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—10— FRIDAY, November 25, 1949

## Alexandria's Anti-Pollution Drive

Sewage in technicolor is not a pretty sight. It is especially unpretty when it is photographed pouring into a natural stream. That is why two public-spirited Alexandria organizations are sponsoring a series of motion picture shows of actual conditions found to exist this fall in the polluted Potomac River.

The anti-pollution campaigners are the Alexandria Chapter of the Izaak Walton League and the John Alexander Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The movies show raw sewage flowing into the river from eighteen main sewer outlets between Four Mile Run, which separates Alexandria from Arlington County, and Huff Run, south of Alexandria. This sewage is but a small part of the twenty million gallons estimated to be dumped into the river every day in this urban area.

In effect, the Potomac River from Washington to Fort Belvoir is an open sewer for the Washington Metropolitan Area. More than two-thirds of this sewage enters the river in a dangerously untreated state. The District's sewage treatment plant is being enlarged to handle all the waste from the city. The Alexandria civic groups are trying to arouse public support for construction of a sewage treatment plant for their community. The Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin is assisting local communities to solve their pollution problems. But, as the Alexandria anti-pollution forces point out, the money necessary for these vital improvements will be forthcoming only when the citizens along the river become sufficiently aware of the dangers of contaminated waters in their proximity. The Alexandria Izaak Walton League and the DAR are to be commended on their enterprise in undertaking to stir up public sentiment in behalf of a cleaner, safer Potomac.

## Mr. Lilienthal's Service

From time to time, during his almost twenty years of public service, David E. Lilienthal has been an embattled figure. This has been true not so much because he has deliberately gone out looking for arguments as because he has been the pioneering and emphatic head of two gigantic and highly controversial enterprises—the Tennessee Valley Authority and the civilian-controlled Atomic Energy Commission. In a sense, therefore, because of the very nature of his work, it may be said that the arguments—some of them very hot and bitter—have gone out looking for him.

Yet, in resigning now from the AEC to return to private life and engage with "greater latitude" in the discussion of public affairs, Mr. Lilienthal may properly say of himself that he has ridden out all the great storms of his career with flying colors, the latest instance being the complete collapse of Senator Hickenlooper's attack on him for "incredible mismanagement." At times, because of certain idiosyncrasies of his own and a tendency to deal brusquely with matters that have seemed unimportant to him, he may have rubbed people the wrong way and thus made the water hotter for himself when a different attitude might easily have made it cooler. That said, however, the fact remains that the record of his achievements in TVA and the Atomic Energy Commission constitutes in itself an enduring monument to the fine, distinguished and uniquely important service he has rendered to the American people.

Although some may read special meanings into it, Mr. Lilienthal's resignation has long been expected, and it apparently reflects nothing more significant than the fact that he has been hankering, for a considerable time, to be a private citizen again and enjoy the greater freedom of that status. A successor of equal gifts and drive will not be easy to find, but his continuing counsel can be counted upon in our atomic affairs. At 50, with all his exceptional energy and experience, he still has much to contribute to a Nation that is richer now for what he has done already.

## Airline Safety Record

Statistics released by the Civil Aeronautics Board should dispel any doubts in the minds of prospective airline travelers as to the safety record of the regular airlines. That the recent series of air accidents, military as well as civilians, has tended to discourage the faint-hearted from flying was inevitable. But the headlines raise fears that are not supported by the CAB record of airline accidents so far this year.

According to Ben Ashmead, CAB safety statistician, the passenger death rate this year up to and including the Eastern Airlines disaster at National Airport is but 1.1 fatalities for every hundred million passenger miles flown—lowest since travel by air has been a major industry. The National Airport accident was the second fatal one involving scheduled airlines this year—and both were caused by collisions with fighter planes. The total of passengers killed in these two crashes was sixty-three, with seven crewmen also killed. Yet the regular domestic airlines have covered more than five billion passenger miles since January 1 last.

The previous low record for fatalities

was 1.2 deaths for every hundred million miles flown, established first in 1939 and again in 1946. The rate last year was 1.3. These figures contrast sharply with the 4.5 rate recorded in 1938, when only 560,000 passenger miles were flown. Last year 13,000,000 airline passengers were carried more than six billion passenger miles, with only eight fatal accidents and a total of eighty-three passengers killed.

The overseas transport picture is even brighter. There has been not a single fatal accident on American transoceanic airlines since April of last year, when a plane crashed at Shannon Airport. Yet big airliners are crossing the oceans every day in increasing numbers.

