

for the energy of beta ray emission. "These results," they say in their journal report, "constitute a definite disproof of the hypothesis of heavy beta-particles."

Their analysis of the work of Champion say Prof. Ruark and Mr. Jones, "have no bearing on the possibility that the heavy particles reported in cosmic-

ray experiments are electrons of exceptional rest mass."

What they are questioning is the correctness of applying a hypothesis for cosmic ray energies of a billion and more electron-volts to the lesser degree of energy that exists in radioactive disintegrations.

Science News Letter, February 19, 1938

MEDICINE

Know Arthritis Type Before Pulling Teeth, Dentist Warns

THE VEXING and much disputed question of whether or not to pull teeth in treating arthritis or rheumatism, to call it by its old-fashioned name, depends to some extent on the type of arthritis in any given case. This is the opinion of Dr. George F. O'Brien of Loyola University School of Medicine.

If the patient has osteo-arthritis, infection is not a factor and the dentist's job, Dr. O'Brien thinks, is one of preservation. The patient's "chewing capacity" must be preserved or improved. Wholesale removal of teeth will not benefit him, since his nutrition will suffer and anything that interferes with his general condition will aggravate the arthritis. It seems to Dr. O'Brien far more logical to do constructive dental work, if at all possible, than to risk the immediate shock or the malnutrition and other effects that may result later from the patient's inability to manage plates and false teeth if his own are removed.

For the type of arthritis known to physicians as non-specific infectious arthritis, the question of pulling teeth depends on whether the physician and

dentist believe teeth can be a focus of the infection that is causing the arthritis.

The chief battleground is the pulpless tooth that shows no signs of trouble in X-ray pictures. These teeth may give trouble even if the X-ray does not show anything suspicious, and even if not infected at the time of examination, they may become so later. If physician and dentist agree that such teeth are possible sources of danger, there seems no reason, Dr. O'Brien believes, for pulling only one such tooth and leaving the rest in.

There is also little point, in Dr. O'Brien's opinion, in removing teeth if other foci of infection, such as in tonsils and certain glands, are not removed.

Science News Letter, February 19, 1938

There are about four earthquakes a day in Japan.

It takes a human being's eyes about 25 years to complete their development.

Ancient Rome, like modern Italy, had its youth organization of boys who paraded in military style.

EUGENICS

Sterilization Would Not Wipe Out Mental Disease

STERILIZATION of the mentally abnormal would not abolish mental disease, Dr. James Page of the University of Rochester and Dr. Carney Landis of the New York Psychiatric Institute have concluded after a study of conditions in Europe and the United States. It would not even greatly reduce the future incidence, they believe.

The difficulty with a sterilization program, these scientists say, is that less than half the patients admitted to mental hospitals are suffering from mental diseases that are hereditary. Most of those who do inherit their illnesses are the children of parents who were latent carriers of the disease but themselves outwardly normal and therefore not touched by sterilization programs.

Denial that the present complexity of life has resulted in any alarming increase in mental disease is made by these investigators. The increase in both America and Europe has been slight, they said. In New York, the moderate increase that has occurred is primarily among old people.

Science News Letter, February 19, 1938

A case of leprosy that developed 43 years after exposure to the disease has been discovered in Scotland.

A LONG BLAST

No lives were lost, not even of civilians, when this blast was loosed, for the prosaic purpose of digging a ditch under water in the Susquehanna river for the laying of a pipe line. The picture was made by Du Pont Company photographers while the explosion was literally at its height.

