

motion was reported, probably a preliminary motion of the magma.

Between the tilt and tremor calculations, scientists can usually let the world know sometime ahead of an eruption that the big mountain will be active soon.

Mauna Loa's last eruption was in April, 1949. In 1933 and 1940 there were eruptions from the summit crater spilling lava southwest. Both times, they were followed in two years by summit eruptions which spilled lava toward the northeast.

#### EDUCATION

## Gifted Children Neglected

► THE gifted boys and girls in our schools form a minority group which is too much neglected. This is the judgment of the Educational Policies Commission, expressed in a report on "Education of the Gifted," issued in Washington.

"The country can ill afford to permit a continuation of such waste in its present proportions," the report states.

Gifted boys and girls who are in the top 10% in brightness should be prepared to go to college. The highly gifted, of whom there are only about one to each hundred in high school classes, should expect to continue their higher education beyond college graduation, the Commission believes.

At present, they report, only about one-half the gifted even go to college. This is

partly because the parents cannot afford to send their bright children through high school and on to college. In many cases it is because parents do not realize just how brilliant their children are or do not appreciate the value of college education for them.

Schools and colleges have the responsibility, the Commission points out, to educate the American people to appreciate their stake in fostering the recognition, education, and utilization of human talent.

Children with outstanding talent should be spotted early in their school career and be given plenty of opportunity to develop their gifts.

Science News Letter, June 17, 1950

#### FORESTRY

## Forest Fire Area in 1949 Equals that of Five States

► U. S. FOREST fires last year burned over more square miles than the combined land areas of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Delaware and the District of Columbia.

For every nine fires in 1948, there were 10 in 1949, Lyle F. Watts, chief of the U. S. Forest Service revealed in Washington. But they were not as damaging as those the year before. Some 15,397,419 acres were burned over in 1949, as compared to 16,556,780 acres charred in 1948.

Nor were there as many fires (a total of 193,774) as the pre-war average of 210,000 forest fires a year.

The chief forester said last year's dry spells in many parts of the country and severe lightning in the West were conducive to fires. But improved smoke-eater equipment and methods, such as faster transport to the fire lines by airplanes and helicopters, kept down the spread of blazes in protected areas.

Most of 1949's fires, however, (some 83%) were on forest lands unprotected by either federal or state fire fighting agencies. The Southeast took a major share of the damage. In the 11 states that lie south of Virginia, nearly 12,000,000 unprotected acres were burned.

Science News Letter, June 17, 1950

#### BOTANY-CHEMISTRY

## Flowering Dogwood Blooms Last Six Days Longer

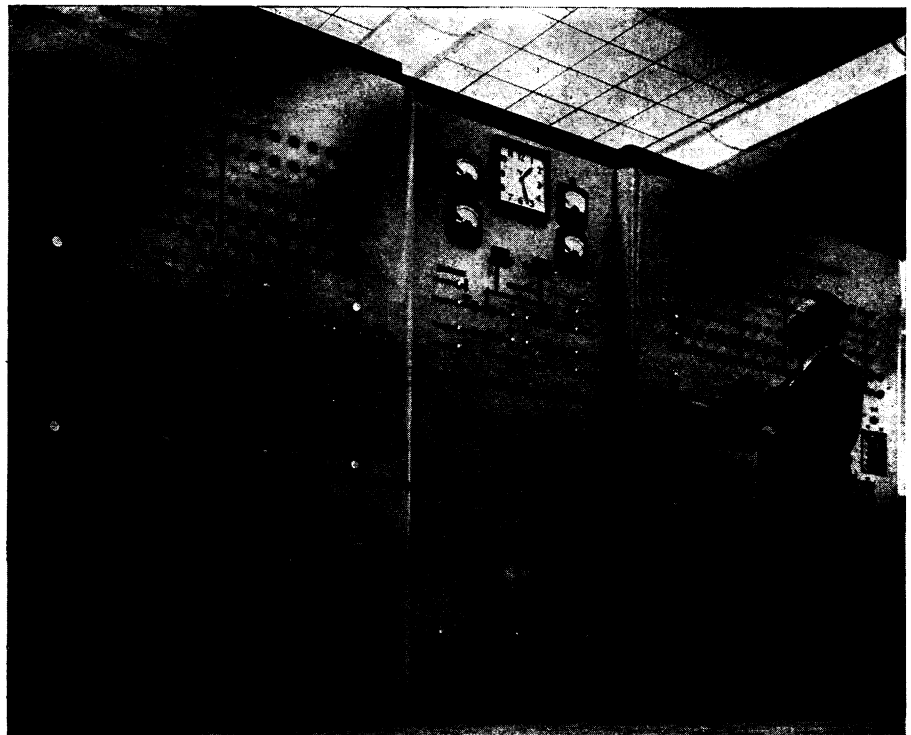
► FLOWERING dogwood that blooms four to six days longer is possible through the use of a spray containing a growth-regulator.

Another similar spray will keep the cherry blossoms on the Japanese cherry trees at the Tidal Basin in Washington from four to ten days longer, Drs. Horace V. Wester of the Department of Interior and Paul C. Marth of the Department of Agriculture report in the journal, *SCIENCE* (June 2).

They have tested different concentrations of alpha-naphthalene-acetic acid and par-chlorophenoxyacetic acid on the flowering dogwood. These same chemicals as well as beta-naphthoaxyacetic acid in varying concentrations were tried on the cherry blossoms.

These same three growth-regulating chemicals were used on the following plants which did not show a definite reduction in rate of petal fall: azalea, aronia, American and Asiatic crab apples, flowering almond, flowering quince, redbud, bridal wreath spirea, lilac, star magnolia and saucer magnolia.

Science News Letter, June 17, 1950



**BROOKLYN BRAIN**—The central brain of the new Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel's electric system controls ventilation according to carbon monoxide concentration. Carbon monoxide detector readings are continuously relayed to the control board, and flow of vehicles is regulated accordingly.