Thus it is apparent that the recent bad publicity which aviation has been getting is not a fair index of the actual safety situation on America's airlines. When the number of miles traveled and passengers carried are considered, the airlines' safety record looks remarkably good.

## China and the U. N.

Foreign Minister Andrei Vishinsky has done the expected thing in telling the United Nations that the Soviet Union no longer recognizes the Nationalist delegation—"these pygmies"—as representatives of China.

The stage for this statement was set last week when the Chinese Communist regime at Peking formally demanded of Secretary General Trygve Lie that the U. N. "immediately deprive" the Nationalists of "all rights" to sit as a delegation. The demand—which may be assumed to have been inspired by the Kremlin—now has received Mr. Vishinsky's full backing as a propaganda prelude to the forthcoming General Assembly debate on charges that the Soviet Union, in violation of solemn treaty pledges, is guilty of criminal machinations in China.

This development has been self-evidently in the making ever since the Kremlin recognized the Peking regime as the only legitimate government of China. And now that the situation in that country is up for debate, Mr. Vishinsky and his underlings in the Soviet bloc can be counted upon to go all-out in vilifying the Nationalists, shouting for their expulsion from the U. N., and beating the drum not only for the universal recognition of the Chinese Communists but also for their seating in the Security Council and General Assembly.

The tragedy here is that the Peking-Kremlin line has considerable strength in it. Virtually the whole of China is now under the military control of the Communists, and the Nationalists have reached such a point of disintegration that it is difficult in the extreme to make a good case for the proposition that they are really capable of governing and are therefore entitled to represent the Chinese people as one of the Big Five—with the veto power—in the United Nations. There is no point in trying to sugar the pill; Mr. Vishinsky can let loose a powerful barrage on this subject.

Nevertheless, the non-Soviet world, as a whole, has yet to shift its recognition from the Nationalists to the Reds. Regarding the latter as a puppet of the Kremlin and hence not truly representative of the Chinese people, the Western Powers have so far been as one in hesitating to recognize them—a hesitation made even more hesitant by what has happened in the Angus Ward case. Further, even if some of these powers change their minds in the near future, the chances are that the United States will be extremely slow about deciding whether to switch from the Nationalist government to Peking.

All of which suggests that the United Nations may soon find itself in a serious legal snarl. On the one hand, Mr. Vishinsky has in effect unilaterally expelled the Nationalists from the U. N. On the other, the United States may hold out for months against either recognizing or admitting the Chinese Reds. Yet China is a member of the Big Five, and the Security Council can take no affirmative action without the unanimous support of those five.

Thus, if the Russians boycott the Council as long as the Nationalists are seated and if we continue to bar the Peking regime, this prime agency of the United Nations will be incapable of arriving at valid decisions, and the resulting paralysis may easily develop into a U. N. crisis of the first order.

## Holy Sepulchre Church

Associated Press dispatches from Jerusalem bring the good news that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre has been spared serious damage. The site associated with the entombment of the Saviour had been the scene of many disasters. It had been violated long before the time of the Emperor Constantine who, about 324 A.D., ordered a pagan temple there replaced by a basilica which should surpass in beauty all others then extant. The resultant structure was dedicated in 335. It must have been a glorious achievement. The walls were made of accurately fitted stones, while the roof was covered with lead as a protection against the winter rains. Marble slabs of various colors covered the floors, and the ceiling was finished with sculptured panel work overlaid throughout with the purest gold. The chief feature of the entire design was the rock tomb. This, according to Eusebius, was "beautified with rare columns and profusely enriched with the most splendid decorations of every kind."

But perhaps just because it was so grand the Constantinian building did not endure. The Persians destroyed it in 614. Restored by the patriarch Modestus on simpler lines, the church was wrecked successively by earthquake, conflagration, pillage and general neglect. Finally in 935 a mosque was reared on the ruins of the atrium. The remnant of the basilica proper was demolished by the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim in 1009. Constantine IX Monomachus of Byzantium sponsored a reconstruction program about half a century later. Then came the Crusaders, who planned and largely completed a program which was intended to bring the rock of Calvary and the tomb of Jesus under the same roof. A fire in 1208 reduced to ashes most of the medieval edifice. Sultan Mahmud II soon afterward licensed the Greeks to raise a new edicule over the sepulchre and lift a new dome.

