

SURGERY

# Surgery Promises Cure For Tropical Elephantiasis

**E**LEPHANTIASIS, the grotesquely disfiguring tropical disease, may yield to surgical treatment, it appears from investigations of Dr. F. W. O'Connor and colleagues at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and the Presbyterian Hospital in New York.

Filariasis is the scientific name for this tropical disease which so often causes disfigurement and disability by enormous enlargement of the limbs, from which it gets the popular name of elephantiasis.

The disease is caused by a worm called filaria. The larvae of this worm make their way into the body of man from the proboscis of certain mosquitoes at the time of sucking blood. Once in the body, they multiply and periodically produce embryos, the so-called microfilariae.

The worms may ultimately become so numerous and accumulate in such large numbers in one place that the circulation of lymph may be interfered with. The limbs and other parts of the body increase, in consequence, to enormous size.

Dr. O'Connor elicited from his patients the fact that there was often a small area where the pain was most intense. On removing tissue from such focal spots he found the worms in the

tissue. Later he found that the accumulations of worms could be located more exactly by X-ray photographs.

Surgical removal of the tissue containing the worms has resulted in disappearance of symptoms of filariasis in several cases in which the method has been tried.

*Science News Letter, December 20, 1930*

ARCHAEOLOGY

## Writings 2,000 Years Old Found By Asian Expedition

**A** NUMBER of important scripts dating back to the first Han dynasty, 206 B. C. to A. D. 25, have been found near Edsin Gol, the site of an old city mentioned by Marco Polo in his travels. The writings were discovered by Dr. Folke Bergman, archaeologist of the expedition directed by Dr. Sven Hedin, noted Swedish explorer.

Inscribed on wooden strips before the invention of paper, these writings deal mainly with the military campaigns of the early Han emperors in defending their empire against the invading Huns. The newly found writing are believed to be much older than anything of the kind previously known, and are expected to shed much light upon an historical period now very obscure.

*Science News Letter, December 20, 1930*



### Remember the Birds

**W**HEN you are preparing for your Christmas feast, remember also the birds. If there is enough snow to make you rejoice in an "old-fashioned Christmas," it will mean a harder Christmas for the birds, a great deal of whose living in winter depends on access to the ground. Therefore spare them the crumbs that fall from your table, which is really all that is required by these brothers of the adoption of St. Francis.

It is better not to scatter your alms for the birds on the ground. If there is snow, that makes the food less wholesome, and much of it is lost. And in any case, it exposes the little feasters to the onfall of cats, who know nothing of peace on earth at any season, nor aught of goodwill toward their fellow-creatures. Rig a flat box, preferably with a shelter from wind and snow, on top of a post. Or better even than that, hang it in the middle of a stretched wire, where it will be safe from pilfering squirrels as well as from murdering cats. And forget not a lump of suet, securely nailed or tied. Birds rejoice in suet as Christmas feasters do in a roast goose or a plum pudding.

We are promised a high reward if we remember the least of the brethren with a cup of cold water. Let us, however, extend our charity toward the little feathered ones just a little further. Warm the water, so that it may stand outdoors the longer before it freezes. And do not set it out in the same pan you have warmed it in: the hot rim may burn the birds' feet. Better attend to this gift of water twice a day if the weather is so cold as to freeze up other drinking places. Thirst is often a worse distress than hunger when the world is locked up in ice.

*Science News Letter, December 20, 1930*

## CONVENIENCE COUPON

for New or Renewal Subscription to Science News Letter

Send this coupon to Washington while you are thinking of it.

Science News Letter,  
21st and B,  
Washington, D. C.

Please  start  renew my subscription to Science News Letter. I am enclosing remittance as checked below:

- 2 years, \$7
- 1 year, \$5

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City and State \_\_\_\_\_

If this subscription is a renewal, check here . . . . .

