

Next Dr. French tried salting the food. Some animals were attracted to the salty food, but others avoided it. By putting his dropper into the exact center of the food area, Dr. French was able to separate the salt eaters from the others. He put them into separate dishes, and repeated the experiment. More were attracted to salty food in the dish of previ-

ous salt eaters than in the dish of those who had a record of abstaining.

In this way, the paramecia demonstrated their consistent individual differences in sensitivity not only to salt, but also to potassium iodide and potassium chloride. Differences were almost entirely absent in "taste" for caustic soda, however.

Science News Letter, January 25, 1941

AGRICULTURE

Race Dogmas Challenged In Wallace's Report

In Final Annual Report as Secretary of Agriculture, Declares Western Hemisphere Has No Room for Such Ideas

"THERE is no room in the Western Hemisphere for any notions about racial superiority."

This counter-challenge is thrown into the faces of "New Order" race dogmatists by Henry A. Wallace, now just become Vice-President of the United States, in the midst of the biological and economic discussions that occupy his last annual report as Secretary of Agriculture. Speaking with the authority of his first-hand knowledge of genetics, which had gained him repute as a scientist before he ever entered public life, he lashes unsparingly at doctrines that would rearrange the world on a master-and-slave status:

"Theories of racial superiority and racial inferiority have no scientific basis. Certain nations may be very different by training from other nations; by inheritance they are probably little different.

"Millions living in Germany are different from us chiefly because of an indoctrination systematically instilled into them from early youth. They have had more training in hard work, in giving their all to the fatherland, and in sub-

mission to economic and military rule. Many of them believe war is holy and think the achievement of German domination justifies any means. But if numerous American children had been adopted into German families 20 years ago, they would be just the same. They would be indistinguishable from native-born Germans.

"Probably any favorably located race can develop a civilization. The Indians of Latin America did so. Civilizations of long ago in Africa, China, Japan, and India were not inferior in many respects to those of today. In this hemisphere, broadly speaking, we have democratic types of civilization, and they rest on a genetic basis."

In the report, much emphasis is placed on the necessity for adjusting American agricultural production to the existing market. Pre-war measures taken by practically all the nations anticipating the outbreak of hostilities had sharply diminished our old export markets, especially for wheat, cotton and tobacco, and the events of the war have cut still further into possible outlets for those crops. On the other hand, home markets for such things as meats, dairy products, fruits and vegetables are steadily improving.

In the presence of this situation, Mr. Wallace points out, "Growing unneeded crops is sheer waste of labor, of capital, and of soil, even if temporarily the products can go into storage under Government loans. It is a drain on resources that would otherwise be available for national defense."

Better trade relations with other Western Hemisphere nations are recommended in the report. Obviously, the

RADIO

J. J. McEntee, director of the Civilian Conservation Corps, will discuss the CCC's health and safety programs as guest scientist on "Adventures in Science" with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over the coast to coast network of the Columbia Broadcasting System, Thursday, Jan. 30, 3:45 p.m. EST, 2:45 CST, 1:45 MST, 12:45 PST. Listen in on your local station. Listen in each Thursday.

United States cannot import from South America commodities of which it already has surpluses, like Argentine wheat or Brazilian cotton; for these, joint effort in seeking sales outlets would seem to promise more satisfactory results. In the meantime, there is plenty of room in United States markets for a whole array of products whose very names suggest the exotic: abaca, cinchona, kapok, rotenone, tea, cocoa, camphor, rubber, tropical hardwoods. Most of the North American demand for these things is now supplied from the Old-World tropics; and even so that demand should be capable of considerable further growth.

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BIOLOGY

Sex of 'Possums Modified With Hormones After Birth

MODIFYING sex in animals after they were born is the scientific feat reported by Prof. Carl R. Moore of the University of Chicago in the new issue of *Physiological Zoology* (January).

Opossums were the animals used in the experiments. They were the only readily available animals adapted to the methods used, because opossums are born in an "unfinished" condition and are immediately placed in the mother's brood pouch, where they remain for 60 or 70 days, completing their development. The only other animals that do this kind of thing live in the Australasian region; with the opossums, they constitute the great primitive mammalian group known as marsupials.

Opossum young, Prof. Moore discovered, are as "unfinished" sexually as they are in other ways when they are born. Rudiments of sex glands are there, but they do not show definite signs of becoming either male or female until the third day after birth. Accessory and secondary sex organs and tissues show differentiation even later.

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