Visitors who saw the church during World War II were assured that portions of

it actually traced back to Constantine. Jack Finegan, in his "Light From The Ancient Past," published by the Princeton University Press in 1946, gave it as his opinion that on this spot was "the true place of Golgotha and the sepulchre of Christ." Christianity as a living force in the world depends not so much upon buildings, however sacred and historic, as upon the spirit which it inspires in human hearts.

## Something Out of Nothing

A recent Star story recorded the results of neighborly co-operation in restoring to some semblance of decent livability the old buildings which now house the Industrial Home School Annex. One of the buildings has been condemned, but is continued in use as a matter of necessity under sufferance of the fire marshal. The other building won the opprobrious designation some years ago as a sort of modern "Black Hole of Calcutta." It previously housed the Children's Receiving Home, now in new quarters.

The notable thing about this story was its recital of what had been done by the voluntary efforts of citizens, without dependence on the always uncertain availability of public funds. Paint and soap, the ingenious use of donated material and equipment and the kind interest of friends have made more attractive and bright one of the most dismal institutions in Washington. Such varied organizations as the MacArthur Boulevard Citizens' Association, the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church, the Civitan Club, the Girl Scouts, All Souls' Unitarian Church, the Franciscan Brothers, the B'nai B'rith, Variety Club and Saint Vincent de Paul Society, not to mention numerous individuals and the boys from the Industrial Home School, collaborated in the work of restoration to decency.

Such things, of course, do not just happen. They happened in this case because the superintendent, Miss Winifred Thompson, had enough determination and enough faith in people to go out and ask for help—instead of following the usual procedure of recording the dismal details of futility in tiresome annual reports that nobody ever reads.

Eventually there will be new quarters, in some other location, for the children—helpless wards of society who have done no wrong themselves but have inherited the bitterness and sorrow of broken homes. But Miss Thompson has not waited for that. With nothing to go on, she is building something that is even finer than a new building.

## This and That

By Charles E. Tracewell

"RICHMOND, VA.

"Dear Sir:

"I am having trouble identifying a bird that I listen to every day. He seems to be in a tree right near my window, but I have never seen him. He whistles just like a human being.

"Some one suggested it might be a starling but I don't think so.

"Will you recommend a good bird book? I'd want one in colors and one that gave detailed information about every type bird. This place is a haven for them.

"One more question. This summer I was looking for grasshoppers to fish with and I noticed the wooden clatter of their wings. Just what it is that causes this sound?

"When I was living in Washington I read your column regularly and enjoyed the unique way in which you handle your subjects.

"Sincerely yours, R. A. C."

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The whistling bird is the titmouse. He often whistles as if calling a dog. He is small, but possesses a wonderful voice, as almost all birds do.

Starlings whistle more in the spring than at this time of year, but warmer days cause them to whistle at any season.

As for the recommended book of a bird book, there is something we shrink from, because every time we do so a sheaf of letters comes in asking why we did not recommend some other book or books.

Every one, you see, has his or her favorites. There is no really best, only fashions in this as in other things. With some persons, the very latest book is always best.

Therefore we would suggest that a visit to a good bookstore, or to the public library, is the best way to find out one's own preference. There are small books, large books, old and new books, and out of the whole list one can find what is desired. Perhaps the one book is best. Every one interested should have at least three books, preferably a small one, a large one, and then the "very latest" or some old standard work. Any good bookstore clerk or library attendant can help in the choice.

The wings of grasshoppers clack because they are made of chitin, nature's own original plastic. When struck together, they make a sharp click, or even a wooden sound, since chitin is the outer covering, an insect specialty that is one of the reasons for their ability to withstand the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, as visited by mankind and the rest of living and inanimate creation against the tribes of insects.

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Here's a lady who says: "Please do not use my name should you print this, I am sure some of my neighbors think I am bird crazy."

From her letter, the reader may think this kind person much more crazy about rabbits, as witness:

"I was most interested in the letter about the wild rabbit.

"I, too, had a cottontail, but I had much more fun with wild one I saw on Friday just before Easter in the back garden. After walking by him twice without him running away I decided he must be ill. He was either ill or hungry.

"When I brought him in my husband told me it is absolutely impossible to make a wild rabbit live as they will not eat out of human hands.

"Well, I fed him with a medicine dropper warm milk every two or three hours, even getting up in the night.

"I nestled him in a big white wool sock so I would have some way to hold him to force-feed him. When he had enough he would look at me in disgust, put his head down and burrow down in the sock. It took days to get him to eat anything but milk but he finally came to eat lots of green grass and especially dandelions. When he discovered how good graham crackers were he made the crumbs fly.

