



Ready to Return

FREQUENTLY we are moved to indignant pity by the story of a drunkard's dog, that always creeps back to lick his worthless master's hands, no matter how he may have been beaten and kicked.

Yet we have treated our wildlife worse than drunkard ever treated his dog. We have shot and trapped it, chopped and burned down its forest homes, plowed up its prairies, poisoned its rivers with sewage and industrial pollution. Naturally, it has vanished from large areas; our methods were massacre, no less; what could you expect?

But give those devastated areas just a little chance, let brush grow up where the forest was felled, clean the filth out of a river, establish a refuge only a few years—and the place fills up with game. You may have to plant a few birds or mammals (which will then multiply amazingly) but often you do not even need to do that. Wildlife will return unbidden.

During the past few years we have begun to awaken from our generations-

long debauch of drunken waste of native resources. Naturally, we have something of a national headache, and equally naturally, we feel a bit of national remorse.

And behold. Already the scared wild things, that we abused almost to the point of extermination, are returning. Deer have become so abundant in parts of Pennsylvania, Michigan, and other one-time big-timber states that they are a problem to wildlife management, and the question of permitting the shooting of does is being seriously discussed.

Of lesser magnitude, but even more remarkable nevertheless, is the phenomenon of the comeback of the pronghorn antelope in the Far West. Once they were more abundant than the bison. Then they were over-hunted until they were in even greater danger than the bison of disappearing altogether. Protection came in the nick of time.

And last autumn it became possible for the State of Oregon to proclaim a short open season. There were many restrictions, of course; yet the unbelievable had happened: Men could hunt the antelope, whose grandfathers had hunted it, but whose fathers could not.

Science News Letter, May 20, 1939

ANTHROPOLOGY

Face Painting Is Art To Seri Indian Girls

FEMININE make-up is sometimes jokingly dubbed creative art. But to see what our face painting might be, if really done in the creative spirit, visit the Seri Indians of west coast Mexico.

When a Seri girl attempts what she calls Pretty Face, she paints on nose and cheeks designs in color out of her own imagination. She may get ideas from flowers and seed pods, baskets, birds and snakes, the sun and moon. For a mirror she has a shell filled with water. For colors she chooses blue, yellow, red, black and white. She may paint with natural realism or with conventionalized technique.

Investigating this old American art is an achievement of two students of Indian culture, Dane Coolidge and Mary Roberts Coolidge, who spent six lively weeks near the wild Seris and put the experience into a new book, "The Last of the Seris" (Dutton).

Face painting is a Seri girl's only aesthetic expression, the Coolidges say. The tribe is poor and ragged, dwindling toward extinction, eking out a living by fishing, but still appreciative of prettiness. Girls design Pretty Face to attract sweethearts. But they also put face paint to other uses. They painted the faces of

their men before war, as protection against pain and cold. They make up certain men of the tribe with special face paintings on festival days.

When the Coolidges supplied paper for drawing, Seri girls eagerly seized the chance to try their art with this new medium. The results showed great ingenuity, but when it came to explaining the pictures, shyness overcame the girls. A medicine man—father of seven daughters—explained the meaning of each line and mark.

The Seris, who are vanishing, have a striking literature of songs and traditions. They tell strange tales of white men with blue eyes and yellow hair, who came to them long ago. The Came-from-Afar Men were whalers. The Coolidges believe they may have been Norsemen.

Science News Letter, May 20, 1939

ENGINEERING

Pittsburgh Assured Against Recurrence of 1936 Flood

PITTSBURGH'S flood disaster of 1936—who remembers it? Few, probably, outside the Pittsburgh district itself. We are so engrossed in our own concerns that we are easily prone to forget our neighbors' troubles.

Yet Pittsburgh's troubles are reflected in the lives of all of us. So essential are the steel, glass and other industrial products of that smoky cornucopia that disaster to Pittsburgh is damage to the whole nation.

It is a matter for congratulation therefore that effective measures have been taken to prevent any recurrence of the

JUST THE WATCH . . .

For the Technical Man . . . As an all round watch for Laboratory—Classroom—Sports—and Aviation the Aristo Wrist Chronograph is ideal.

5 DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

1. Full Large Dial for reliable Timekeeping.
2. Precision Stop Watch recording 1/5th Seconds up to 30 minutes.
3. Time - Out feature for timing interrupted operations.
4. Telemeter readings for determining distances by light and sound speeds.
5. Tachometer for direct reading of speed in miles per hour on measured courses.



ARISTO CHRONOGRAPH

A high grade 17 jewel Watch in Solid Stainless steel case with English Washable Pigskin strap. No. 1713TT. No. 1713 same watch without Telemeter & Tachometer. Send check or money order or sent C.O.D. for ONLY

\$35.00

List \$50.00

Full One Year Money Back Guarantee

ARISTO IMPORT CO., INC. 630 Fifth Ave.
Dept. L. RADIO CITY New York

BOOKS

SCIENCE NEWS LETTER will obtain for you any American book or magazine in print. Send check or money order to cover regular retail price and we will pay postage in the United States. If price is unknown, send \$5 and the change will be returned. When publications are free, send 10c for handling. Address:

Book Department

SCIENCE NEWS LETTER
2101 Constitution Ave.
Washington, D. C.

great deluge of 1936. Ten great dams on the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers and their tributaries will hold back the freshets of late winter and early spring, not only protecting the city but regulating the flow for navigation on the Ohio and also materially abating stream pollution.

