

**CHARTED CURRENTS**—Jerome Namias, Chief of the Extended Forecast Section, United States Weather Bureau (left), looks over a chart of the northern hemisphere upon which the path and speed of the great weather currents have been indicated. Weather forecasts a month in advance are made from these charts.

predict the weather accurately, you have to predict what the sun is going to do.

Now, in many centers of learning throughout the world, men are trying to find out, not whether it is going to rain tomorrow, but whether it is going to rain on this day next year.

Science News Letter, February 18, 1950

**ZOOLOGY**

**Gray Whales in Pacific Are Increasing**

► THE Pacific gray whales are on the increase again. As many as 30 a day have been seen in the coastal shallows as they head for their winter mating grounds.

Dr. Carl L. Hubbs, marine biologist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, La Jolla, Calif., has been observing the whale's comings and goings for several years. He reports that the whales are coming back in larger numbers now that they are protected by an international whaling agreement. At one time they seemed headed for extinction.

The Pacific gray whale spends the summer in the Bering sea and then migrates to the waters off the coast of lower California where it remains till March.

Science News Letter, February 18, 1950

**AGRICULTURE**

**Herbicide Kills Weeds, Allows Cotton to Grow**

► A WEED killer that kills off the competition but allows the cotton to flourish has shown great promise in tests made at

the University of California College of Agriculture in Davis, Calif.

The herbicide that shows this commercially valuable ability to select between desirable and undesirable plants is called maleic hydrazide. It is a growth-regulating compound.



Drs. H. B. Currier and A. S. Crafts of the botany division found that maleic hydrazide has a rapid lethal effect on barley, which is a grass, but has no noticeable effect on cotton plants. Immediately after spraying, barley stops growing, leaves turn dark green and die, and in about six weeks the entire plant is dead. Cotton plants sprayed with the compound, on the other hand, continue to grow and to flower at exactly the same rate as unsprayed plants.

The two botanists have found that the age of the sprayed plants makes a difference. Even cotton, if it is sprayed too young, will be affected.

This fact is helpful in control of weeds, because if the cotton is allowed to develop,

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the weed killer can be sprayed as soon as the weed grasses start to appear. Experiments with water grass and Johnson grass have been successful, the young grass shoots being killed off by the spray.

A more thorough testing of the chemical is being planned. Of particular interest to the investigators is the chemical's selectivity. This is a valuable and useful property in agricultural practice.

Drs. Currier and Crafts announced their preliminary findings in the journal, *SCIENCE* (Feb. 10).

Science News Letter, February 18, 1950

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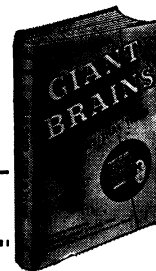
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