



Beastly Behavior

► ANIMAL ANALOGIES for human conduct have long had folk-recognition in such popular terms as hoggish, bearish, wolfish, foxy, catty, mousy, fishy, even serpentine and reptilian. If the animal's own conduct is well enough known to be recognized as complex, its image may be used in both praise and condemnation. A man's friends may praise his dog-like fidelity, while his enemies curse him for a hound or a mutt.

But all these zoological qualities in human beings are rather loosely figurative, and indeed often based on quite inaccurate fables. There are genuine resemblances between traits in man and his next of kin, the primates, which could well repay close observation and serious analysis by scientists, Prof. Earnest Hooton of Harvard holds, in his recent book, *Man's Poor Relations* (Doubleday Doran).

Prof. Hooton looks at the apes, monkeys and lemuroids from the viewpoint of the anthropologist. He has not done any research of his own on these several-times-removed cousins of ours, but has gathered all available data on both their bodily composition and their individual and social behavior: analogues, if you like, of physical and cultural anthropology. Regrettably, social studies on primates in the wild are but few and most of these are rather sketchy. Studies on cage behavior help somewhat; but one is left haunted with the feeling that in this case it is like studying sociology in a jail.

Best studied of Old World monkeys, apparently, are the baboons and the macaque; of monkeys in the New World, the spider and the howler genera. Both baboons and macaques, Prof. Hooton finds, are "totalitarians": unbridled

egoists, fighting and bullying without restraint, killing females in ferocious sex battles, even pulling food out of the very mouths of helpless young ones. His descriptions remind one of the disgusted British civil servant's entries on a questionnaire about a certain African tribe: "Manners: none. Customs: nasty."

Howlers and spider monkeys behave much better—from the human point of view at least. They troop together amicably, their battles are mainly vocal (settling things by diplomacy?), the bigger ones sometimes help the smaller out of trouble. Prof. Hooton even styles them communistic; though from the descriptions it would be as easy to say they are tolerant, live-and-let-live individualists. At any rate, on the basis of what knowledge we have of them, it is possible to join Prof. Hooton in his confessed feeling of "solidarity" with the simians of our own hemisphere.

Science News Letter, May 15, 1943

ASTRONOMY

Comet Discovered in April Increasing in Brightness

► THE COMET discovered this spring by Miss L. Oterma, Finnish woman astronomer, is increasing in brightness. When first seen on April 8 at the Turku Observatory, in Finland, the comet was recorded to be of the fifteenth magnitude. Recent observations agree that it is now of the ninth magnitude.

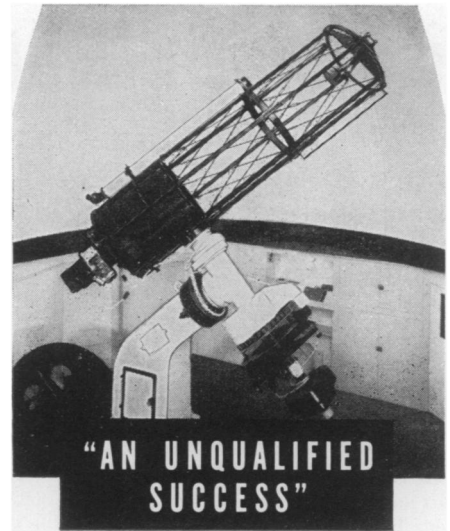
Miss Oterma's new data were relayed to Harvard College Observatory which is the central distributing agency for North America in the dissemination of information about new astronomical discoveries.

Early reports showed the comet in the constellation of Virgo, and moving slowly westward. Dr. Otto Struve, Director of the Yerkes Observatory, Williams Bay, Wis., reports that on April 30, at 10:42 p.m., EWT, the comet's right ascension was 12 hours, 9 minutes, 58 seconds, and its declination plus 2 degrees, 25 minutes, 10 seconds.

On May 2 at 10:45 p.m., EWT, the comet's right ascension was 12 hours, 8 minutes, and 13 seconds, while its declination was plus 2 degrees, 28 minutes, 57 seconds. From these reports it is observed that the comet is following the motion originally described for it by Miss Oterma.

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Garden soil to be ideal for plant growth should contain about 50% of solid matter, 25% water, and 25% air.



From Volume VIII, No. 6, Publications of The Observatory of The University of Michigan describing the Francis C. McMath Memorial 24-inch Reflecting Telescope, now in operation at the McMath-Hulbert Observatory of the University of Michigan.

"The mirrors were entrusted to The Perkin-Elmer Corporation. Our specifications were exacting, as no part of any surface could depart from the theoretical surface by more than one-tenth of a standard wavelength . . . Perkin-Elmer Corporation completed the primary mirror by conventional methods...It was then tested, pronounced well within the specifications, and found to have an unusually fine surface. The two high magnification secondaries, however, presented real difficulties. McCarthy, of Perkin-Elmer, felt that conventional methods of testing were inadequate and proposed a new method, which he has recently described. The Perkin-Elmer Corporation made up the necessary auxiliary optical equipment, and our two secondaries were figured by the new method, which eliminates the combined testing of primary and secondary. These two mirrors have been an unqualified success, both focal lengths being well within specifications, while the figuring is superb. Exposures for the disk of Jupiter are shorter by a factor of at least twelve when compared with our old 10½-inch telescope."

