

gram, he said, should develop on a schedule calling for 350,000 to 400,000 units the first year and reaching 1,000,000 units annually by the end of the fifth year.

He asserted that these post-war housing figures "are reasonable and are within the ability of the housing industry to accomplish and the public to absorb."

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This Week's Books

- THE BACONIAN LECTURES 1943—*Univ. of Iowa*, 120 p., paper, 75c. Series on Aims and Progress of Research No. 74, Study Series No. 405.
- BEHIND THE OPEN DOOR: The Story of American Far Eastern Relations—Foster Rhea Dulles—*Institute of Pacific Relations and Webster*, 92 p., illus., paper, 40c.
- THE BRUSH FOUNDATION STUDY OF CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT: I. Psychometric Tests—Elizabeth Ebert and Katherine Simmons—*Society for Research in Child Development*, 113 p., paper, \$1.50.
- CALCULUS REFRESHER FOR TECHNICAL MEN—A. Albert Klaf—*Whittlesey House*, 431 p., \$3.
- THE CONTRIBUTION OF HOLLAND TO THE SCIENCES—A. J. Barnouw, B. Landheer, eds.—*Querido*, 373 p., illus., \$3.50.
- CERAMIC STRATIGRAPHY AT CERRO DE LAS MESAS VERACRUZ, MEXICO (Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 141)—Philip Drucker—*Gov't. Printing Off.*, 155 p., illus., paper, 50c.
- DR. GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER, Scientist—Shirley Graham and George D. Lipscomb—*Messner*, 248 p., illus., \$2.50.
- ELEMENTARY TOPOGRAPHY AND MAP READING—Samuel L. Greitzer—*McGraw-Hill*, 157 p., illus., \$1.60.
- GEOLOGY FOR EVERYMAN—Sir Albert Charles Seward—*Cambridge Univ. Press*, 312 p., illus., \$3.25. This book is not only good as a first approach to geology but is useful for reference purposes despite its British flavor.
- A GUIDE TO NAVAL AVIATION—Wallace W. Elton, Alfred H. Driscoll, Robert N. Burchmore, Gray B. Larkum—*McGraw-Hill*, 296 p., illus., \$2.50.
- IT'S YOUR FUTURE: Make the Most of It!—Martin Panzer—*Whittlesey House*, 270 p., \$2.50. A breezy "success" book.
- LET'S ALL GROW VEGETABLES—Grace Keen and Arthur Hutchins—*Univ. of Minn. Press*, 92 p., illus., paper, \$1.
- THE MUTANTS OF DROSOPHILA MELANOGASTER—Calvin B. Bridges and Katherine S. Brehme—*Carnegie Institution*, 257 p., illus., paper: \$2:50, cloth: \$3, Publication No. 552.
- PHYSICS WORKBOOK—Mahlon H. Buell and Frederick W. Schuler—*Lippincott*, 378 p., illus., paper, \$1.12, rev. ed.
- STICK AND RUDDER; An Explanation of the Art of Flying—Wolfgang Langewiesche—*Whittlesey House*, 389 p., illus., \$3.75.
- WINGS AFTER WAR: The Prospects of Post-War Aviation—S. Paul Johnston—*Duell, Sloan & Pearce*, 129 p., illus., \$2.
- WAR-TIME CHINA—Maxwell S. Stewart—*Am. Council Inst. of Pacific Relations*, 63 p., illus., paper, 25c., I.P.R. Pamphlets No. 10.



Wandering Weeds

➤ AMERICAN fighting men who have time to look about themselves in quieter sectors of the Pacific islands may be surprised to find, among the lush, exotic vegetation, many leaves and flowers and fruits that remind them of home. They will most often be weeds, sometimes of the very same species they have had to pull out of their gardens or fight in the fields back on the farm.

In the War Department's official manual of emergency food plants and poisonous plants of the Pacific islands (TM 10-420), the following are listed among species that may be pressed into service to enable grounded flyers and "bushed" soldiers to live off the country, if need be: ground cherry, black nightshade, water chestnut, dayflower, seaside morning-glory and purslane—the latter more likely to be called "pusley" by fighters who were farmers a couple of years ago.

Because they knew them at home, and now find them in these far islands, our men overseas may take them all to be American in origin. This is not necessarily the case. Some of them were immigrants into America, too, and their presence in the islands may be the result of further travel from our continent or of independent travel from other lands where they are equally at home. This will certainly be the case, for example, with the water hyacinth, familiar to everyone from the Gulf Coast and peninsular Florida, which was a far-traveled weed before ever it reached our shores.

How did they get there? Well, weeds are great travelers, and seem to have pretty much the same abilities as stowaways on the white man's ships as

his universal though unwanted animal fellow-voyagers, the rat, the cockroach and the housefly. It's pretty hard to tell just how.

Seeds of some, probably, were brought in earth and gravel used as ballast in ships. Such ballast is usually shoveled up from dumps and waste places—natural habitats for weeds. Some of the species definitely belong to the seashore, which gives further support to this theory.

Somewhat more direct, though still inadvertent, may have been the human role in furnishing transportation to these vegetable wanderers. The South Sea Islands have been favorite scenes of American missionary endeavor from the very early days of the republic. American traders, too, have been frequent visitors at many of the islands, and on some of them Americans have settled as planters. Garden seeds imported from home may have had weed seeds mixed with them; hay and straw used as packing in boxes and barrels of household gear or trade goods notoriously carry weed seeds.

A few species are plants once cultivated but now "gone native" and relapsed to a more primitive, weedy habit of growth. Among these, beyond all possibility of question, are several definitely South American plants, such as tomato, lima bean, sweet potato, peanut and cassava, or manioc.

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INVENTION

Novel Air Fence Uses Balloons Within Balloons

➤ A NOVEL air fence, subject of patent 2,345,550 granted to Alex Berman of Louisville, Ky., is intended to entangle enemy dive bombers and other aircraft attacking a city, building, camp or ship. The fence is made up of encircling balloons from which dangle wires and chains. Each balloon is held at a fixed height by a cable attached to an anchored winch on the ground by which it can be pulled down to the earth.

Each of these balloons, in reality, is an envelope containing a number of small attached balloons so that if some are punctured by bullets the others will hold the main balloon and its dangling chains aloft. The hanging chains are suspended from the two ends of a strap extending over the balloon so that the whole is effectively stabilized.

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