco mosaic, a wide-spread disease of tobacco plants. This was done by Dr. Wendell M. Stanley, of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. It is pointed out that "potato virus X is perhaps more typical of viruses in general than tobacco mosaic, so it seems more probable that all viruses may be specialized nucleo-proteins." Two strains of the potato virus were crystallized, the S and G strains.

GEYSERS in Yellowstone National Park, spectacular enough at all times, appear to be putting on a special show this season. Old Faithful has been spouting to unprecedented heights. Recently an eruption reached the height of 223 feet, which is 73 feet above its 150-foot averages and 32 feet higher than its previous record of 192 feet. Grand Geyser has taken a new lease on life, with 200-foot eruptions at thirty-hour intervals. The Giantess, largest of all geysers, has erupted four times in nine months, which is about double its usual rate. National Park Service observers are not yet certain whether there has been a general increase in geyser activity or simply a shift in underground water flow, increasing the activity of some at the expense of others.

DON'T tidy up forests too much, by removing fallen timber and otherwise clearing the ground, is the advice of a leading Swiss ecologist, Dr. Arnold Pictet. If you clear away all such accumulations of "rubbish" you deprive the forest of much of its biological working capital. Trees are a soil-exhausting crop, Dr. Pictet

points out. They withdraw a large proportion of the soil's original store of nutrient substances and lock it up in their stems. When they fall, the swarming destructive life of the forest floor—insects, worms, fungi, bacteria—unlock these hoardes and return the accumulated capital to the soil as humus. Lumbering operations inevitably carry off a good deal of this capital to market. Fire destroys it, not to be replaced for centuries. Fallen trunks, and forest litter generally, can re-invest a part of it in the soil.

AN easily readable device that tells the navigating officer how much a ship is off a pre-determined course has been patented by Francis West, Jr., of Chilmark, Mass. An electrical set-up enables the compass to be kept at one place and to operate an indicator on the bridge to inform bridge officers the ship's direction in terms of the course set, according to the specifications for the patent. It can replace with a simple needle swinging across a dial the complex compass card that requires considerably more than a glance to read it. So long as the ship is correctly headed a needle rests at zero on a dial. A condenser of a particular type is actuated by the compass so that when the ship moves off course a capacity bridge is no longer kept in balance and the bridge-actuated needle swings to one side. Amount of swing informs the navigating officer how much the vessel in his charge is off course. Mr. West claims that the device is suitable for use on ships, airplanes or other means of transportation requiring compass-steering.

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