

weight, heavy power requirements, and relatively low efficiency.

Mr. Messinger characterized as a "popular misconception" the belief of some engineers that aircraft air conditioning does not require refrigeration because planes fly at high altitudes. Passengers and mechanical equipment, he said, tend to make cabin interiors warmer than might be expected.

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*African bongo* are called the hand-somest of all the antelopes.

*Improved soap* is possible with the use of molecularly dehydrated phosphates, it is claimed by chemists who state that such soaps will have nearly twice the cleansing power of ordinary pure soap.

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## Books of the Week

THE CHEMICAL PROCESS INDUSTRIES—R. Norris Shreve—*McGraw*, 957 p., illus. and charts, \$7.50. A textbook for engineers.

A FUTURE FOR PREVENTIVE MEDICINE—Edward J. Stieglitz—*The Commonwealth Fund*, 77 p., charts, \$1. A program for the development of preventive medicine, defined as "the attainment by the individual of optimal development and performance."

MEN WITHOUT GUNS—DeWitt Mackenzie—*Blakiston*, 152 p., illus., \$5. A record of the work of the Army Medical Corps, in 177 drawings and 118 full color plates by famous contemporary artists. Foreword by Maj. Gen. Norman T. Kirk, Surgeon General, U. S. Army.

MY GARDEN DAY-BY-DAY 1946—*Tool Shed*, \$1. A week of gardening advice and verses to each large page of this calendar, with room for notes.

SCIENCE AND SCIENTISTS IN THE NETHER-

ENGINEERING

## Glass-Reinforced Plastic

FINE GLASS fibers used to reinforce plastics, much as steel rods are used to reinforce concrete, make a plastic material with greater strength than the structural metals, H. W. Collins of Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation stated at a meeting of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers in Chicago. The war-developed material, widely used in military aircraft, will have many peacetime applications.

The glass-reinforced plastic material does not corrode and is dimensionally stable, he declared, and can be fabricated without costly dies. The plastics industry now has a material that can be thought of in terms of the metals and their uses, he added. It is possible that the glass-reinforced plastic may be used "for such products as railroad car, bus, automobile and truck body parts; for boats and canoes, for luggage and furniture, for piping, for kitchen and bathroom assemblies, and home appliances."

Because the low-pressure resins used in combination with the glass fibers polymerize without giving off volatiles, he explained, it is possible to cure them in any shape merely by holding them in contact with the mold. This makes it possible for manufacturers to produce very large parts, such as the whole top of a Pullman car or the hull of a boat, without the expense and physical limitations imposed by the use of high-pressure presses.

Strength properties attainable with

LANDS INDIES—Pieter Honig and Frans Verdoorn, Eds.—*Board for the Netherlands Indies (Stechert)*, 491 p., illus. and charts, \$4.00. Technical articles dealing with the development of various branches of science in the Netherlands Indies. Although prepared by the Government of the Netherlands Indies, "the editors have attempted to keep the work free of narrow political considerations."

STORMS, FLOODS AND SUNSHINE: A Book of Memoirs—Isaac Monroe Cline—*Pelican*, 290 p., photographs, charts, \$3. Experiences of a meteorologist who spent over 50 years in the service of the U. S. Weather Bureau. Bibliography is included.

THE WHEATS OF CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY—Naum Jasny—*Johns Hopkins Press*, 176 p., illus., \$1.75. The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, Series LXII, No. 3.

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glass-reinforced plastics are, according to Mr. Collins: tension, 76,000 pounds per square inch; compression, 68,000 pounds per square inch; and flexure, 112,000 pounds per square inch.

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RADIO

## Engineer on Moving Train Talks to Yardmaster

FIRST TRYOUT of ultra-high-frequency radio communication between moving railroad engines and control towers was made at the Wayne Junction yard of the Reading railroad, near Philadelphia. Two-way conversations were successfully conducted between the yardmaster's office and three diesel-electric locomotives moving about the yard. The principal advantage of using very high frequency waves is that they are basically static-free.

The center of the system is a 25-watt transmitter in the yardmaster's office. The locomotives are equipped with 15-watt transmitters. Tests are scheduled to continue for about three months. They are under the direction of Nelson Wells of Maguire Industries, Inc., who devised the equipment and supervised its installation.

*Science News Letter, January 5, 1946*

A new tobacco, low in nicotine and as aromatic as expensive Turkish products, has been developed by the University of Kentucky.