



American Eagles

TODAY is the day when, according to the tradition of the Fathers of this Republic, the American eagle screams his proudest. The bald eagle, chosen by our early statesmen to be our national crest, is a truly noble-appearing bird, with his stern, piercing eye glancing out from a pure white head. For the term "bald" is a puzzling misnomer; the only explanation that can be guessed is that it is due to these snowy feathers, a feature unique among eagles. The bald eagle's tail also is white, but the rest of the body and the wings are clothed with feathers so dark brown that they are sometimes said to be black.

Another eagle found in America, which has by inadvertence replaced the bald eagle on at least one American coin, the half-dollar, is the golden eagle. He is an even larger bird than the bald eagle, for his wing-spread averages seven feet or more, and the spread of the bald eagle is a little less than this, as a rule. This eagle also is brown, but his tail is white-and-black instead of all white, and the feathers on back of his head and neck have a yellowish tinge, which accounts for his name. The outstanding mark of distinction between the two species, however, is the "trousered" leg of the golden eagle, as contrasted with the total absence of feathers on the shank of the bald. Only the young of the bald eagle have these leg-feathers, and this sometimes causes juvenile bald eagles to be mistaken for the golden species.

Since we have settled upon an eagle to be our own bird, it is perhaps more appropriate for us to take the bald eagle, since it is strictly American in its habitat, whereas the golden eagle is known from Europe and Asia as well as from this continent.

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SOCIAL SCIENCE

Fears New Discoveries May Vitate Disarmament Moves

FEAR THAT NEW scientific discoveries may make disarmament agreements invalid before they are fairly ratified was expressed in a recent address of Sir Samuel Hoare, formerly Minister for Air, and newly re-elected president of the British Science Guild. The Guild was founded by the late Sir Norman Lockyer, K. C. B., F. R. S., to promote the application of scientific methods and results to social problems and public affairs.

In his address, Sir Samuel said: "The question of armaments is going to be the central question of foreign politics in the immediate years before us. Already the whole problem bristles with difficulties. I believe that if the discussions at Geneva next February are to be really useful, the scientific aspects of disarmament should be brought into even greater prominence than its political and financial aspects.

"Suppose, for instance, that agreement were reached as to the quantity and quality of existing armaments, the labors of Geneva would be practically wasted if science then developed new types of weapons outside the scope of the agreement.

"The main problem of disarmament

and by far the most difficult is the problem of these new weapons of destruction and the need for finding some means of controlling them. There has been far too great a tendency to think of the next war in terms of the last. If there is anything more certain than another it is that any future war will be very different from that of 1914.

"Should the world of science help these new developments of the weapons of destruction? The question is by no means a simple one, for scientists will discover these new rays and gases and explosives in the stride of their ordinary work. Can the world prevent invention and discovery being used for the purpose of destruction?

"The world at large wants to know the truth about the possibilities of future warfare. If during the next six months the British Science Guild could produce a report upon the kind of questions I am suggesting, I am certain that it would be doing most useful work in instructing public opinion and in investigating a vital side of what will be the most prominent question in foreign politics during the next year or two."

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ASTRONOMY

Encke's Comet Observed By Argentinian Astronomer

ENCKE'S COMET, the most frequently-returning of these visitors from space, has been observed for the first time on its present visit to the neighborhood of the sun by a South American astronomer, Señor Bobone, at the Cordoba Observatory, Argentina. The comet was picked up on a photographic plate taken late on Sunday night, June 21, and the information was relayed to Science Service through Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of Harvard College Observatory, Cambridge, Mass.

The comet when observed was of the ninth magnitude, considerably fainter than the smallest stars visible to the

naked eye, which are of about sixth magnitude. It will therefore need to come closer to the earth if it is to become visible. It was picked up in the position which astronomers designate as right ascension 7 hours 35 minutes 24 seconds, declination 8 degrees 22 minutes north. These are the celestial equivalents of latitude and longitude. They correspond to a spot near the present positions of the planet Jupiter and the bright star Procyon, which may be seen well to the east at about nine o'clock in the evening, and high in the south at midnight.

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