

MEDICINE

Scurvy Returned to U. S. With the Depression Diets

President of American Academy of Pediatrics Sounds Warning to Colleagues of Diet Deficiency Disease

PHYSICIANS in this country thought scurvy was ancient history. It was so extraordinary for a baby to have it that medical students were shown the pop-eyes, bleeding gums, and tender legs of a tiny scurvy patient as something very rare in a doctor's experience.

There was rickets in the United States for baby specialists to cope with. But scurvy was a disease of malnutrition to read about in books.

"It is hard to be rudely awakened from so happy a dream," says Dr. Thomas B. Cooley, president of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Sounding the warning of this returning "curse"—as nutritionists feelingly call it—Dr. Cooley has written as follows to the American Child Health Association:

"When some three years ago, we began to see that our annual case of scurvy at the Children's Hospital had grown to five or six cases severe enough to need hospitalization, we looked upon the increase as probably accidental and temporary. In this we were wrong, for as the depression deepened, we found that 'thick and fast they came at last, and more and more and more,' until we came to realize that we were seeing in a few weeks' time more scurvy than an ordinarily experienced pediatricist would have expected to encounter in a lifetime."

Dr. Cooley plainly calls scurvy a by-product of the depression. Its serious malnutrition symptoms come from lack of vitamin C. So many of the fruits and vegetables contain this vitamin that adults and children of school age are apt to get enough vitamin C to escape lasting damage. But if the baby's orange juice or tomato juice are crossed off the market list in hard times, and he goes too long on milk and water, the harm, says Dr. Cooley, "may well be irreparable."

"The baby's cocktail hour was supposed to be even more universally observed than that of the parents," Dr. Cooley comments, thinking of the prosperous era when every family seemed to be enlightened on baby feeding.

Now his own state, Michigan, is mak-

ing a special health drive through its officials and child specialists, to put the deficiency diseases "back in their proper place."

The baby's needed ration of juice is small, but if the family cannot buy even the minimum in oranges or tomatoes, nutritionists can suggest other foods that will serve. Juice extracted from freshly ground or grated turnips, rutabaga, or cabbage compares favorably with tomato juice in the valuable vitamin C. And for the older preschool child there are many raw vegetables which may be chopped fine for suitable sandwich fillings of the protective vitamin.

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PALEONTOLOGY

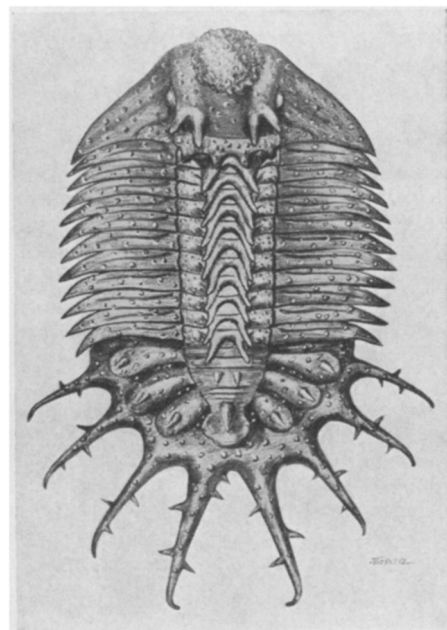
Giant Crab-like Fossil Found Near Buffalo

REMAINS of a 250 million year old giant crab-like creature, largest of its kind ever found, have been discovered in an abandoned quarry at Williamsville, near Buffalo.

More than two feet long, the creature once scuttled across the bottom of a shallow tropical sea that in Devonian times rolled over the present site of Buffalo. Scientists call it a trilobite, dignified with the name of *Terataspis grandis*. This particular kind has never previously been reported from western New York.

It is very ornate in structure, being decorated with a fringe of long, thorny spines around the tail piece while the head has on it a large wart-covered globe behind which is a second fringe of smooth spines. The head and the tail piece, with a few fragments of some of the body segments, were discovered by Irving G. Reiman, curator of geology at the Buffalo Museum of Science, while on a Sunday afternoon field trip.

Hundreds of geologists, amateur and professional alike, have searched the Williamsville quarry over a period of nearly a century, in an effort to unriddle the story told in its massive limestones. They have collected literally thousands of



GIANT AMONG TRILOBITES

Restoration sketch of the largest trilobite ever found, a two-foot specimen, elaborately ornamented, discovered in a quarry near Buffalo.

specimens including many small trilobites, none more than two inches long. But all overlooked this giant of the species, which was in plain view.

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Spectroscope Is Used to Study Types of Sunburn

THE SPECTROSCOPE, instrument that analyzes the light of stars, chemicals and other industrially useful things, promises to tell why some skins sunburn with rashes and splotches and others just redden and tan.

To the Massachusetts Institute of Technology conference on spectroscopy, Dr. Harold F. Blum of the University of California explained the use of the spectroscope to study various kinds of sensitivity of human skin to light.

Normal skin is sensitive only to that light which ordinarily produces sunburn and then tanning, he said, but some skins possess some special pigments which respond to light with various rashes and splotching. By sorting sunlight with a spectroscope, he was able to filter it and determine the exact wave lengths which caused particular rashes. This may suggest possible cures, although no progress in this direction has been made as yet.

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