

BIOLOGY-PSYCHOLOGY

Hand and Head a Unit

An understanding of the interdependence of mind and body in performing the world's work is necessary to solve present labor difficulties, leading biologist says.

► IF EVERY labor leader as well as every manager of industry realized that the hands that do the work and the minds that also work and plan are parts of the human body that depend upon each other, present labor difficulties would come closer to solution in the opinion of Dr. William E. Ritter, Emeritus Professor of Biology of the University of California and Honorary President of Science Service.

"The present serious outbreak of labor troubles must depend in part for its remedy on education, regardless of what may be undertaken by legislation and other political means," Dr. Ritter said. "As the discussions of the ideals of unity have been carried on, these refer to social, national and international unity. But from the educational point of view, perhaps the most important thing is the unity of the individual himself. No aspect of this is more crucial than that

of the age-old disruptive duality of mind and body. So far as philosophy and theology are concerned, the individual is a house divided against itself. Psychobiology calls attention, however, to the fact that mind and body, with hands as a climactic aspect of the body, form a unity of such a nature that the attempt to separate them can result in nothing less than intellectual and spiritual disintegration.

"If every person who should become a leader in industrial labor were to be adequately conscious of what he and every one of those whom he leads really is—a unit—his attitude would be quite different from what is now being manifested in labor troubles. This would be equally true of owners and managers of the industries. It appears that there would be a basis for the leaders of the two aspects to get together for considering their mutual interests and their dis-

agreements. The meliorating conditions would not be applicable only to economic problems, but to all political organization and effort so far as government has to do with economic and industrial matters."

Dr. Ritter explained that recent investigation in psycho-biology has shown that the cooperative activity of all the most important parts of the organism, head and hands with the rest, has a scientific basis. If we had not human brains and mind, we would not have human hands and if we had not human hands we would not have human brains and mind.

The skilled surgeon using his head and hands in combination is just as much a laborer as the man or woman who works as a mechanic in the production lines of bombers and tanks and other machines. Dr. Ritter pointed out that both of them would be unable to do their tasks in life if it were not for the fact that they use their heads and hands in combination.

Science News Letter, July 24, 1943

MEDICINE

Recovery Hastened by X-ray Used on Painful Shoulder

► PATIENTS suffering and disabled with a painful shoulder condition technically called acute subdeltoid bursitis can be back at work within 48 hours when treated with X-rays, Dr. Arthur A. Brewer of Alton, Ill., and Dr. Oscar C. Zink of St. Louis report (*Journal of the American Medical Association*, July 17).

There is no definite cause for the condition, but overuse and unaccustomed use of the arm are frequently factors. Typists, one authority found, were more often afflicted than clerks.

A typical case reported was that of a typist who had each shoulder involved at different times. On one occasion the condition was treated with diathermy and heat applications. She was completely disabled for a month and was a hospital patient for three weeks. When the other shoulder became involved, she had X-ray treatment and was back at work before the end of 48 hours.

The same results of X-ray treatment of acute bursitis in other patients, the doctors report, are obtained in a high percentage of cases. The pain frequently gets worse during the first eight to 24 hours after the treatment but then promptly grows much less. A sling for the arm and analgesics are therefore given following the treatment.

Science News Letter, July 24, 1943



BETTER MAPS—The soldier, using photographs made from airplanes, constructs and corrects maps by use of the Abrams Vertical Sketchmaster, which adjusts the pictures to the proper scale.