

"Let's get the youngsters to work on this problem, too," Mr. Fink urged. "It's the democratic way, and what are their big brothers fighting for, if not to preserve it?"

Science News Letter, February 13, 1943

WILDLIFE

Water Hyacinth, River Pest, On Increase in California

► WATER HYACINTH, a floating weed of tropical origin that has become thoroughly established in Southern rivers and is a major hindrance to navigation there, is now threatening to assume a similar role in the San Joaquin river in California, Prof. Ira L. Wiggins of Stanford University reports (*Science*, Feb. 5). It has been known to be present in local spots for some years, but during the past season rafts of the plant 10 to 15 feet wide and several times as long were observed in the river near Stockton.

While it is possible that natural causes may hold the weed in check, Prof. Wiggins points out that no such luck can be counted on, and suggests a campaign of extermination before the growth gets out of hand.

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TRIPLE DUTY—the Army nurse's new greatcoat does triple duty. Its water-repellent, wind-resistant material, sealed seams and hood make it a raincoat; its removable wool lining makes it a warm topcoat; the lining itself is finished, trimmed and buttoned to become a bathrobe.

MILITARY SCIENCE

New Nurse's Uniform

Army Nurse Corps gets birthday present of new wardrobe suited to global war. Differs from WAAC's in hat, bag, buttons and insignia.

See Front Cover

► A COMPLETELY new, smart and practical wardrobe suited to global war from the Arctic to the tropics, from hospitals at home to service in very advanced theaters of operations at the front, has been designed for the Army Nurse Corps.

Announcement of the new uniforms was made by the War Department as a birthday present to the Nurse Corps on the anniversary of its founding and a tribute to its 42 years of service. Actual field experience in this war, such as that of the heroic Army nurses on Bataan who had to borrow servicemen's field service shoes for heavy duty work and the men's overalls for camouflage, was part of the reason for the change in the nurses' uniforms. Simplification of the supply problem, now that the Army has other women besides nurses to uniform, was another reason for the change.

The new uniforms will be issued to nurses overseas on July 1 and to nurses in the United States on Sept. 1.

Dress uniforms for the Army nurses will be of olive drab exactly like those of the WAAC except for: 1. the cap which is flat in back, softer, more feminine and more comfortable looking; 2. the Army Nurse Corps insignia worn on the jacket; 3. gilt buttons with U. S. Army insignia instead of the WAAC plastic buttons; and 4. the bag, which is envelope instead of pouch style.

For wear in field hospitals and other installations in the theaters of operations, the nurses will wear a one-piece wrap-around uniform of brown and white pin-striped seersucker. Easy to launder, requiring no ironing, crisp and fresh close-up, and fading into the background for camouflage at a distance, this uniform fastens with one hook and a tie, so the nurse "will not have to worry about sewing on a button when she has to save a life," as one officer put it.

When she moves into the very advanced zone, the Army nurse will don trousers and shirt of herringbone twill,

similar to those worn by the servicemen, with shoes that lace up to the ankle and leggings for protection against marsh and mosquitoes, and regular Army helmet. "Cargo pockets" on front of the trousers will hold necessary supplies.

When she goes into the Arctic, she will have the same protection against cold and storm as the ski troops; a reversible parka, white on one side and khaki on the other, with fur trimmed hood, and woman's type ski pants of wind-resistant, water-repellent fabric; pile fabric liners to wear underneath this, consisting of close-fitting jacket and under trousers of fur-like alpaca and mohair pile fabric to provide an insulating layer to hold body warmth; warm, trigger-finger gloves; and rubber shoe pacs.

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PHARMACY

Rumors of Restrictions On Sulfa Drugs Unfounded

► RUMORS of restrictions on civilian use of the sulfa drugs are unfounded. War Production Board officials state that no such restrictions have been ordered.

The sulfa drugs are critical and scarce but no real shortage exists, WPB states. It is doing everything it can to provide for military and civilian needs for these life-saving chemicals.

"Discretion" in the use of the sulfa drugs, however, is urged by WPB officials. Sulfadiazine is the scarcest of the sulfa drugs and the one most in demand by military and civilian physicians. It is hoped, therefore, that when a physician thinks sulfanilamide or sulfathiazole can be used as safely and effectively as sulfadiazine, he will choose one of these others instead of the scarce sulfadiazine.

The layman can help by not clamoring for a sulfa drug for a cold, boils or some minor infection when his physician says sulfa drug treatment is unnecessary.

The reason for the scarcity of the sulfa drugs is that enormous amounts are being used or reserved for use in the treatment of war wounds, where they are performing miracles in pre-

venting or checking infection that would otherwise take heavy toll of life and limb. The publicity given these drugs has also tended to increase the demand for them.

Production of all sulfa drugs has expanded tremendously since Pearl Harbor. This increase has been financed and the production carried on by the old-line drug manufacturing companies. The

Government has assisted by assigning high priority ratings to facilities and equipment for their production.

