by the Yucca moth.[3] The Yucca moth was evidently common in St. Louis, where several species had long been cultivated. Engelmann's observations were made somewhat earlier than 1873.

Yucca has been cultivated in Ames as early as 1888. I had frequent occasion to note the flowering of this plant, but until three years ago I had not seen any of the capsules. Only a few were observed then. I did not, however, note whether the pollination was brought about by the Yucca moth. A few weeks ago one of my freshman students brought to me a fine panicle of fruit with more than a dozen capsules, every one of which showed circular holes left by the emerging of the larvae. Evidently the Yucca moth has only been recently introduced at Ames. The plants observed are in the station grounds of the Northwestern Railway. There are plants on the college campus two miles away, but none of these, so far as I know, have produced seed.

The *Yucca glauca* Nutt is common on the loess bluffs along the Missouri River in western Iowa. It is evident that the insect has been introduced from this source. The species cultivated in gardens at Ames is a form of *Yucca filamentosa*.

L. H. PAMMEL

AMES, IOWA

NOISE AND HEARING

THE discussion of the relation of noise to hearing that has appeared in SCIENCE October 17, December 12 and March 6 prompts me to report my own personal experience.

In the spring of 1921 I had an attack of Bell's Palsy, from which I did not recover for more than a year. During the period when the nerves of the entire left side of my face were giving me constant pain, there were such noises as the barking of a dog when close to me and the "Klaxon" on an automobile that were painful. Musical tones did not produce the same painful effect nor the usual tones of the voice in conversation, but the contact of iron tires on a wagon with the street-car rails had a painful effect. I tried to plug my left ear, especially when driving a car, but this did not lessen the annoyance from a "Klaxon" when a car drove by me on passing. This peculiar sensitiveness to these noises continued for more than two months and did not disappear until after the nerves of my face ceased to be painful. My hearing is above the average in keenness for low sounds but distinctly faulty for musical pitch and tone quality. I can not distinguish any difference in the general quality of my hearing since I recovered, and the pain from the types of noises mentioned is absent.

[3] Report Missouri Botanical Garden 13: 27 (See 124).

Immediately on giving symptoms of Bell's Palsy, I was examined by a regular physician and a specialist on ears and was constantly under their care. After recovering, I was again examined and at no time was there any evidence of alteration of my general sense of hearing. Their attention was directed to the reaction just given which was one of the reasons for special attention being given to testing both ears at that time. I was not given an explanation at that time nor have I since accounted for this selective defect in my hearing during the apparent progress of degeneration of the nerves in my face.

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THE DEATH OF ARCHIMEDES

AN ancient mosaic representing the death of Archimedes has just been described by Franz Winter, the archeologist of Bonn, in an illustrated publication issued in Berlin by Walter de Gruyter and Company. This mosaic has been in private ownership in Wiesbaden, since 1860, when it was obtained from the estate of Jérome Bonaparte. The mosaic came originally from the city of Herculaneum, that was destroyed by an eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A.D. It represents a Roman soldier approaching with drawn sword, and Archimedes seated at a table and turning toward him, with hands raised as if to protect the figures drawn in the sand on the table. According to this mosaic the geometric figures were not drawn in sand on the floor, as commonly reported, but in sand on a suitably designed table. Winter is convinced of the genuineness of the mosaic and discusses a number of questions of archeologic interest.

FLORIAN CAJORI

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ANTI-CONSERVATION PROPAGANDA

ALTHOUGH I have already sent a letter of protest to the American Forestry Association in regard to the misleading information regarding forest conservation contained in an article in a recent number of its magazine contributed by Mr. A. H. Carhart who "for four years served the United States Forest Service as recreation engineer," the persistent and industrious circulation of such propaganda that has been going on for some time is having such a serious effect that I would like to call the attention of SCIENCE readers to it, especially to the following extract:

> It would be quite acceptable if we could stop the laws of nature from moving forward in some particularly fine bits of woodland and hold them just as they are, for the use of the public for many generations. But there is no fountain of youth for the tree. We can

not set aside for all time something which is not stable, something which is changing as the seasons change. It would be as sensible as to suggest making a park preserve out of a particularly brilliant stand of oaks because of their fall coloring as to propose such a reservation of a growing forest. Both are passing conditions. One is more transitory than the other, but the principle is the same.[1]

Of course individual trees grow old and die. So do human beings, but should they all be poisoned or asphyxiated as soon as they are mature? Is it not one of the basic facts of forest science and one that we might expect every one in the Forest Service, even if only one of the wood chopping engineers, to be perfectly familiar with, that a forest under natural conditions maintains itself, as the population of a human community does, the trees being of all ages, the younger individuals that have been growing up taking the place of the aged ones that die off from time to time? A forest may and often does maintain itself unimpaired century after century. If this were not so, why was a large part of this country covered with magnificent forest with trees several to many centuries old when the first settlers came? Can we doubt that it would still be so but for human interference?

And as for the individual trees, is it not true that most of our native timber trees are long-lived, able to live and grow in a flourishing condition for 200 to 300 years, some of them very much longer? No more pernicious nonsense can be disseminated than the idea that if we do not hurry up and cut the rest of our dwindling supply of timber the forests are going to fall down and rot like a crop of weeds. Were cutting down what our forests need, it would seem as though they had been getting it in plenty for nearly three centuries.

We shall never get any real conservation in this country until people wake up to a realization of how the tentacles of commercial interests have penetrated, not only the branches of our government, but also most of the conservation organizations.

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THE NEW SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE AS A SUPPORTER OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

GREAT satisfaction and pleasure have been manifested over the appointment of President W. M. Jardine to the position of Secretary of Agriculture. During the two weeks intervening between the time of the announcement of his appointment and the induction into office (fortunately for his welfare it was no longer) he has been hailed and extolled as the "cow puncher" who has come on up, farmer, educator, economist, level-headed citizen, Rotarian, golfer and all with approximately correct estimation and the warmest sincerity.

However, several of the most excellent, perhaps some of the most significant characteristics of the new Secretary of Agriculture have not appeared to receive the public notice that they deserved. One of these is his attitude towards serious scientific endeavor. During the thirteen years that he has been director of the Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station and then president of the college, science, even just for science's sake, has hardly had anywhere a more keenly open-minded and generous supporter. Whether the project called for the investigation of the fauna of the alimentary tracts of termites or the physics involved in a musical tone, if there was prospect of the exercise of energy and integrity in the prosecution of it, his support was enlisted. On the other hand, if the investigation gave promise of valuable economic results, either immediately, or remotely, it was not thereby "tainted" as science. An investigator might superintend the economically important rodent project calling for end results as rapidly as they could be secured, and, at the same time, diligently seek the causes of the absorption, during sexual activity, of the pubic symphyses of female pocket gophers.

The secretary, although most responsive to wholesome public sentiment, has not been deluded by that harmful myth to the effect that farmers, boards, governors and others are constantly bringing desperate pressure to bear on state institutions to secure exclusively results that are capable of immediate practical application, thus enforcing superficiality. Only this year he was able to say that difficulties of this nature had not been imposed upon him.

ROBERT K. NABOURS

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

Principles of General Physiology. By SIR WILLIAM MADDOCK BAYLISS, 4th Edition, 1924, Longmans, Green & Company, London.

THIS edition of a book unique among all its kind appears just a decade after the first, and only a few months after the author's death. The tautologous title is still retained and is still somewhat misleading. For treatises on the principles of any science heretofore have led us to look for a style almost stereotyped. One recalls Newton's "Principia," v.

[1] *American Forests and Forest Life,* February, 1925, p. 71.