

whole soils any longer. As a rule, only the mineral particles, ranging in size from coarse gravel to sand, are all that remain. These have been likened to the skeleton of the soil; they are more or less analogous to the fossilized bones that are usually the only remains we find of extinct animals. Missing is the "flesh" of the old soils—the finer clay particles and the organic humus that form the soil colloids. Missing also is the soil solution—the "blood" of the soil.

Yet despite the skeletonized condition of these fragments of ancient soils, it is possible to make some kind of legitimate inferences regarding the forest floors trodden by the dinosaurs, and the plains where the offspring of little Eohippus grew up into horses.

Science News Letter, March 20, 1943

METALLURGY

British Metallurgists Award Platinum Medal

► THE MEDAL of the Institute of Metals has been presented to a former president of the Institute, Dr. Harold Moore, C. B. E., director of the British Non-Ferrous Metals Research Association, a leader in industrial research in England, a communication just received in the United States reports.

The medal is unique in that it is made of pure platinum.

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SPACE-SAVING MEALS — These tiny packets contain large quantities of food for shipment to hungry Europe.

PUBLIC HEALTH

DI Men Avert Strike

Scientific detective force from U. S. Public Health Service tracks down the causes of skin diseases in more than 50 war plants.

► A THREATENED strike in a Seattle shipyard recently was averted by the DI men of the U. S. Public Health Service, the Office of War Information announced.

The DI men of the federal health service, (DI meaning "dermatoses investigation") are the six doctors specializing in skin disease and the one chemist who, under the leadership of Dr. Louis Schwartz, medical director of the Public Health Service, make up its Dermatoses Investigation Section.

This scientific detective force has tracked down the causes of skin disease threatening to cripple war production and prevented further outbreaks in more than 50 government and privately-owned arsenals and war plants.

Before these doctor-detectives went to work, almost 15% of the workers handling explosives in these plants suffered from some form of industrial dermatitis.

The strike threat in the Seattle shipyard came when electricians who had developed a skin eruption learned that they were working with cable made by a copper company where occupational hazards resulting in some deaths had recently been reported.

Plant officials persuaded the workers to stay on the job until a Public Health

Service DI man could arrive to investigate. Dr. Schwartz flew to Seattle, examined the workers suffering from "cable rash" and proved almost immediately that the cause was the chlorinated compound in which the cable was packed. He recommended precautionary measures which were put into practice at once. The strike was avoided and the workers protected.

A unique case recently solved by Public Health's DI men was an unusual skin rash which developed in two State Department clerical employees in Washington. Prior to the rash these employees had been sorting mail from India. The pouch in which this mail had arrived also contained glass tubes of oil samples which had broken and spilled over the documents in the sack. The DI men found by special tests that this oil contained an irritant which had caused the rash.

Government photographers, Navy Yard machinists, Bureau of Engraving printers and building trades' laborers are some of the members of Uncle Sam's wartime force of civil service employees served by Public Health's DI men in addition to industrial plant workers all over the nation.

Science News Letter, March 20, 1943

PSYCHOLOGY

Color-Blind Family

Father and two sons have among them three different types of color-blindness. Father is completely blind to violet end of spectrum.

► A FATHER and two sons who among them exhibit all the three known types of color-blindness were described by Dr. Dean Farnsworth of New York University at the meeting of the Optical Society of America in New York.

The father is violet-blind. He confuses violet with yellow, blue with green, and orange with red-purple. One son is red-blind. The other is green-blind.

Violet-blindness by itself is extremely rare. Dr. Farnsworth mentioned only

two conspicuous previous cases investigated in this country. One was of quite a different type, he said, and the other was not adequately investigated. However, he believes that violet-blindness is not so rare as generally supposed, that a number of cases have escaped detection because of inadequacy of the color-blindness tests.

Another rare feature of the present case is that the father is completely blind to the violet edge of the rainbow. He