Although sulfadiazine is the scarcest of the sulfa drugs, WPB is making sure that there will be a supply of it on hand sufficient to take care of all real needs for it. The same, of course, holds true for the other sulfa drugs.

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NUTRITION

Mushrooms Supply Food As Well as Flavor

► MUSHROOMS, it has been discovered, supply nourishment as well as flavor to the diet. This finding, made by Dr. E. E. Anderson and Dr. C. R. Fellers, of the Massachusetts Agricultural Experiment Station at Amherst, Mass., will come as welcome news especially now when it is so important to consider everything we eat from the standpoint of how much nourishment it contributes.

Of course, you may have been one of those who always thought mushrooms were nourishing and called them the "vegetable beefsteak." Many scientists, however, have given mushrooms a low place nutritionally. Some of this confusion, the Massachusetts scientists report, was due to failure to take into account the differences between the many types of mushrooms. These scientists studied the composition and nutritive properties of just one type, the commercially cultivated mushroom, *Agaricus campestris*, and not any wild or foreign mushrooms.

They found, among other things, that while mushrooms do not deserve the title of "vegetable beefsteak," they do contain enough protein to keep rats alive for a six-weeks' test period and promote some growth. Their protein is a "partially incomplete one," similar to the gliadin of wheat or the hordein of barley. Properly supplemented, mushrooms are suitable as a source of protein, although few persons eat enough mushrooms to satisfy much of their protein needs from them.

Mushrooms also supply vitamins and two minerals, iron and copper, the Massachusetts scientists discovered. In fact they are one of the best plant sources of some members of the vitamin B complex. A prepared serving of about three and one-half ounces of fresh mushrooms would provide, the scientists state, about one-fifth of a grown-up's daily requirement of riboflavin and over one-quarter of his requirement of pellagra-preventing niacin (nicotinic acid). They also contain appreciable amounts of vitamins B₁, C, and K.

The scientists conclude that "although mushrooms will probably always be eaten for their innate flavor and taste appeal, they do possess definite food values and are not a purely luxury food in our war-time dietary."

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PSYCHOLOGY

Jap Behavior Explained

Ruthlessness as a covering for inner uncertainty said to have basis in treatment in infancy. Mothers spoil them for about a year, then reject them.

► OVERBEARING, bullying conduct on the part of Japanese men toward those who resist their demands is traced to a severe emotional shock which most of them receive while they are still babies, by Prof. John F. Embree, University of Toronto anthropologist now on war service in Washington, D. C. He sets forth his observations and opinions in a new Smithsonian Institution publication, one of a series giving background information on the war.

Japanese mothers, Prof. Embree states, make themselves virtually the slaves of each baby until the next one arrives. The infant can nurse at any time it wishes, and if it sees anything it wants it can have it without argument, simply by crying for it. This intensive course of spoiling goes on as long as the child is the youngest.

As soon as the next baby is born, however, the mother's devotion is monopolized by the newcomer, and little Jiro is transferred to the much less attentive care of a nurse or an older sister. As a result there may be weeks of frequent temper tantrums.

This sudden shift in status, at the tender age of only one or two years, "creates an early sense of insecurity which in turn produces an adult who is never absolutely sure of himself and who through compensation may become almost paranoid."

"The adult manifestation of the temper tantrum resulting from lack of attention or fancied slight is assassination, and the deep shame felt from real or threatened loss of face is manifested by suicide."

Another factor in the outrageous behavior of some Japanese, Prof. Embree

thinks, is the bad example set by one of the Shinto gods, Susano-o No Mikoto, His Swift Impetuous Male Augustness, a being notable mainly for crude horseplay. Once, legend says, Susano-o greatly shocked his better-behaved sister, the sun-goddess Amaterasu, by flinging a newly-flayed horse-hide into the house where she and eight of her weaving women were busy.

Japanese human beings, Prof. Embree feels, are not genetically different from other racial groups; but with a combination of the solid conviction of male Japanese superiority fostered by national policy and social custom alike, the baby-spoiling program ending with a jerk, and myths like that of Susano-o, a mixture of uncertainty and violent ruthlessness is just about what one should expect.

Elsewhere in the book, other factors in Japanese life are described and their effects analyzed. Prof. Embree sees Japan as essentially a nation of peasant culture which has undertaken the engrafting of the material side of Western culture without substituting the concomitant mental and spiritual attitudes of the West for the traditional Japanese feudalism. The result of this incongruous mixture is something very close to a national psychosis.

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White shoes are suggested as a safety measure, particularly for women when on the street during a dim-out—drivers "invariably look at the feet".

Dog-hair, clipped from Newfoundlands, Chows and Samoyeds, is being used in the Netherlands for knitting sweaters, gloves and other apparel.