



JUST ONE

A single crown root of a wild oat plant 80 days old. Total length of roots shown here measures more than 300 miles.

troublesome weed as its relative, quack grass, has done. In general, Mr. Pavlychenko holds, it is a most desirable type of plant immigrant.

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Science News Letter, May 8, 1937

A series of English books for Chinese readers is being prepared in China, using 850 common English words.

Drinking through straws is an idea as old as 1400 B. C., for people in Syria drank beverages that might contain dregs by inserting a copper tube with holes in it in the clay drinking jar and putting a long bent reed inside that.

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MEDICINE

Much Spring Hay Fever Due to Plantain Pollen

SPRING hay fever has been thought of largely as grass hay fever, and doctors have been treating it with grass pollen extract.

Now come Drs. George I. Blumstein and Louis Tuft of the allergy clinic at Temple University, Philadelphia, with the news that 20 per cent. of the spring sneezers may attribute their trouble not to the grasses but to plantain.

By mixing some plantain pollen with the grass pollen extract, physicians and their hay fever patients may both be happier over the results, an article in *the Journal of the American Medical Association*, (May 1) states.

English or narrow-leaved plantain is a worse culprit than the common or broad-leaved plantain, because it is more abundant. As a pollen producer it ranks right along with the best of the grasses.

Plantain pollination begins about May 15 and continues until early September, but after July 1 the amounts are small.

The pollen grains on the plantain flower are hung in such a fashion that the slightest jar shakes them off and they float out into the air.

These Philadelphia physicians studied

a group of 150 sufferers from all types of hay fever and found that only 7.7 per cent. of them were sensitive to plantain pollen.

When they took a group of 70 patients with spring hay fever, however, they learned that plantain was a factor in 20 per cent. of the cases.

Timothy and ragweed pollens bear no relationship to those of plantain, it was found.

Use of the dry pollen nasal test is an invaluable aid in arriving at a correct diagnosis of plantain hay fever, especially when grass hay fever exists in the same individual, these investigators learned.

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ANTHROPOLOGY

Expedition Seeks Mummies Threatened By Foxes

RESCUING ancient mummies from hungry foxes is one aim of a Smithsonian Institution expedition now preparing to start for Alaska.

The expedition, led by Dr. Ales Hrdlicka, noted anthropologist, will return to the Aleutian Islands, off Alaska, where last year they found some of the elusive mummy caves that were once scenes of strange Aleutian Island burials.

Salvaging the mummy bundles is of great interest, scientifically, because they shed light on physical type and cultural possessions of little-known early inhabitants of America, in the far north. Danger to the mummies is becoming acute, because fox farms are established on the islands. Famished foxes find the mummy caves, and devour the hides that wrap the mummies, gnawing and scattering the bones. Souvenir hunters have also risked their necks to land on the craggy islands to plunder the old burials.

Dr. Hrdlicka is seeking evidence particularly on migration routes taken by early people who entered America from Asia. Bering Strait was the main crossing point, but the Aleutian Islands, which swing like stepping stones across from Asiatic waters toward Alaska, may have been a secondary route, according to one theory.

Dr. Hrdlicka, assisted by volunteer college students, will explore two large ancient towns in the Aleutian Islands, never visited by white men, so far as is known. In ruins of these towns, which lie in the western part of the island chain, he may find new evidence to solve the old migration riddle.

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