



A Break for Whales

WHALES in Antarctic regions may be getting a break at last as a result of the entry of Japan into the war. If their whaling fleet of six or seven factory ships and 40 or more killer boats was given sufficient warning of their government's intention to run amok and stayed home, that means a lease on life to the 10,000 to 12,000 whales they would have slaughtered during the current season. If they did go out in October, and are now on the whaling grounds, they will probably be rounded up by New Zealand cruisers in short order, or at any rate driven into the long, precarious northward cruise home.

Nobody in this country seems to know where the Japanese whaling fleet is. Normally, the ships stop at the port of Freemantle, near the southwestern corner of Australia, on the way to and from the whaling grounds. But Australian authorities here either don't know, or if they do know they aren't telling.

Of the European whaling fleets, only the English and part of the Norwegian ships are free to go into the Antarctic. The few whalers that Germany had have been tied up in Hamburg harbor since the outbreak of war in the autumn of 1939. They may have been blown to bits or burned to the water's edge by the many fierce blastings which RAF bombers have loosed on Hamburg. One or two of the Norse ships were sunk, at least one captured by the Germans and slipped through the British blockade to a German port. Some of the others are carrying gasoline and oil to England.

There is little doubt that at least part of the whaling fleet is at work in the Antarctic, because whale oil is used in Britain as a source of both food fats (margarine) and soap. But the total take will undoubtedly be much smaller dur-

ing the present Antarctic summer.

Absence of the Japanese ships will be especially beneficial to the whales, because of all the nations engaged in whaling only the Japanese would not sign the international convention for the conservation of whales, to which even the Nazis subscribed. They killed recklessly and wastefully, in utter disregard of the rights of either the whales or the whalers under other flags. They made themselves the most thoroughly unpopular persons in all the Far South seas.

Science News Letter, February 14, 1942

HOROLOGY

"War Time" Is Name Given To New Advanced Time

WAR TIME was the designation given by President Roosevelt to the daylight saving time put into effect Feb. 9. (See SNL, Feb. 7, p. 83) The abbreviations are EWT, CWT, MWT, PWT, depending upon whether Eastern, Central, Mountain, or Pacific time zones are meant.

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