

STATISTICAL MECHANICS—Norman Davidson—*McGraw*, 540 p., \$14.50. Full year's graduate course.

THE STRUCTURE AND DISTRIBUTION OF CORAL REEFS—Charles Darwin, foreword by H. W. Menard—*Univ. of Calif. Press*, 214 p., illus., maps, paper, \$1.95. Reprint of Darwin's work (1851) on the origin of coral atolls through subsidence, a hypothesis proven experimentally only a decade ago.

STUDIES IN MODERN ANALYSIS, Vol. I—R. C. Buck, Ed.—*Mathematical Assn of Am. (Prentice-Hall)*, 182 p., \$4. Deals with theory of limits, spectral theorem, and functional analysis.

THEY SHALL TAKE UP SERPENTS: Psychology of the Southern Snake-Handling Cult—Weston La Barre—*Univ. of Minn. Press*, 208 p., photographs, \$3.75. Anthropologist's analysis of the snake-handling cult practised in the southeastern United States.

UNITED STATES ARMY AND AIR FORCE FIGHTERS 1916-1961—K. S. Brown and others, Bruce Robertson, Ed.—*Harleyford (Aero Pubs.)*, 256 p., illus., \$9.75. Historical review of U.S. fighter aircraft.

VOLCANOES AND EARTHQUAKES—Robert Irving—*Knopf*, 130 p., illus. by Ruth Adler, photographs, \$3. Up-to-date and informative, for young people.

THE VOYAGE OF THE BEAGLE—Charles Darwin, notes & introd. by Leonard Engel—*Double-day*, 524 p., illus., maps, paper, \$1.45. Reprint of revised 1860 edition, with new maps and photographs added.

THE WELLSPRINGS OF LIFE—Isaac Asimov—*New Am. Lib.*, 224 p., paper, 60¢. Reprint (1960).

WORLD WHO'S WHO IN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY—*Marquis*, 12th ed., 1358 p., \$24. Biographical sketches of 23,400 business executives, key-indexed to more than 6,000 leading businesses.

• Science News Letter, 81:204 March 31, 1962

TECHNOLOGY

Continuous Gas Phase Laser Now Available

► THE FIRST LOW COST gas phase laser giving a continuous beam is now commercially available.

Lasers, also known as optical masers, are

devices for producing extremely intense beams of a very pure color. Their possible uses are being extensively studied at many laboratories here and abroad.

Some suggested applications include mapping the moon, serving as radar, to provide space and earth communications, acting as a surgeon's scalpel and, possibly, even as a death ray.

The laser comes on the market less than two years after it was first operated successfully in the laboratory. Perkin-Elmer Corporation, Norwalk, Conn., and Spectra-Physics, Inc., Mountainview, Calif., jointly developed the laser, which uses a mixture of helium and neon gases to produce its continuous beam. This kind of laser was invented by Dr. Ali Javan at Bell Telephone Laboratories. Its light is in the near infrared region of the spectrum.

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BACTERIOLOGY

Bacteria Frozen 50 Years In Antarctica Found Alive

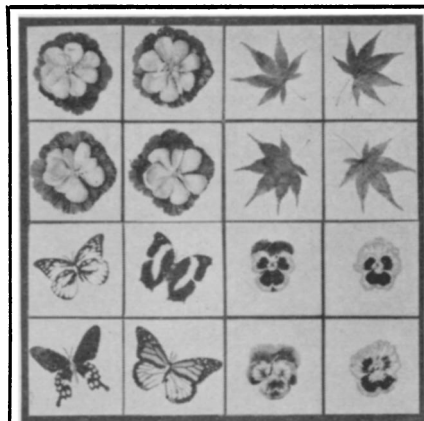
► BACTERIA frozen in the Antarctic ice for half a century have been found alive.

The bacteria were deposited in Antarctica by the expeditions of Robert Scott and Ernest H. Shackleton, just after the turn of the century. The discoverer, George H. Meyer, a University of Texas microbiologist, said that the history of the sites and the fact that the organisms were recovered from human excrement deep in the ice determined the age.

It is extremely unusual for microorganisms of this type to survive for a long time, the scientist remarked.

Mr. Meyer and Dr. Marie B. Morrow, University aerobiologist, are trying to learn the relationship between microorganisms and their environment, how they are influenced by solar irradiation, negative temperatures, desiccation and other conditions, and why they can survive in Antarctica.

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by Judith Viorst, Science Service

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