"I had him in the house for six weeks, kept him in a bird cage the last three weeks, as he got so big he could jump out of the waste can I was using. He was so tired with the cage he would bite the wires and look out at the window and finally got to nipping me when I would pick him up. Finally I had to put him back in the garden but I put graham crackers out for him every evening. I went on vacation in June and have not seen him since but my neighbors tell me he ate their flowers in their back yards."

## Letters to The Star

Disapproves Proposal To Oust Soldiers Home For V. A. Hospital

To the Editor of The Star:

Seldom does The Star take the wrong side of the various proposals affecting the welfare of the men who have successfully defended the United States Government, and in so doing obtained from the Mexicans enough money to establish a home for themselves in their old age.

General Scott certainly established a monument to his men when the Soldiers Home was located in the suburbs of the National Capital, and it was not misplaced. We can say that Washington, D. C., also was misplaced. The Soldiers Home is located where the old men can reach a shopping center, places of amusement and clubs within 25 or 30 minutes, instead of having to board a train or bus to reach their places of amusement.

A VA hospital in this locality would be an error in judgment except as an economy. The VA would grab this delectable real estate site and sell half of it to real estate men, who would benefit financially. We old veterans who helped pay for our Soldiers Home by contributions over the years, feel that we would suffer a grave injustice if we were kicked out now.

Put the VA hospital where the site and money already have been approved, and where the hospital belongs—in the quiet of the country.

This is not the first time that proposals have been made to acquire the Soldiers Home property. Bringing in the Veterans Administration is the "red herring" this time to gain approval of the land grab.

Let those who helped to pay for this beautiful reservation help to keep it just where it is.

C.

## Growth of Population Leads To Government Control of Individual Effort

To the Editor of The Star:

As a life-long Republican I wish to express my somewhat pessimistic views on the future of our country, capitalism and the Republican Party.

In the "wide, open spaces" of the middle West where I was reared we knew very little of Government aid or control of our destinies. We could build any kind of shack or mansion on our own land. We relied on ourselves in case of floods, drought, low prices or other emergencies. We raised most of our food and had our own fuel and water and took care of our own aged and sick.

Now, we live in thickly settled communities—cities—and we find that we can't even build a front porch on a house without permission from a Government agency. We must pay huge tribute to big corporations and to labor goons for everything we eat, drink, wear or dwell in.

This leads me to the conclusion that the denser the population becomes the more demand there is for a central government to control the differences and inequalities that exist between ourselves and our fellow man.

We, as the government, will take over the communication system and run it as we do the Post Office Department. We will nationalize all the other public utilities, including mines, oil wells, waterpower, etc., and forbid the workers from striking. This will rid us of the inconvenience, suffering and damage we now suffer from periodic strikes and give us a feeling of security.

A contributing cause to this trend toward "statism" is the big labor unions or rather their leaders and the small minority of communically inclined people that run them. They live on "special privileges" and deprive the poor working man, all of which is just bosh. The average "capitalist" is just a working man who, by harder work, greater shrewdness or just plain luck, has acquired more wealth than the rank and file.

No one questions the great achievements of union labor in improving the standard of living of American workers, but they must be careful not to overdo it or they will smother the goose that lays their golden eggs. If they want a larger share of the profits of industry, why do they not invest in the stock of the companies they work for instead of using millions of dollars for fighting the Taft-Hartley law and for swinging elections?

As capital must have a profit in order to do business, it naturally passes along to the consumer all extra expense for higher wages and other benefits. We all share in the higher cost of living this causes, but it is most burdensome on pensioners, white collar workers and other fixed income people. The organization worker loses most of his advantage through loss of wages from strikes. The only ones to win are the labor leaders whose salaries go on.

Most of us Republicans still believe in free enterprise, individual initiative and the capitalism that has made this country the greatest in the world. And many Democrats do too, but "we all" seem to be in the minority.

Among other things we must face is how best to curb the power of big business monopolies and the power of big labor monopolies, both of which are controlled by small groups of unscrupulous men. Both groups have a head start on us now.

What is the future of the Republican Party? I don't know. GRANDPA.

## Deplores Exploitation of Sex As a Contemptible Expedient

To the Editor of The Star:

Every reader of a report on the assault of a helpless child such as you published recently must be indignant over the outrage. But it would be interesting to note how many readers see any connection between such a tragedy and the unwholesome emphasis on sex which prevails in most of our channels of instruction and entertainment. The use of an instinct, sacred in its purpose yet dangerous when excessively stimulated, as a means of attracting attention for business purposes, should be recognized as the contemptible expedient that it is.

