

ists, and those artists, painters and illuminating engineers faced with practical problems in the use of colors. The color council, made up of delegates from the constituent societies, and of private persons interested in the same program, will set about filling this gap.

At the same time the council will, by the spread of popularized information, promote a wider understanding of color problems.

Other officers of the new organization are: vice chairman, L. A. Jones of the staff of the Eastman Kodak Company and president of the Optical Society of America; secretary, M. Rea Paul of the National Lead Company; treasurer, A. E. O. Munsell, president of the Munsell Research Laboratories, Baltimore.

The cooperating bodies are as follows: American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists, American Chemical Society, American Oil Chemists' Society, American Pharmaceutical Association, American Society for Testing Materials, Illuminating Engineering Society, International Society of Master Painters and Decorators, National Academy of Design, N. Y. Museum of Science and Industry, Optical Society of America, Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industries, Textile Color Card Association of the U. S., and the U. S. Pharmacopeia.

Science News Letter, November 14, 1931

PHYSIOLOGY

Enzyme in Liver Makes Vitamin A from Carotene

AN ENZYME has been found in liver which transforms carotene, the yellow coloring matter of carrots, into vitamin A, Harold S. Olcott and Duane C. McCann of the State University of Iowa have just discovered.

The fact that carotene, which is found in other vegetables besides carrots, was changed to vitamin A in the body has been known to scientists for some time. The transformation has never before been performed outside the body, however.

Preliminary experiments showed that carotene was destroyed and vitamin A appeared when carotene was kept in a warm place for a time with fresh liver tissue from the bodies of rats that had lacked vitamin A. It was supposed that the reaction was due to an enzyme.

Further research, using a liver extract instead of fresh liver, proved this to be the case, the Iowa investigators report.

They suggested that the new enzyme should be called carotenase.

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DISCOVERERS

Gilbert LaBine, left, and Shirley R. Cragg, the mining engineers who used an airplane to locate the radium ore veins

METALLURGY

New Radium Find in Canada May Break Belgian Monopoly

THAT RADIUM to the value of several millions of dollars, just discovered in Canada, will break the Belgian world monopoly of this precious substance and speed up the relief of cancer victims is the opinion of competent mining experts in Washington.

The pitchblende treasure bearing \$7,000 worth of radium in every ton of ore, discovered by Gilbert LaBine and Shirley R. Cragg, airplane prospectors, of the El Dorado Mines Corporation at Labine Point in the Great Bear Lake region, is equal in richness to the best ores of the Belgian Congo, which since 1922 have driven all competitors, including the United States, from the market.

The new ore is here described by geologists as "a very substantial deposit of high grade material" yielding one three-hundredth of an ounce of radium per ton. Twenty tons have already been shipped on a fur steamer of the Mackenzie river and forty more tons mined ready for shipment at a cost which compares favorably with Belgian freight charges on the long passage from Africa to the refineries in Europe.

Hundred-pound lumps were actually picked up on the surface. The radium from these will yield \$70,000 a gram whereas the most valuable emeralds

fetch only \$5,000 a gram. Silver ore yielding \$300 a ton has been found alongside.

The Canadian discovery, consisting apparently of several thousand tons of ore, will add greatly to the world's present 600 gram total supply of radium. Treatment of cancer, until now hindered by the prohibitive prices, will be helped.

Science News Letter, November 14, 1931

METEOROLOGY

Egyptian "Dust Devils" Reported to be Orthodox

"DUST-DEVILS" of Egypt which seemed to have defied the world-wide rule that such upward moving columns of air whirl in a direction opposite to the hands of clocks, have had their non-conformity exorcised by J. Durward, weather observer at Heliopolis. Some of these little tornadoes rise only two feet above ground, carrying with them leaves and feathers.

Mr. Durward, in writing a letter to *Nature*, reported a study of the dust-devils and suggested that reports of clockwise rotation are due to the spectator forgetting that he is looking down on the little cyclone and not up.

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