



Doctor in the Kitchen®

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The American Tentative Society

Today, I want to talk about a most exciting scientific development - the founding of The American Tentative Society. When they first hear the name, people are inclined to exclaim "whaaat?" But the purpose of the society is serious. Note these comments of one of the founders:

"There is a hazard when we learn anything. It's the danger we may stick some 'fact' away in the attic of our brain and let cobwebs gather

around it. We may resist the challenge when new developments might enrich our understanding and show that earlier information is no longer valid.

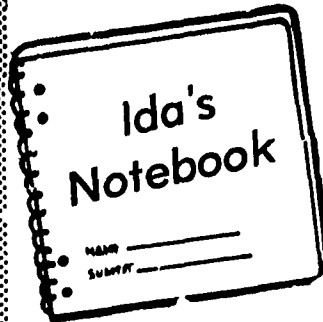
"We may become prisoners of our own dogma, stuck with our yesterdays. We may become arrogant in defense of some outmoded 'truth'. Scientists, among others, can be guilty of sins against reason."

Open-mindedness Sought

According to the founders, the above thoughts are

partly why three science writers founded The American Tentative Society. They are determined to do whatever they can to make scientists and the lay public alike more aware of the fruits to be gained through open-mindedness. If everyone will remember and practice the knowledge that science is "incorrigibly tentative," science and the public will be far better off. Arrogance and undue adamancy will wither in favor of humility in the search for truth, truth at least for now.

The American Tentative Society is not a group that you can join - at least not that I know of. Nor do they need your money. They have enough for now, thanks to the will of one of the founders, Rennie Taylor, former San Francisco-based Associated



Ida Risser

This summer I and My children had a chance to peep at a house in a deep woods. It is a deserted house with "no trespassing" signs

posted and so we stood afar and looked at this building from the past. It is located in the Welsn Mountains and always had a quaint charm for me ever since I picked huckleberries nearby. I learned to know the old man who lived there with his aged mother. They had lovely flower gardens and a round walled-up well with a wooden bucket and rope which they enjoyed showing to us. Their one cow wore a huge bell which clanked continually as she was free to roam.

The former occupants are dead and gone and only the

Press science writer, who died last year. Rennie, according to his friends, lived modestly, but invested prudently and was thus able to finance at least the initial projects of the organization.

General Directions Outlined

The beginning ATS projects are not yet known but the philosophy of the society is bound to touch our lives. ATS's purpose, to wit:

"The specific and primary purposes for which this corporation is formed are the promotion of education by the advancement of knowledge through the production and dissemination of written, filmed, and tape-recorded materials reporting on, explaining, and interpreting scientific information in the various fields for the benefit of writers, educators, students, and the general public."

One must wish this new group well and great success. Just as this column observed last week that the public should not be unduly alarmed by possible but unlikely developments, so should scientists and the public keep their minds open to new information. We all can benefit from change wisely judged and applied.

house stands to excite the curiosity of passers-by.

Talking about long ago reminds me of the manner in which my aunt swept the rag carpet in her kitchen each morning. First she took wet coffee grounds and scattered them on the floor and then she took up the broom and swept. I believe the idea was to keep down the dust. Whether this was common practice with other folks I don't know.

My grandmother's garden had sunken walkways in the old tradition which were usually muddy because they were so low. And on the hot mornings when I sat out there to pull tobacco plants one of the pleasures to look forward to was the big pitcher of lemonade which she invariably brought us. Nothing since then has tasted better.

Mentioning taste brings another thought to mind. This is the practice of storing surplus eggs in "water glass" or a sodium silicate and water solution. I'm so glad we no longer need do this as I felt the eggs were scarcely fit for baking.

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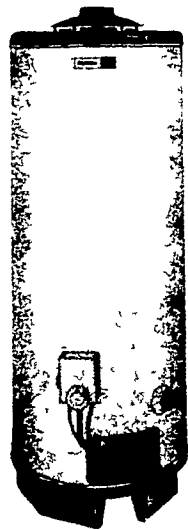
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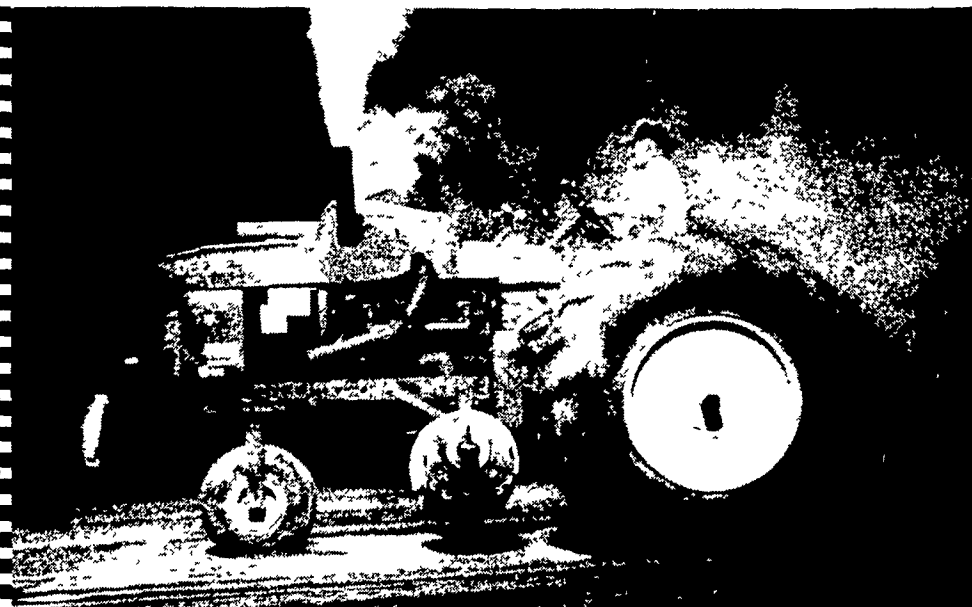


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