Perhaps the abnormal assault of an innocent child bears a heavier moral responsibility than the clever men who exploit his passions to line their own pockets. But more probably he does not.

DISGUSTED READER.

## Expresses Disappointment In Reception of Al Johnson

To the Editor of The Star:

My curiosity as to what happened to the Al Johnson celebration is enough to kill several cats. It was announced that he would arrive at 8:40 a.m. Thursday, at Union Station, be escorted to the Commissioners' office, receive the traditional key to the city, be proclaimed the personality of the year by the Variety Club, and Saturday was to be designated as Al Johnson day in the District of Columbia.

What happened? It was reasonable to assume that such a famous native of Washington who has been instrumental in giving Washington so much free advertising through moving pictures and radio would be welcomed by several hundred persons upon arrival. However, the committee of four men and 10 beauty queens for atmosphere were the only ones present. Even the photographers were late, but finally got the usual shots in a few minutes.

Although the temperature was way down, Al was herded into an open car for a ride to the District Building, followed by two closed cars bearing the "queens." At the time of getting into the car Mr. Johnson was in tears. Whether it was the cold or the apathy of Washington to his arrival, I do not know. My guess is it was the latter.

Here is a warm-hearted man who has

## Letters for publication must bear the signature and address of the writer, although it is permissible for a writer known to The Star to use a nom de plume. Please be brief.

Sex-Crime Law Believed Working Effectively

To the Editor of The Star:

During its first year of quiet, steady, continuous enforcement, the District's sex-crime law seems to have justified its widespread reputation as "the best law of its kind in the country." Any statute that benefits not only the community but also the individual offender is worthy of a special niche in the legal and penological Hall of Fame.

More than that, however, the promotion and passage of this particular legislation evidences the fact that Washington, despite its rather complicated and ponderous legislative mechanism, can secure needed laws if the public is aroused. Congress is shown the need, and real teamwork is developed in the intervening promotional, educational and public relations processes. Nor is it necessary for such projects to drag along interminably. As we recall the history of this law, the elapsed time from inception to passage and Presidential signing was under a year.

This is a good example of what can be accomplished for the public good when laity and specialists get together on a proposal, and the Fourth Estate joins wholeheartedly in the effort. As regards this final category, The Star can take special pride in the effectiveness of its pioneer and notable support. We well and gratefully remember your excellent series of articles and your numerous effective editorials pointing up the importance and urgency of the problem.

No law, as has often been said, can hope to eliminate, wholly, the crime with which it is designed to cope. Washington will continue to have sex offenders, but we are assured, at least, that their number probably will tend to decrease and that society will have more efficient and intelligent protection from those whose backgrounds and mentalities indicate potential chronic malignancy in this field. Any statute providing such assurances surely can be counted a major community asset.

RAY H. EVERETT,

Executive Secretary, Social Hygiene Society.

## Comments The Star and Mr. Neely For Articles on Jet Airliners

To the Editor of The Star:

Please permit me to extend my heartfelt congratulations to you and to Frederick R. Neely for the two splendid articles appearing in the Star on November 13 and November 20, concerning the development of jet airliners in England and the United States.

The lucid explanation of the matter, obviously based on painstaking research, undoubtedly will be most helpful to a real understanding of the issues involved.

The Star and Mr. Neely have performed a valuable public service in providing the basis for sound thinking and the establishment of sound policy on a matter of vital concern to this country's aeronautical future.

E. E. MILLER.

## Disposal of Italian Colonies Discussed With Emphasis On Ethiopia

To the Editor of The Star:

The easy acceptance of the solution provided by the U. N. Congress of the disposal of the Italian colonies shows a decided variation in the principles this country has always stood for. In this matter, this country is stooping to the level of the prewar diplomacy of European countries, a decided contrast to the declared views of various leaders in this country. The average citizen shows little interest in this, but to make the U. N. work, it will have to give the fullest publicity to all details of its actions, and these details in turn should be given the fullest publicity among all member nations.

To return to the matter of the Italian colonies: These colonies were acquired by conquest—Eritrea and southern Somaliland from the Ethiopians and various Somali tribes. Italy had no right or justification to take them. Other European countries, notably England and France, acquired territory in the same area in the same way, and Ethiopia was cut off from the sea. Ethiopians had every reason to dislike the British and French, just as they disliked the Italians. When Mussolini came to power, he forced Ethiopia to ally herself with Britain and France. So in the past war, Ethiopia was an ally of ours, also. Her ruler excited considerable sympathy from the common people here, but higher circles seemed decidedly cool to him. Why?

