and ability to run a mile in seven minutes.

When the complete test of 14 items was given to 2,628 men entering the University of Illinois, more than one-third (35.84%) failed to pass; almost one-fourth (23.71%) were classed as near failures; about two-fifths (40.45%) passed. In this same group 679 men (26.55%) could not swim at all and an additional two-fifths of the group could swim 75 feet but not as much as 100 yards.

Science News Letter, January 22, 1944

ENGINEERING

Prefabricated Houses Are Taken Down and Shipped

➤ MOVING TIME in Kingsford Heights, Ind., has a strange new wartime pattern, these days. Not the furniture, but the houses—200 of them—are being taken apart, packed, shipped, and then set up again, ready for housekeeping in Port Clinton, Ohio.

This first large-scale moving of prefabricated houses is being studied by Federal Public Housing Authority specialists in order to determine future policy for construction and transfer of these portable units.

Approximately 15% of the asphalt roofing had to be replaced when the houses were reassembled in Ohio, an investigator of the housing agency reported. This was a surprisingly low replacement figure, as the housing specialists anticipated a 50% loss. Interior partitions made of a cardboard product containing crushed rock did not take the punishment of the demounting, moving and re-erecting nearly as well as did the plywood partitions.

After the nail holes were puttied and the walls repainted, the transported houses looked as good as new, a government investigator stated.

Of the 2,960 prefabricated houses originally built in Kingsford Heights, 1,200 are to be moved to areas where they are more urgently needed. After the present shipment of 200 houses is completed, consideration will be given to the transfer of the remaining units.

Science News Letter, January 22, 1944

HIDDEN SOIL HORIZONS—These layered records of the past, brought to light again by erosion, give evidence, Dr. Lowdermilk believes, of pulsations of climate way back in Pleistocene times many thousands of years ago.

AGRICULTURE

China Looks Forward

Her people are well fed, and are modernizing field management to get even better crops, according to U. S. Soil Conservation Service expert back from year in Orient.

See Front Cover

➤ THE PEOPLE of Free China are well fed and their morale is high, though like everybody else they don't want the war to go on a day longer than necessary, reported Dr. Walter C. Lowdermilk, of the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, who recently returned from a year's scientific work in the western lands of the fighting Republic of the Orient. He and his American associates made a thorough study of Chinese land use and soil erosion problems, and offered suggestions toward their possible solution.

The exceedingly fine-grained, fertile soils of much of western and northwestern China are of the type known as loess, resembling soils of the same name found in our own Midwest and Pacific Northwest. They are easy to cultivate and yield good crops, but they are also extremely susceptible to erosion by both wind and water. In the valleys and on the lower slopes they have been under cultivation for perhaps 4,000 years; up toward the hilltops, for only a few centuries.

Pressure of cultivation on the soil of China has been especially severe in the last few generations, Dr. Lowdermilk pointed out; in the last century the population of the country has multiplied three-fold.

Chinese farmers do not need to be educated in terracing, Dr. Lowdermilk stated; for centuries they have been building terraces to hold the soil of sloping fields. They also have some very practical tricks of their own in the business of damming gullies. However, the American techniques of strip-cropping and basin-listing are new to them, and can be profitably introduced into Chinese field management. When Dr. Lowdermilk and his group set up some demonstration fields, the neighboring farmers took notice of them immediately and came around to ask help in getting the new methods started on their own land.

"The Chinese farmer is not a hidebound traditionalist," Dr. Lowdermilk explained. "He is a conservative because he has to be. He has little land, and knows he must get (*Turn to page 58*)