of Greenland is mostly mountainous, except in Pearyland in the north, and Greenland has few areas with the type of flat lake-dotted terrain of Finland and large areas of Alaska and Canada.

"Greenland's whole center ice cap provides excellent emergency landing fields for airplanes," Dr. Stefansson states. "This region used to be mistakenly rated a danger zone. Actually, it is a zone of safety."

Science News Letter, May 18, 1940

GEOGRAPHY

Fate Of 60,000,000 Natives Hangs On Belgian And Dutch

Belgium's Foreign Domain Is Concentrated in Africa But Holland's Lies in West as Well as in East Indies

FATE of nearly 60,000,000 natives in Belgian and Dutch colonies hangs in the balance as a result of German invasion of the two mother countries.

With Belgium and Netherlands caught up in Europe's total war, "protection" of large and important holdings in Africa, East Indies and America creates a new international problem. Queen Wilhelmina's domain includes islands and South American mainland only a few hundred miles from the Panama Canal.

Concentrated in Africa, Belgium's foreign domain consists of the Belgian Congo, a million square miles of equatorial territory rich in copper, rubber, cotton, cocoa, palm oil, and gold. Eighty-five times the size of Belgium itself, this vast possession is surrounded by holdings of Portugal, France, and Britain. Its coast is a mere 25-mile strip along the Atlantic.

Besides this valuable Congo colony, Belgium is responsible also for an adjoining corner of Tanganyika, a portion of Germany's former colonies assigned to Belgian mandate after the World War. Britain, which ceded this area to Belgium in return for World War assistance, has exchanged economic advantages there with the Belgians and would be most concerned over any change in its status.

More scattered but totaling an almost equally impressive area, the Netherlands colonies are all in the tropics; and, with the one important exception of Dutch Guiana in South America, the Dutch colonies are islands. Small Holland in Europe controls some 50,000,000 Javanese, Balinese, Sumatrans, and other natives of the East Indies.

The Netherlands holds a large part of New Guinea, one of the world's largest islands, and one which the Dutch have until recently been content to hold without intensive exploitation. Fear of Japan's encroachment on the East Indies is seen as the reason for Dutch activity to plant rubber, coffee, and kapok in New Guinea and to demonstrate a concern for using, as well as holding, the land.

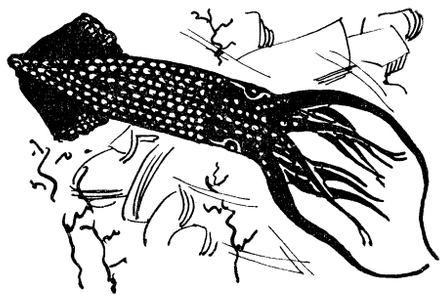
In the shadow of the Monroe Doctrine, and short flying distance from the Panama Canal, lie the Dutch West Indies consisting of several islands off Venezuela, also the mainland colony of Dutch Guiana, in South America.

Holland's colonies figure in world trade in such valuable lines as tin, rubber, oil, quinine, spices, indigo, sugar, coffee, and tea.

Science News Letter, May 25, 1940

BIOLOGY

NATURE RAMBLINGS by Frank Thone



Living Lanterns

OCEANIC abysses and other unsunned parts of the world are not wholly without light. In these dark places there are numerous creatures that carry their own lanterns, and have eyes sufficiently sensitive to see by this dim light of their own providing. These carriers of cold light are described in a new book by Prof. E. Newton Harvey.

Not only in the ocean's depths but also in our own upper world of air and earth are there nocturnal creatures that light their own dark ways. Almost every large class of animals, and two great groups of plants, have representatives in the shining ranks reviewed by the Princeton biologist. Bacteria, fungi, protozoa, jellyfish, up to insects, squid and fish, all are represented.

Some, like the bacteria, have no way of turning their light on or off, and so shine with a constant glow, but most of them either flash at more or less determinable intervals (like the familiar fireflies) or burst into a glow when disturbed, like the one-celled animals that swarm in the sea during periods when the water "burns" at night.

There are certain forms without "power-plants" of their own that make use of the light-producing powers of smaller creatures, notably bacteria. One remarkable case which Prof. Harvey describes is that of two related genera of tropical fish. Below each eye, in these fishes, is a light organ apparently specially designed for growing masses of luminous bacteria. This organ has a rich blood supply, opaque screens to protect other tissues of the fish from the light, and a mechanism for turning the light on and off.