In *The Military Engineer*, (May-June) Lt.-Col. W. E. R. Covell of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers tells of the work to date. Because the Pittsburgh watershed crosses state lines into New York, West Virginia and Maryland, the whole project has been taken out of state hands and made a Federal undertaking. The dams will stretch in a long line, in mountain valleys to the north and east, like fortifications against a raiding enemy.

One dam has been completed for more than a year, four more are nearing completion, three are ready to be undertaken as soon as funds are made available, and two await legislative clarification of status before work can be started.

Blessings already flow from the one fully completed dam. Not only has it checked at least one stiff freshet, but it has released the impounded waters later in the season to maintain navigation levels during a drought period, has made it possible for sportsmen to catch big bass in waters long sterile through pollution, and has diminished the pollution problems of city water supplies along the upper Monongahela by fifty per cent.

Science News Letter, May 20, 1939

servatory. Thus the simple name, Hassel comet, now turns out to be Jurlof-Achmarof-Smith-Hassel. Latest reports on the JASH comet show it is rapidly leaving the earth and has dimmed from third magnitude brilliance to the fourth magnitude.

Science News Letter, May 20, 1939

PHYSIOLOGY

Vitamin Alphabet Going Out of Style

THE vitamin alphabet, that is, designation of the various vitamins by letter, is going out of style. For example, if you want to be really up-to-date, you must learn to say ascorbic acid instead of vitamin C when you are referring to the substance in orange juice, (or other citrus fruits, tomatoes and other vegetables) which prevents and cures scurvy.

This may be discouraging, especially if you pride yourself on having really learned the vitamin alphabet, or most of it. But the scientists who have most to say about vitamins, the nutritionists and biochemists, are trying their best to get the vitamins out of the alphabet. They make the point that the letters did very well for names in the early days of vitamin discoveries when only a few were known and not much was known about them. Now, however, since there are about as many vitamins as letters of the alphabet, with half-a-dozen going under the name of B, it is confusing and even leads to inaccuracy to call these essential food factors by letter.

Some of the vitamins have been identified chemically and even made synthetically. They have regular names, just as other chemicals have. Vitamin C is ascorbic acid. Thiamin is the beriberi preventing and curing substance that once went under the name of vitamin B or B₁. Nicotinic acid, the stuff that is curing pellagra, is the chemical that was variously called vitamin B₂, vitamin G and the P-P or pellagra preventing factor. Riboflavin is another diet essential that was once labelled vitamin B or vitamin G. Recent discoveries have shown that it is necessary for the health of both man and other animals.

The anti-sterility vitamin, formerly called E, is now known as alpha tocopherol. Vitamins A and D may keep their letter names for some time, because there is not so much confusion about them as about the B vitamins. Until the chemical composition of other vitamins is discovered, however, scientists favor calling them by descriptive names, not by letters.

Science News Letter, May 20, 1939

ASTRONOMY

Hassel Comet Takes New Names As Prior Discoverers Are Found

LIKE some of the world's famous divorcees, who pick up new names with each change of partners, the comet Hassel is adding names with each mail delivery.

Full name of the comet is now Jurlof-Achmarof-Smith-Hassel, but to avoid this hyphenated terminology astronomers are going back to their standardized forms and calling the comet 1939 d.

First knowledge of the new comet, visible to the unaided eye low in the northwestern sky in early evening, came from Oslo, Norway, with the reported discovery by observer Hassel on April 16, 1939. Prof. S. Rosseland of the Oslo Observatory cabled the news to Harvard Observatory, which distributed the news quickly through the United States.

Thus, and quite rightly, American as-

tronomers took to referring to the comet as the Hassel comet.

However, it now appears that other observers saw the comet too and did it before Hassel found it in his Norwegian observatory.

Two Russian amateurs, Jurlof and Achmarof, saw the comet on April 15, one day earlier than Hassel. They wrote of their discovery on April 16 and mailed the letter to European centers for distributing astronomical information. This slow method gave Hassel the apparent priority for a time.

Still more recently it has become apparent that a Canadian amateur astronomer, Lewis V. Smith, of Sedgewick, Alberta, saw the comet on April 15 also. Like the Russians, he announced his discovery by mail. This fact has only recently been received at Harvard Ob-

SCIENCE NEWS

LETTER SUBSCRIPTION COUPON

To Science News Letter, 2101 Constitution Avenue, Washington, D. C.

☐ Start

☐ Renew

my subscription to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER for

☐ 1 year, \$5

☐ 2 years, \$7

Name _____

Street
Address _____

City and
State _____

(No extra postage to anywhere in the world)