

NUTRITION

Greenland's Plight Spurs Red Cross to Send Scout

Six Weeks' Survey Will Be Made to Determine Food Needs of Eskimos Cut Off from Denmark

WHILE the American Red Cross dispatches an investigator to Greenland via the Coast Guard cutter *Comanche* to find out what supplies are needed to keep alive Greenlanders cut off by fortunes of war from Denmark, in Washington a nutritionist is working the island's food problem on paper.

It is all part of preparedness, in case the United States takes part in sending a food ship to the isolated northern island.

The survey in Greenland will be made by Michael R. Reddy, Red Cross assistant national director of disaster relief.

Checking long lists of supplies that Denmark has customarily sent to its distant colony, Miss Melva Bakkie, nutritionist of the American Red Cross, is translating Danish foods into equivalents which America might ship. It is complicated arithmetic. It involves converting tons and gallons of meats and dairy supplies into a list of our available foods which would presumably provide enough vitamins, minerals, fats,

proteins, and carbohydrates to ward off serious malnutrition.

In the lists of Danish exports to Greenland last year, Miss Bakkie finds such items as 900 tons of corn meal, 8.7 tons of barley, 6.7 tons of wheat, 88 tons of rice grits, 210 tons of potatoes, 414 tons of sugar, 24 tons of pork, 19 tons of frozen beef, 29 tons of coffee, 4.5 tons of chocolate, 8 tons of cabbage, 22 tons of butter in casks and cans, 88,000 eggs, 106 tons of confections.

Most urgently dependent on outside food supplies are the 400 Danes who live in Greenland. They are said to eat little Eskimo food, which is so different from the diet to which continental Europeans are accustomed.

Greenland's 16,000 Eskimos, while less dependent on outside food sources so long as hunting is good, fall back more heavily on trading posts for food, when gales or other catastrophes prevent them from fending for themselves. If a post's stores are low, then the natives may be

in for a bad winter. Denmark has held a monopoly of Greenland trade, sending supplies only during the months from March to October, when ships can reach Greenland without icebreaker convoy.

"We do not know exactly, what proportion of food sent to Greenland has been vitally needed to keep Danes and Eskimos going," explained Miss Bakkie. This will be learned by Mr. Reddy.

"The trade list of foods has included such obvious luxury items as 1,000 pounds of canned sardines, anchovies, and herring, 2.3 tons of liver paste, 500 pounds of bouillon—single items in a year's supplies of many tons of more basic food, but evidence that the Danes, at least, in Greenland have imported some of their food for variety and attractiveness."

Science News Letter, May 18, 1940

ZOOLOGY

Rabbits Most Ancient Of Living Known Mammals

RABBITS, together with the opossums, are the most ancient of the living known mammals on our continent, dating back to Eocene times some 30,000,000 to 40,000,000 years ago. This is one of the incidental findings in the great exploration of ancient life on this America which has centered around Dr. William B. Scott, professor emeritus of geology at Princeton, who in our time has greatly extended science's knowledge of the animals of the past, both those whose descendants are now living and those whose lines have become extinct.

Science News Letter, May 18, 1940

PUBLIC HEALTH

New Respirator Protects Against Dust Hazards

NEW defense against dust and pollen is a light and efficient filtering device over nose and mouth combined with goggles to protect the eyes designed by W. H. Lehmborg, an American Optical Company scientist. It promises to do its part in fighting silicosis and hay fever. Approved by the U. S. Bureau of Mines, the new mask weighs but an ounce and a half. It excludes particles of dust as small as one micron, 1/25,000 of an inch, and has a new self-equalizing double headband which holds the mask securely but comfortably regardless of the position of the head.

Science News Letter, May 18, 1940

India, with its 239,000,000 Hindus, has a minority of 80,000,000 Moslems.



NOT A GOBLIN

This strange figure at the left shows how the wearer of Dr. Lehmborg's new respirator looked after coal dust was blown directly into his face for a test. With respirator removed, the pattern on his face indicates the protection afforded mouth and nose.