Not always, however, is the presence of luminous bacteria beneficial to the ani-

mal in which they live. There are a number of species of insects and smaller crustacea that become populated with these shining germs, and in most instances such infection is fatal. Luminous wounds in human beings have even been recorded, in days before modern aseptic surgery.

Less serious in its consequences, and with even a humorous touch, was a case of "borrowed fire" which Prof. Harvey himself observed in Cuba. He found what appeared at first to be a luminescent frog. Upon closer examination, however, it turned out that the frog had just made a hearty meal of fireflies, which were still shining so strongly that their light came through the skin on his bulging abdomen.

Science News Letter, May 25, 1940

GENERAL SCIENCE—RESOURCES

Americas Should Take Lead In Assuring World Peace

Waste or Destruction of Necessary Resources Anywhere Affects Welfare and Security of Peoples Everywhere

NATIONS of the Americas can and should take the lead in assuring world peace through equitable distribution and planned conservation of natural resources, Gifford Pinchot declared before the Eighth American Scientific Congress in Washington.

To this end, he urged the appointment of a commission to assemble data from already existing sources and put them into form that will be useful and effective when the now warring powers sit down around the council table to arrange terms of peace. This is the contribution that neutral nations can make for a lasting international concord, he pointed out, adding, "It would be wise to prepare in time."

Mr. Pinchot said, in part:

"The proposal is that the nations of the Americas prepare now for an endeavor to bring all nations together, at the right moment, in a common effort for conserving the natural resources of the earth, and for assuring to each nation access to the raw materials it needs, without recourse to war.

"In all countries some natural resources are being depleted or destroyed. Needless waste or destruction of necessary resources anywhere threatens or will threaten, sooner or later, the welfare and security of peoples everywhere. Conservation is clearly a world necessity, not only for enduring prosperity, but also for permanent peace.

"No nation is self-sufficient in essential raw materials. The welfare of every nation depends on access to natural resources which it lacks. Fair access to natural resources from other nations is therefore an indispensable condition of permanent peace. . . .

"The conservation of natural resources and fair access to needed raw materials are steps toward the common good to which all nations must in principle agree. Since the American nations are less dependent on imported natural resources than European nations, and since they are already engaged in broadening international trade through negotiated agreements, their initiative to such ends would be natural and appropriate.

"The problem of permanent peace includes, of course, great factors which the foregoing proposal does not cover. But it does cover that factor which is certainly, in the long run, the most potent of them all."

Science News Letter, May 25, 1940

● Earth Trembles

Information collected by Science Service from seismological observatories resulted in the location by the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and the Jesuit Seismological Association of the following preliminary epicenters:

Saturday, May 4, 2:24.1 a.m., EST

Near Attu Island (Aleutians). Latitude, 53 degrees north. Longitude, 173 degrees east. Strong shock.

Saturday, May 4, 4:01.4 p.m., EST

May have occurred in Persia, near Caspian.

Saturday, May 4, 9:03.6 p.m., EST

Apparently near the coast of northern Peru.

Saturday, May 11, 8:54.6 a.m., EST

Near Attu Island (Aleutians). Latitude, 52.7 degrees north. Longitude, 172.4 degrees east. Moderate shock.

For stations cooperating with Science Service, the Coast and Geodetic Survey, and the Jesuit Seismological Association in reporting earthquakes recorded on their seismographs, see SNL, Feb. 24.

Adjusting traffic *lights* so that they are bright in the day and dimmer at night is being tried in England for blackout reasons, but they may also be plainer that way when drivers face the sun.

BIOLOGY

Students Take Subjects But Do Subjects "Take"?

STUDENTS often talk of "taking" a subject, but often the subject doesn't "take" on the student. A single exposure seems to confer lifelong immunity. At any rate, they don't do anything with or about it afterwards. Perhaps the textbook for the course is partly responsible. It rounds up the course, finishes it, makes no provision for later continuation. A new text, *Everyday Biology,* by Curtis, Caldwell and Sherman (Ginn) does something to remedy this defect. Its final section provides "leads" that may make biology a lifelong interest — hobby, if nothing more serious — by suggesting how to "go collecting" (and how to make needed equipment), how to do nature photography, how to identify animal tracks, how to "bring 'em back alive" and keep 'em alive at home, how to make gardens, or models of gardens and a score of other fascinating activities. If you "take" biology this way, very likely you'll never get over it.

Science News Letter, May 25, 1940

Britons call the *flaps* on barrage balloons "ton patches" because from them mooring cables hang, and each weak-looking flap is tested for taking a ton of weight.