

## Do You Know?

Some 5,000 Australian *orchids* are now being sent weekly to the United States.

*Wool* is a cool-country commodity in both production and use.

Storage batteries and electrical cable coverings consume about half the *lead* used in the United States.

Experiments to obtain *rayon* from eucalyptus gum fiber are under way in Australia.

The *virus* of foot-and-mouth disease, so destructive to cattle, very rarely affects human beings.

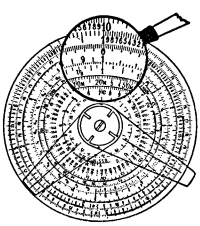
*Chipmunks* living on the Mammoth Hot Springs Terraces in Yellowstone Park drink hot water from the springs and seem to like the hottest water best.

American *railroads* operate a "navy" consisting of some 2,000 units; they are largely ferries, tugboats, car floats, barges and lighters used in harbor and ferry operations.

*Sweet potato* contains a rich store of carotene which gives it the yellow color but changes in the body to vitamin A; it also contains vitamins B and C, and starch and sugar which furnish high energy or fuel value.

The use of *lithium* has greatly increased, partly as a result of wartime developments; in the form of metal, salts or alloys, it is used in pyrotechnics, welding and ceramics, as a grease for airplane engines, and in removing oxygen from heat-treating furnaces.

A commercial product known as *Lignosite* is made by a refinement of ethyl alcohol produced by fermentation of the waste liquor in wood pulp mills; it is nearly pure calcium lignin sulfonate and is valuable in the cement and adhesive industries.



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lead to the determination of the times when these animals lived. Fossil plants also will help in determining the periods when various plants and animals flourished in South Africa.

A large collection of fossils from Karroo,

near the southern tip of Africa, where there are rich deposits of certain periods, contains mammal-like reptiles which bridge the gap between reptiles and mammals in evolution.

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### GENERAL SCIENCE

## Mental Battle for Peace

► A MENTAL BATTLE for world peace was fought in Boston, as leaders in education, science and culture opened sessions with one eye on Paris and the other on their plans for defending peace in the minds of men.

Assistant Secretary of State George W. Allen, opening UNESCO National Commission sessions, challenged American scientists to find any middle ground between subjection of scientific beliefs to the dictates of political dogma, as in Soviet Russia, and the traditional freedom of science. He similarly asked world churchmen where is the middle ground between East and West on freedom of religion.

Denounce one-party dictatorship in Russia, Secretary Allen demanded of Progressive Party candidate Wallace, by inference.

Told by Secretary Allen that "It is entirely possible for capitalism and com-

munism to exist in the world side by side," but that democracy and totalitarianism cannot do so, the conference turned to such details as reconstruction of devastated laboratories and colleges, teaching everybody to read and write, and keeping world news for press and radio free and uncensored.

President Milton S. Eisenhower of Kansas State College, speaking as chairman of the U. S. UNESCO Commission of One Hundred, said this group must be a militant organizing force for peace, despite gloomy prospects at Paris.

At the meeting scientists heard proposals for international observatories and laboratories, better exchange of information, more interchange of scientists between various nations, and greater attention to conservation and increase of world food supplies for the growing world population.

Science News Letter, October 9, 1948

### MEDICINE

## Don't Burp the Baby

► DON'T "BURP" the baby. This advice, contrary to that in all the baby books, was given by Dr. William F. Burdick, associate professor of pediatrics at Georgetown University School of Medicine, at the meeting in Washington of the Medical Society of the District of Columbia.

Twins who at two and one-half months started vomiting most and sometimes all of their feedings were cited as an example of the trouble burping can cause. Their mother reported she never put the babies down until they got up their "bubbles," even though it sometimes took 15 minutes. When she was persuaded to let them suck without interruption until they seemed satisfied and then to put them down without burping, their vomiting stopped.

If baby shows discomfort, there may be some value to the burping procedure, Dr. Burdick said, but he thinks it is often carried too far. It takes a reversal of the normal peristaltic movement of the digestive tract to achieve a burp, he pointed out. The same reversal occurs in vomiting. This may explain the vomiting of some babies. Or, he suggested, they may vomit from resentment over being forced to burp.

Put the newborn baby's cheek against his mother's breast the first time he is brought in to nurse. This, Dr. Burdick advised, will

avoid some feeding troubles. It will let the baby's "rooting" reflex come into play. Feeling the smooth surface, he will start rooting with his mouth for the nipple. Dr. Burdick criticized the practice of nurses who grasp baby's cheek and try to turn his head toward the nipple. The reflex in this case makes the baby turn toward the nurse's palm instead of the breast.

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### RADIO

## New Device Checks Up on Radio Station Frequency

► A NEW DEVICE that can detect a difference of five electrical impulses in a million has been developed to reveal when a radio station is broadcasting off its assigned frequency.

Developed by General Electric Company engineers, the new AM station monitor uses a new type of electronic circuit. The monitor checks up on amplitude of broadcast waves and the power being transmitted, as well as measuring frequency.

About the size of an egg crate, the monitor is relatively small for such equipment.

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