

paleontology, Buffalo Museum of Science. The specimen, along with its restoration, is now on display in that Museum. Thirteen inches long, about half the maximum length attained by the species, the specimen shows the underside of the left half of the animal, the right half being missing.

This fossil marine animal, dating back to Devonian times, about 250 million years ago, was found in the Onondaga limestone of the Fogelsanger Quarry in Buffalo's suburb, Williamsville. Since

very little of the specimen showed when it was found, much laborious chipping was involved to bring it to light. It has created great interest because previously no uncrushed body segments were known, and restorations had been made only from fragments.

The restoration pictured on page 132 was made by Paul Marchand, staff artist, under Mr. Reimann's direction. It is 20 inches long.

Science News Letter, February 27, 1943

PSYCHOLOGY

Causes of Absenteeism

Fatigue, friction between individuals, and poor morale contribute largely to time lost, including that blamed on trivial illnesses.

➤ ABSENTEEISM in war plants, an extremely serious problem wherever it occurs, is often due to psychological causes.

They are extremely varied and can be different not only for each plant but for each department.

Time lost may be due to fatigue. Even where the work week is kept to a reasonable length, certain individuals may be putting in more hours than the average. Or they may be working at great tension to keep their individual production high. Rest periods should be enforced for such self-starting and self-pushing workers. Otherwise, they will suddenly go stale and will take time off without warning, disrupting the work of others.

Minor illnesses contribute to time lost. These may be so slight as not to be reported as illness—colds, headaches, indigestion and other such trivial ills will make workers late or off the job for mere fractions of a day, but these fractions add up. Such slight illnesses are often due to fatigue, but often they represent a kind of mental friction in the human machinery.

Petty irritations over working conditions, uncongenial companions, unreasonable or untactful supervisors can all result in such physical upsets. And where nervous tension is high, as it tends to be in wartime, a sharp word spoken thoughtlessly by a supervisor can produce a storm of tears or temper in an employee and with it time off in the infirmary or washroom to recover poise.

Such states of friction may not even be realized wholly by the workers. It is

quite possible that a supervisor or trouble-making employee can be disliked without any surface show of the hatred produced. It shows up, indirectly, however, in the time-lost reports. The accident rate is likely to be high, headaches and colds frequent, oversleeping common.

The mechanics of living becomes increasingly difficult in wartime. It is harder without a car to do personal errands, shop for the family, get to the bank, and so on. Anything that can be done to provide community meals, community services, convenient shopping centers will help to reduce absenteeism in war plants.

But probably chief among the psychological causes of absenteeism is low morale. Workers too often these days do not know what they are working on and what it has to do with the war. Necessary secrecy may keep the workers producing a vital part from knowing how it is to be used or where. Production in one plant jumped tremendously when the workers found out that the mysterious plastic something they had been producing was used by General Doolittle in his famous raid on Tokyo. Main contributor to high morale is the feeling that the work being done is of major importance, that the worker's part in the war effort is recognized, and that each individual is considered necessary and missed when he is absent.

Science News Letter, February 27, 1943

United States *soldiers* eat approximately twice as much as civilians.

MEDICINE

TB Research Initiated As Result of Army X-Raying

➤ A NEW tuberculosis research program has been initiated as a result of the chest X-rays for detection of tuberculosis given the millions of men entering the armed forces, Dr. William Charles White, chairman of the National Tuberculosis Association's committee on medical research, announces.

The research is being done under the direction of Dr. Carroll E. Palmer and Dr. Herman E. Hilleboe, of the U. S. Public Health Service, with financial aid from the National Tuberculosis Association.

Student nurses in general hospitals will be the guinea pigs of this war-inspired research. The object is to discover the constitutional factors that decide whether or not a person will be able to resist the tuberculosis germ invasion. Student nurses were selected for the study because they are subjected to frequent contact with actual cases of tuberculosis and can be examined at short intervals during their three years period of training.

Only when the factors of constitutional resistance are known, Dr. White declared, will doctors know how to prescribe the right treatment for each individual case of tuberculosis. At present, the only safe procedure for all cases in the earliest stages is immediate and complete rest in bed.

How to prescribe the right treatment for each man rejected by the armed forces because of very early tuberculosis is, Dr. White said, the most pressing current tuberculosis problem.

Science News Letter, February 27, 1943

A five pound *meteorite* was found in Vermont near South Strafford in August 1942; the first reported for that State.

● RADIO

Saturday, March 6, 1:30 p.m., EWT

"Adventures in Science," with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over Columbia Broadcasting System.

Dr. C. C. Little, managing director of the American Society for the Control of Cancer, will discuss "The Scope and Trends of Cancer Research."

Monday, March 1, 9:15 a.m., EWT; 2:30 p.m., CWT; 9:30 a.m., MWT; and 1:30 p.m., PWT

Science at Work, School of the Air of the Americas over the Columbia Broadcasting System, presented in cooperation with the National Education Association, Science Service and Science Clubs of America.

"The Chemistry of Courage" will be the subject of the program.