

would appear to the writer that a distinction can be drawn between the static agent on the one hand, and the moving agent on the other.

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A POSSIBLE FACTOR IN THE INCREASING INCIDENCE OF GOITER

IN my surveys of industrial hygiene I have noted that at some of the salt works in Ohio, where the material is obtained from deep wells (which in pioneer days were widely known springs, and the gathering points of men and animals), bromine, and a trace of iodine, are separated out of the purified product, sodium chloride, and bromine sold as a by-product. I suspect that in inland countries, Nature's chief source of iodine has been in connection with these salt springs, wells, and "licks," and that perhaps this change to a deep source of salt and this purification has resulted in the quite complete absence of iodine from our daily condiment when obtained from inland manufacturers, that is, in package or carton through the avenues of commerce.

It is well known that sea salt, some sea foods, and sea growths contain iodine. Also there is only a limited amount of goiter among dwellers along the seas. Furthermore, in former times a considerable part of the salt used has been sea salt, simply crystallized, and not necessarily pure sodium chloride separated from the other halogen salts.

At first this theory does not seem plausible in connection with the historical incidence of goiter, cretinism, and other manifestations of hypo-thyroidism, noted in the Alps and associated mountain regions, wherein are located some of the largest salt mines in the world. However, Molinari in his "Inorganic Chemistry," as translated by Dr. Ernest Fielmann (1912), takes occasion to explain that while these great salt beds were originally naturally deposited from sea waters, they have had the composition of the deposits very materially changed during the ages, through the varying solubilities of the halogen compounds (sodium iodide being particularly soluble and therefore among the first to be washed out through the influence of percolating wa-

ters). Hence perhaps inhabitants of these regions, getting their salt from these localities, have been bereft of the associated iodine component so essential to the human economy.

As is well known, Marine and Kimball published remarkable effects of the administration of a few grains of sodium iodide several times a year to school children as a prophylaxis in goiter.¹ After communication with two or three authorities I am convinced that this suggestion concerning goiter has not been heretofore considered. Also in an investigation of literature at hand, I have been unable to find that any consideration has been given to the influence of a condiment composed of whole sea salts upon goitrous conditions. Should any one be so informed, I shall be pleased to hear from him, inasmuch as I have determined to spend a little time this summer in investigating the subject from the industrial end.

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THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF COUNTRY PLANNING

FOLLOWING in the wake of city planning now comes country planning. As the face of the country differs from the face of the city, so country planning in some respects will differ from city planning. The social aspects of the planning idea as applied to country living conditions, are so important that a study of these aspects should rank as a sociological contribution of the first order.

Such a study is under way in the Division of Farm Life Studies, Office of Farm Management and Farm Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture. The first step in the study is finding out the location of a few of the best instances or examples of outdoor country art and country planning in the United States—especially instances arising from the initiative of farm or village populations. The next step is to obtain a description and history of each from the person who has been connected with, or has close personal

¹ *Jour. Amer. Med. Assoc.*, Vol. 71, No. 26, pp. 2155, Dec., 1918.

knowledge of, the enterprise. This fund of information will give a basis for studying the social effects upon the farm population itself, and of estimating the special value of a policy of country planning in the development of country life in America.

The kinds of examples of country planning which the division of Farm Life Studies is particularly desirous of locating are as follows: Country parks (not State or Federal) for country people, outside villages and cities; public reserves in the country, that is, spots of natural beauty or of historic interest reserved for public use either through private benefaction or by local government; "gateways" to town or village from the farming country—that is, improved fringes of towns and villages, where highways lead from the farms planned and maintained through private or public means; colonization planning by land companies, which provides beforehand for better adjustments of rural community life; special outdoor art features, such as may be illustrated by certain farm athletic fields, farm roadside tree plantings, country bulletin boards, country cemeteries, community buildings, detachment of farm houses from farm work by screening effects.

The technical landscaping phases of country planning are promoted by the Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture. The technical side of country planning, highly important indeed in its place, is not, however, a subject of inquiry in the present study. On the other hand, the human conditions and motives which lead to outdoor art improvements or which on the other hand, prevent or retard such improvements among American farm population groups, are the immediate aim of the study. There are presumably inducements to a country art movement not now generally recognized. There are possibly social values in country art which may become convincing to farmers when once analyzed. The result will doubtless increase the demand in farm communities for the outdoor art technician.

It will help to forward this work if any one conversant with the particulars of any out-

standing instance of the foregoing phases of outdoor country art, will send some account, and photograph or other pictorial representation of the same, to the undersigned.

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QUOTATIONS

CUSTOMS LEGISLATION IN ENGLAND

So far as makers of scientific apparatus are concerned, we believe they are not satisfied with import duties, and want prohibition of import for a time, with permits to import in special cases. Many consumers have stated their preference for a system of subsidies to enable prices to be low enough to compete with foreign goods. Such a scheme naturally offers difficulties, and there would need to be assurance that efforts at improvement are being made. There seems to be no reasonable objection to the price being made as nearly as possible equal to that of the foreign article, so that the competition should become one of quality. The bill, however, will probably be passed, although it may still be possible to insert provisions to enable free import to recognized scientific institutions. Such permits must be of a general character, not requiring renewal, and not demanding the intervention of the customs or other government department. No special licenses for individual cases would be satisfactory.

How obstructive to scientific progress the customs regulations may be is shown by letters that have appeared in these columns. The question of books is a very serious one. Incidentally, reference may be made to the increasing difficulty of publication of scientific papers, which seems to be greater in England than in other countries. But here again what is wanted is a general fall in prices, and this can be brought about only by a return to normal trade relations throughout the world.

Much stress was laid by certain speakers in the House of Commons on the necessity of our industries as a national insurance in case of future war. The only remark that need be made in this place is that the most important matter is to keep abreast of scientific work in other countries. Restriction of research is