

PUBLIC HEALTH

Six Million Children Without Enough to Eat

MEDICAL examination of one million children to see how their health and vigor have been affected by the depression is the aim of the U. S. Children's Bureau, urged at its Washington conference of scientists and relief workers to determine where and how these examinations are to be made. Funds for the examinations will not be forthcoming from the Federal Relief Administration.

Harry Hopkins, Federal Relief Administrator, told the conference that there are six million children in the country without enough to eat because their parents are "taking the licking in this depression." These children are known to relief agencies already. Their families are getting public assistance, to the extent that the whole family has fifty cents a day for all living expenses. The number of children getting private assistance is not known.

The thing to do is to feed these children, in Mr. Hopkins' opinion. Relief funds should be used to feed and clothe these children, and to pay for doctors and nurses when they are ill. In addition a certain amount of sickness prevention may be undertaken, such as furnishing toxin-antitoxin to prevent the development of diphtheria among the children "on relief." But apparent-

ly none of the Federal Relief Administration Funds will go for well baby clinics.

"I doubt if we have responsibility for baby health stations and clinics for health examinations," Mr. Hopkins specifically said.

The physical results of malnutrition in children are not the only ones to be considered, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt told the conference.

She urged consideration of what undernourishment resulting from the depression will do to the minds, characters and dispositions of American children. If children are undernourished they can take very little advantage of other things being offered by libraries, schools and playgrounds.

Science News Letter, October 21, 1933

ENGINEERING

400,000 Yards of Concrete In Feet of Boulder Dam

ONE OF THE first of many striking pictures that will undoubtedly come from the building of Boulder Dam is reproduced below. These massive columns of artificial stone are the feet upon which the dam will rise some 600 feet higher. You are looking down-



SOLID SKYSCRAPERS OF CONCRETE

stream into the river bottom made dry for construction by two temporary earth dams and diversion tunnels. (*SNL, Sept. 30, '33, p. 216*)

This forest of concrete columns has a width of almost 400 feet and a depth of about 650 feet. These are the dimensions of the dam at its base. At the crest, the 650 feet shrink to a thickness of 45 feet and the 400 feet expand to 1,180 along a huge semi-circle.

The concrete work shown in the picture, which was taken at the end of September, has a volume of about 400,000 cubic yards. When completed the dam alone will contain 3,400,000 cubic yards of concrete and the dam, power plant and appurtenant works, 4,400,000 yards.

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ENTOMOLOGY

Entomologist Doubts Bee's Aid to Comrade

WILL a bee really come to the aid of a drowning comrade?

W. R. Walton, of the Bureau of Entomology, U. S. Department of Agriculture, controverts a story of such an occurrence, which was reported to *Science* by Prof. H. R. Phalen of St. Stephens College, New York, and retold in the *SCIENCE NEWS LETTER* (See *SNL*, Oct. 7, 1933, p. 233). Prof. Phalen said that he saw a drowning bee in a bird bath seized and towed ashore by another bee.

Commenting on this, Mr. Walton stated:

"Without doubt, Prof. Phalen tells the facts exactly as he saw and interpreted them but what really occurred, I believe, was as follows: As the drowning bee struggled back-downward on the surface of the water, a robber fly, member of the dipterous family *Asilidae*, probably the species *Mallophora clausicella*, which looks amazingly like a honeybee, swooped down, grasped the bee, and carrying her off to the surrounding shrubbery, proceeded to make a meal of her. Much to the chagrin of beekeepers, these bee-like robber flies sometimes assume the habit of lurking around the entrances of the beehives, there to 'rescue' many a bee from its life of sordid toil.

"Entomologists, I believe, would readily accept my version of this incident, but students of animal behavior very probably will proceed to expatiate upon Prof. Phalen's story in centuries to come."

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