

hear them. He is of the opinion that there are no completely dumb animals. It is we who are deaf, rather than they who are dumb, he holds.

Desert mice, and many other animals that live in arid regions, are able to get along without drinking, and even without eating juicy leaves. Mr. Walker continues. They may lap up dew occasionally, and get a few "greens" during the brief seasons of quick growth that sometimes come in the desert, but at need they can live and thrive entirely on dried

foods. Their physiology is so adjusted that water is manufactured in their bodies out of other hydrogen-oxygen compounds.

"I have often offered water to pocket mice, kangaroo rats, grasshopper mice and other desert animals to make certain that they did not suffer from lack of moisture," he says. "Almost invariably they refuse it, though occasionally they may sip a little and then not touch water again for months."

Science News Letter, December 6, 1941

GENERAL SCIENCE

Unity of American Cultures Sought in Havana Conference

Exchanges of Students, Teachers, Scientific Leaders Among Steps For Bettering International Relations

AN historic forward step in cooperation and understanding among the nations of the Western Hemisphere has just taken place in Havana. National Committees on Intellectual Cooperation from nineteen American countries met to discuss ways of bringing this unity about.

A tri-lingual hemisphere is envisaged by Dr. Antonio S. de Bustamante of Cuba, who stated that understanding of one another's languages was the first essential of friendship and unity between our nations. He asserted that Spanish and Portuguese should become "second languages" of the United States, as English is fast becoming the second tongue of Central and South American states. When we can freely converse, we can cast off our suspicions of one another, read the literature of other Americans and develop a family spirit, he affirmed.

Dr. James T. Shotwell, head of the delegation from the United States, stated that the preservation of freedom throughout the world was the ultimate objective of the historic conference. He said it was impossible for cooperation and unity to be imposed upon peoples; that it must spring from a genuine appreciation of the achievements of one another. "The peace settlement of the present war must include strong measures for cultural cooperation among nations," he concluded.

The development of science and scientific societies among the American republics was brought up in a resolution presented by the delegates from Peru.

The proposal is for a series of international literary and scientific competitive contests, with money to be contributed by their respective governments. Prizes of \$8,000 and \$2,000 would be awarded each year for the most outstanding literary and scientific works.

In addition, proposals have been drafted by the conference calling for widespread exchange of students, teachers and scientific leaders among the American republics during the coming years. Selection of these would be on the basis of scholarship merit, character, ability to profit by the experience, and familiarity with the language of the country.

Resolutions were offered condemning the treatment of many scholars and scientists in occupied countries of the world today, and asking that the governments of the American nations offer every possible facility to exiled scientists and scholars, and give them freedom of movement among the several American states.

This conference marks a milestone in inter-American relations, and proposes to set up means of free exchange of various scientific and cultural works, educational films, and works of art and music. Changes in copyright laws, to give better protection to writers, were recommended.

Transfer of the scientific and cultural societies of the world to the Western Hemisphere was forecast by the Congress which voted to invite to the New World the International Sci- (Turn to page 366)

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entific Union, with headquarters in London, the International Union of Academies, formerly located in Brussels, the International Committee of Historical Sciences, the International Library Association, and all other world cultural associations now suffering from the hindrances of war.

Such large-scale transfer of scientific and historical associations would make this continent the world's center of learning. It would make the Western Hemisphere the coordinating center for all scholars and educators.

The Congress voted to offer locations for these societies in various American republics. With the decline of scientific research in Europe, it was felt, obligation and opportunity come to the New World to take over this function.

Also voted by the Congress of Government Representatives was a motion to recommend special passports and travel credentials for teachers, scientists, and newspapermen, as these persons are especially qualified to spread mutual understanding and to create good-will among the nations of the Americas. Newspapermen were referred to as "professors of the popular masses" and "directors of public opinion." Special passports, and reductions in travel fares, would make possible a wider exchange of these men among our American republics and speed the day when we shall work and plan together for the Western Hemisphere.

Free entrance for all books and printed publications from country to country was urged in order to further mutual under-

standing by reducing costs. A commission was set up to compile a list of the most important books in each American Republic, and it is planned that these shall be published, one by each country, under the title, "Literary Masterpieces of the Americas." They would be printed in their original language, and also in translation. This would make it possible for a Pan-American literature to be developed.

Bureaus for disseminating medical information were also recommended, so that hygiene and public health discoveries of one country would be available to the others. An All-America Radio Office has already been established in

Havana as a clearing center for all long and short wave programs between the Americas.

The conference took a firm stand against the oppression of totalitarian countries and the abuse of scientific and literary persons in those countries, and recommended that domicile be given as many of these men as possible in the New World.

Because the question of copyright on printed materials has caused confusion in the past, a special committee was set up to work out a plan for better protection of literary works, songs and other works when circulated from country to country.

Science News Letter, December 6, 1941

PSYCHOLOGY

Howler Monkeys Have Better Foreign Policy Than Man

HOWLER monkeys have a better foreign policy and scheme of international relations than science has yet taught man to use, Dr. Edward L. Thorndike, eminent educational psychologist of Teachers College, Columbia University, told a luncheon meeting of the Psychological Corporation honoring its founder, Dr. James McKeen Cattell, pioneer psychologist. Prof. Thorndike said:

"The howler monkeys manage the matter as follows: For the most part, each nation stays in its own territory, minding its own business.

"If one nation encroaches upon another's territory, the invaded nation meets them with a vigorous attack of howls.

"The invaders howl back.

"The contest continues until, by a beneficent provision in the brain of the howler monkey, the side that is out-howled is moved to retire. Not a drop of blood is split; not an atom of food or shelter is destroyed. No blot stains the national honor, since each citizen howls his loudest until his inner nature says 'Hold! Enough!' or 'Howled Enough!'

"The absolute justice of this procedure is dubious, since there may be a very low correlation between rightful ownership and vociferousness. But the outcomes are surely far better than in man, where the large wins over the small, the bellicose over the peaceful, and force over reason.

"It is an elementary principle of psychology that we should not try to dam up and push back the energy and passions of men, but should rather direct and entice them into desirable channels. It has been the world's tragedy of the last half century that effort was not made and ways were not found to encourage the energy and ambitions of the German people and of their rulers toward lines of action that would be good for them and for the rest of the world.

"It is perhaps impertinent to suggest that our governments should study psychology. But I can at least recommend that psychologists study government.

"If we do the work we should do in that field, we may hope to see psychologists attached to Departments of State."

Science News Letter, December 6, 1941

Aids to Research

RESearch in applied psychology will be aided by a series of grants established in honor of Dr. James McKeen Cattell by the Psychological Corporation.

First of the grants will be made in 1942, when four awards of \$250 each will be made to graduate students with the best plans for experimental work.

Dr. Paul S. Achilles, vice-president of the Psychological Corporation, announced the establishment of the grants at the meeting.

Science News Letter, December 6, 1941

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