

# Books of the Week

COMMON AILMENTS OF MAN—Morris Fishbein, ed.—*Garden City Pub. Co.*, 177 p., \$1.

THE FLORA OF OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN: A Study in Physiographic Plant Ecology—Marjorie T. Bingham—*Cranbrook Inst. of Science*, 155 p., paper, illus., \$1. Bulletin No. 22.

GENERAL BIOLOGY—Leslie A. Kenoyer and Henry N. Goddard—*Harper*, 653 p., illus., \$4.50. Revised ed.

HANDBOOK OF PRACTICAL BACTERIOLOGY: A Guide to Bacteriological Laboratory Work—T. J. Mackie and J. E. McCartney

—*Williams & Wilkins*, 720 p., \$5. A William Wood book.

PRINCIPLES OF RADIO—Keith Henney—*Wiley*, 534 p., illus., \$3.50. Fifth ed., revised and enlarged.

THE STORY OF A COUNTRY MEDICAL COLLEGE: A History of the Clinical School of Medicine and the Vermont Medical College—Frederick Clayton Waite—*Vermont Historical Soc.*, 213 p., \$4.50, illus.

TECHNICAL DATA ON PLASTICS—*Plastics Materials Manufacturers' Assoc.*, 163 p., paper, \$1.50. Spiral binding.

THE WAY OF AN INVESTIGATOR, A Scientist's Experiences in Medical Research—Walter Bradford Cannon—*Norton*, 229 p., \$3.

YOUR NERVES, How to Release Emotional Tensions—Louis E. Bisch—*Funk*, 310 p., \$2.50.

*Science News Letter, July 7, 1945*

## RADIO

### Two Radio Stations Beamed On Japan from California

➤ TWO powerful radio stations on the coast of California, each housing three high-frequency transmitters, soon will be in complete operation, each with a new 200-kilowatt transmitter added to the two 50-kilowatt transmitters already in use. All six transmitters are beamed on Japan to carry to the people of the Nipponese empire the war information that they should have and can not get otherwise.

Only one other radio station in the world has such a powerful unit. These two California stations are operated for the Office of War Information, one by the Columbia, and the other by the National Broadcasting Company. Their programs will reach all parts of the world occupied by the Japanese, including the homeland, Manchuria, Korea, China and distant islands in the South Pacific. Six radio voices may be on the air at one time, or the three transmitters in either station may carry the same program at the same time to forestall jamming by the enemy.

These new high-frequency stations are the results of cooperation of engineers of the OWI, two major broadcasting systems, the International Telephone and Telegraph Co., and the Federal Telephone and Radio Corporation. This latter company constructed the main units for a 200 kw high-frequency broadcast transmitter, two rectifier power supplies, modulators, cooling systems and the radio control panels.

*Science News Letter, July 7, 1945*



### Untamable Animals

➤ INDIANS in several parts of the Americas—Mexico, Yucatan and Guatemala, Colombia, the Andean plateau—built up civilizations that in their material monuments at least were equal to those of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia and India. But whereas the Old World peoples had plenty of beasts of burden, our Indians had to depend almost altogether

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## THE WAY OF AN INVESTIGATOR

By Walter B. Cannon, M. D.

George Higginson Professor of  
Physiology, Emeritus  
Harvard University Medical School

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on their own muscle power for transportation. The Old World peoples, even in prehistoric times, caught and tamed donkeys, horses, oxen, camels, elephants, water buffalo and—in the Far North—reindeer.

The only wild animal that was tamed and made a burden-bearer in any part of the Americas was the llama of the Andes. And even at best, the llama is a very poor kind of a work-animal. If you load more than about a hundred pounds on its back, it just lies down and will not budge until you take some of it off.

The Indians north of the Incas' realm didn't even have llamas. Some of the Plains tribes fashioned travois for their dogs to drag during their migrations; but the burden a dog is capable of hauling by such primitive means would not be even as much as an elderly squaw could carry.

It has been a subject of speculation, sometimes, what might have happened had it ever occurred to the Sioux, or the Pawnees, or some of the other Plains tribes, to tame the bison or American buffalo. The most probable answer is, that it simply wouldn't have worked out. Although a fairly close cousin to our domestic cattle—so close, indeed, that the two can and frequently have been hybridized—the bison is less intelligent than the proverbially stupid ox, and a great deal more obstreperous. On the basis of what we know about its general nature, the bison would probably have to be considered untamable.

There is one good bit of collateral evidence in support of this opinion, in the fate of the European bison, or wisent. This animal, originally widely distributed over all of Europe and much of Asia, is zoologically very closely related to the American bison, and is very much like our bison in appearance and general character.

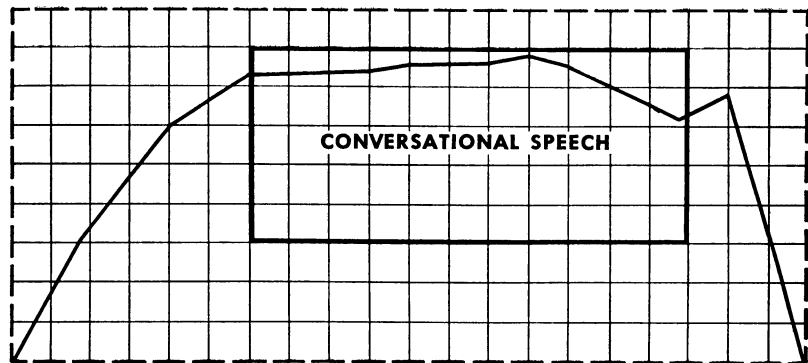
It was known to Old World peoples of great antiquity: its image appears on some of the earliest cylinder seals of Sumeria; and it was probably the original model of the great winged bulls, that guarded the entrances to Babylonian and Assyrian palaces, long after the peo-

ples of Mesopotamia had exterminated it from that part of the world.

Now with the readiness that man has always shown everywhere to shift his burden from his own shoulders to those of an animal, if he can find a beast sufficiently docile to accept the load, it is unlikely that the wisent would have escaped captivity and domestication if it had been in the least amenable to such treatment. But it wasn't. To the very end (which probably came during the present war) the wisent continued to be a beast of the chase only. It could be hunted and killed, but not tamed. And so it was with our own American bison.

*Science News Letter, July 7, 1945*

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