



Unlisted Casualties

**U**NKNOWN, unnoticed casualties of the new war that is tearing Europe to bits are many, especially among the wild creatures that lived in the forest and fields suddenly turned into areas of savage, blasting battle. Until the fighting ceases we shall not know what has happened to them; perhaps we shall never be able to find out.

Among the animals now utterly lost amid the dust and smoke of new battles is one species that was almost exterminated during the first World War. The present conflict may mop up the few survivors. This is the wisent, or European bison, close cousin of the shaggy animals that were the Thundering Herd of our own western plains until half a century ago.

Before the first World War there were about 800 or 900 of these animals in the forest of Bialowies, in Poland. In the time of starvation and anarchy that followed, practically all these animals were killed for food by peasants and straggling soldiers. When the Polish Republic became a stabilized nation and took charge of the area, there were only a handful of wisent left. These were put in a fenced range and carefully protected.

Now, war has swept through the Bialowies woods twice in two years. The forest was in the Soviet-occupied part of Poland when that country was partitioned between the Reich and the USSR in the autumn of 1939. The Soviet government promptly set up a preserve, endeavoring to carry on what the Poles had started. But in the past few weeks they in turn have been driven out by the crushing onrush of the Panzer corps. It is too much to hope that the few surviving wisent escaped.

There used to be an even larger herd in the Caucasus, before the first World War. An expedition of Soviet scientists went into that area about ten years ago. They did not find a single living wisent.

There were also scattered small groups, mainly on large estates and in zoological gardens. Their fate is unknown. Best chances for survival would seem to be for the wisent on the estate of the Duke of Bedford, in England, and for

a small group in Sweden. The latter, however, are said to have been hybridized with American bison, so that as representatives of the original species they hardly count.

So far as judgment is possible at present, one is forced to the melancholy conclusion that here is another once-great animal whose long twilight is passing into the night of final extinction.

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## ANTHROPOLOGY

## Book on Race Problem Refutes Nazi Doctrines

**Book Sponsored by Catholic University of America Is, However, Non-Sectarian Work by Many Authors**

**N**AZI dogmas about race are treated rather roughly in a new book, *Scientific Aspects of the Race Problem*, sponsored by the Catholic University of America. (Reviewed *SNL*, this issue) Although neither Nazism nor Fascism are anywhere mentioned by name in the book, and the word "Aryan" does not occur in its pages, no doubt is left about its purpose.

The aim, indeed, is openly avowed in the preface, written by the University's rector, Bishop Joseph M. Corrigan, who states: "Truth will never be defeated, though it may be obscured for a time. Nevertheless, the only remedy we can hope to apply against the madness which seems to have befallen so large a part of Western civilization is to state clearly the objective truth. Truth indeed will but seldom convert those who have fallen the prey to fanatic creeds; but it may, and it alone may, prevent the spreading of the disastrous contagion. It is timely and necessary, therefore, to treat the question of race in a cool, objective, and truly scientific manner."

Since the Catholic University of America is the property of all the bishops of the United States, rather than of a single religious order or society, a publication of this kind must have been considered very carefully before being undertaken, and it may be assumed that it has the consent and approval of the very highest authority in the Church.

The book, however, is specifically not a sectarian work. Of the six authors who contributed chapters, four are non-Catholics, and neither they nor the two

Catholic authors make the slightest mention of Catholic or any other religious doctrines. The discussion is thoroughly and factually scientific throughout.

The initial chapter, by Dr. H. S. Jennings of the University of California at Los Angeles, is a condensed but complete statement of what is known at present about the facts of heredity and the biological processes underlying them. There follows a closely related chapter, by Prof. Charles A. Berger, S.J., of Fordham University, on human psychological inheritance. Neither Dr. Jennings nor Prof. Berger is willing to make any sweeping statements about heredity in human beings; existing facts simply do not justify such declarations.

Dom Thomas Verner Moore, O.S.B., professor of psychology at the Catholic University, contributes a third chapter, in which he discusses how far animal and human intelligence march together and where they part company. There is evidence, which he brings out, that animals perceive and "reason" somewhat as man does where concrete material things are concerned. But confronted with the simplest abstraction, even dogs and apes apparently are unable to do anything with it. From there on, man walks alone.

Dr. Ales Hrdlicka, veteran anthropologist of the U. S. National Museum, discusses the physical realities of races in his chapter. His tabulations of existing and ancient races show that most peoples of the world are and have been very mixed. Incidentally, Dr. Hrdlicka considers Nordic man to be descended from the Mediterranean stock—an idea that