No, in the peace talks, this country created a policy of obtaining as favorable a peace for Italy as can be arranged. But Russia blocked the settlement of the colonies problem, and in fact if it were left to some of our diplomatic bargainers, Italy would have received all her colonies back intact. During all this time, the common people here were not urged to make a decision affecting our foreign policy. Oh, no! Leave it all to the State Department.

So it goes to the U. N., a body supposed to be devoted to preserving and enhancing all of the highest ideals of mankind. Do they consider the wants of the people involved in their decision. Do they give them a chance to vote on what they want to go? Do they consider how they can get along if they become independent? No! They simply form a voting bloc and dispose of the problem. What a farce! Have they considered any colonial problems affecting other nations near the Italian colonies? Would Britain or France be offended if their portions of Somaliland would be given independence? Why doesn't the U. N. consider the problem of the Sudan, which belongs to the Egyptians, and which Britain has held for many years, and refuses to give up?

No, my dear Sir, I think you have the wrong idea, in company with many other people, when you say that the wishes of the Ethiopians have little political or economic weight. To be more correct, the delegates of the U. N. thought so, and you acquiesce, by implication, but it amounts to the same thing. You are simply going along, as we all are, with a policy in foreign affairs which has netted nothing but trouble in the past.

WILLIAM P. THOMAS, JR.

## Lax Legislation and Drinking Held Responsible for Crimes Against Children

To the Editor of The Star:

There are two reports of the brutal murder of little girls, one six years of age and one seven, in The Star of November 18.

One of the criminals said he had "been drinking all day."

These savage attacks upon children seem to be a common thing.

Men who will drink enough to put them in the condition of a savage, have not brains enough to be at large among people.

And what of legislators who allow intoxicating liquors to flow full and free to make savages of brainless men?

Let us not try to straighten out the affairs of foreign countries until we can prevent savagery at home.

H. B. BRADFORD.

## Cosmic Clouds Studied

By Carnegie Institution

Vast Aggregation of Minute Particles Floats Around Rotating Earth

By Thomas R. Henry

Cosmic clouds float around the rotating earth. They are a vast aggregation of innumerable minute particles—electrons, protons and nuclei of atoms—which constitute a hitherto unsuspected element of the solar system. Hydrogen nuclei have been detected in them, and they may consist chiefly of this mother gas of all creation.

These clouds may be "smoke puffs from the sun." They may have drifted into the solar system from far distant parts of the universe, or they may be something left over from creation. At present practically everything concerning them is a mystery which scientists of the Carnegie Institution of Washington are trying to clear at the institution's upper atmosphere research station at Derwood, Md.

## Radio Pulse Probe System

About the only way of studying them is through a system of radio pulse probes set up to analyze the bottom layer of the ionosphere, the three-layered electrical blanket around the earth which reflects a large band of radio waves and makes all long range broadcasting possible.

For this, extremely sensitive apparatus has been assembled to make more than 2,000 pulse probes an hour over a wide range of wavelengths. The minute fractions of seconds required for different wave lengths to be echoed back to earth, and the amount which returns, give much information which could be acquired in no other way.

Among the facts gathered thus far is that these clouds fall towards the bottom of the ionosphere at a rate of about a mile and a half a second. This gives no indication, however, of the speed with which they may be hurtling through space before they are gathered up by the earth's magnetic field. This may be as great as 40 miles a second.

## Positive and Negative

It is certain, Carnegie scientists say, that such cloud must consist of approximately equal numbers of positively and negatively charged particles. Otherwise they would blow up. They could not be held together by gravitational attraction.

Some of these clouds may be enormous. Others, there now is reason to believe, may not be more than a few miles in diameter. With the new system of radio probes it is expected that much will be learned of their frequency and their composition.

Recent researches are beginning to associate the lowest layer of the ionosphere with weather on the earth's surface. Observations of its behavior, it is believed, may give the earliest indications of coming weather changes. One comparison is to the surface of a stream flowing over a very rough bottom, the bottom in this case being the turbulent atmosphere directly above the earth's surface where weather phenomena become apparent.

## Questions and Answers

A reader can get the answer to any question of fact by writing The Evening Star Information Bureau, 316 E. Washington, Washington, D. C. Please enclose three (3) cents for return postage.