

NEW ADVISORY STAFF MEMBER

At the Representative Assembly meeting in New York City, Mr. C. M. Goethe, Sacramento, California, was unanimously elected to serve on the Advisory Staff of *The American Biology Teacher*. Mr. Goethe, a charter member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BIOLOGY TEACHERS, brings to the Association the experiences of a career rich in service to his fellow men. Among others, he is a business executive, world traveler, and pioneer in movements such as playground, city planning, and garden clubs. He is the author of numerous newspaper and magazine articles dealing with business, civic, and scientific subjects. Also, he has written many books including *Seeking to Serve, Sierran Cabin From Skyscraper, War Profits and Better Babies*, and *Geogardening*. A review of the latter book appeared in the January, 1949 issue of *The American Biology Teacher*. Mr. Goethe writes and publishes a Eugenics Pamphlet, eugenics being his major scientific interest. His slogan through most of his life has been, "Reduce Biological Illiteracy In the United States of America." *The American Biology Teacher* cordially welcomes Mr. Goethe into its official family.

BROTHER RAT

When man finally rockets to the moon, the chances are that Brother Rat will accompany him. This was the prediction made by Charles D. Thurmond of Monsanto Chemical Company in a recent talk before the Pacific Insecticide Institute during which he reviewed the progress made during the last ten years in discovering and perfecting rat poisons.

He pointed out that for centuries man's greatest defense against the rat was witchcraft. He cited the custom of "rhyming rats" in ancient Ireland and Scotland. One of the charms to get rid of the rats was to beat loudly on a skillet, Mr. Thurmond said, and at the same time to shout

"Beat for the rats.
Beat for the rats.
Go to so-and-so's house.
There is a bridge to pass."

Poison is the most efficient means of destroying rats, Mr. Thurmond said. He described ten rodenticides (rat killers) which are generally used. Six of them, he said, were in common use prior to the war. The remainder were directly or indirectly the result of war-inspired research to obtain adequate battle-area rat control.

A new rodenticide, which Mr. Thurmond said will soon be available, is known as Compound 42. It was discovered during cattle disease studies made in the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Wisconsin. Compound 42 is a tasteless and odorless substance which causes rats to die of lung hemorrhage.

One of the best rodenticides, Mr. Thurmond said, is Compound 1080. In discussing its use, he emphasized the need for extreme caution and pointed out the rigid precautions taken by his company and government officials in controlling 1080's distribution and application. It is available only to professional exterminators and government agencies.

Other "ratistics" given by Mr. Thurmond:

There are more rats than people in the United States—155 million rats to 150 million people.

The rat has caused mankind more trouble, more expense, more suffering and more death, than all the wars combined.

The annual damage caused by rats has been estimated at \$500 million, mostly in agricultural products.

Rats destroy and eat as much food each year as 265,000 farmers produce in the same period.

BIOLOGY LABORATORIES

By The "Old Fossil"

TURN OF THE HALF CENTURY. Not for its present news value but for the record we say this about biology. The biology course seems to be firmly established in the secondary school curriculum. It is one of the newer courses to be added; generally considered as a two semester, second year course.

TWENTY FIVE YEARS AGO. It was about this time when biology as a course was sired by the mating of the father zoology and mother botany. Prior to this, these two courses were offered as one or two semesters each and in sequence. I started my first biology class using the Kinsey text as my sole guide. My university training never did include a course of instruction in biology as such. The *Hegner* text dominated the field of zoology and *Bergen and Caldwell* was tops in botany. By the late twenties many good texts in biology appeared. Biology laboratory manuals were common but gave way to the present day workbook.

WINDOW DISPLAYS. *Valpariso, Indiana*, November. The J. C. Penny store window had an exceptional leaf collection put in by the high school. Instructor Miller was the biology sponsor of this biology student project. Instructor Roberts was in charge of the manual arts work connected with making the covers. The covers consisted of individual work and design in metals, plywood and leather.

Plymouth, Indiana, November. Our practical biologists, the 4H, had a display in Nellans Electrical Appliance Shop. They had a fine display of seeds of grain and other related articles grown by the students in the summer of 1949. One article that I remember was a small red ear of popcorn about two inches long.

IF YOU ARE A GARDEN FAN or give some instruction in this in your classes write for the following: Hollenbach's Seed Store, 808 West Lake Street, Chicago, has a good garden bulletin, *What When How Helps*. It is free. The editor who signs himself as "The Seedling" is Walter Juengling. He certainly does a nice job in this bulletin.

THE BOY IN THE REAR of the room was no dummy. He had a pair of field glasses reading the fine print on a front room class chart. Perhaps you can put your pair of glasses to similar advantages in class room laboratory and other places. You can see things besides birds.

LAB FEES. Many schools collect a lab fee from each student for biology incidentals. The prevailing charge seems to be twenty five cents. Some charge much more, others less. This money is used to supplement the purchase of materials regularly furnished by the Boards of Education. If you do not collect a fee and would like to, consult your principal about the idea. Such fees should be handled as all other school funds.

DETROIT. From a letter from C. L. Thiele, Divisional Director of the Exact Sciences of Detroit: "At the present time a committee of Detroit senior high school science department heads are making a thorough revision of the science supply and equipment list." This is a worthy attempt to bring purchases up to the present day offerings. Many school lists are cluttered with materials listed years ago and now have doubtful value. They do not keep abreast of the newer developments. We sincerely hope Detroit not only prepares an up-to-date list of supplies and equipment but also maintains flexibility for additions to such listings which may later prove of value.

"THINGS OF SCIENCE" a service supplied from the Science Service Building, Washington 6, D. C. One years' subscription \$4.00. Each month a blue package of actual objects of science is mailed to the subscriber. In the past "Things of Science" units have included: new plastics, coal-by-products, new insecticides, petrified wood, chicle, vegetable dyes, together with sheets of explanatory comment, written by scientists. Museum style cards are furnished to identify each object, so that exhibits may be set up.

TEACHING AND EXPERIMENTATION. At least two firms are experimenting with new teaching devices at the present time. This is quite a task. Experiments must be conducted to determine the know-how. Another set of tests must be conducted to transfer this know-how to a production basis. Then protection of patent and copyright procedures takes more time. I will give you more information regarding these two projects soon. In the meantime it is the Old Fossil at 5001 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago 25.