

Fire Underwriters and have been approved as American standard by the American Engineering Standards Committee. The chemical engineering division of the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils is desirous

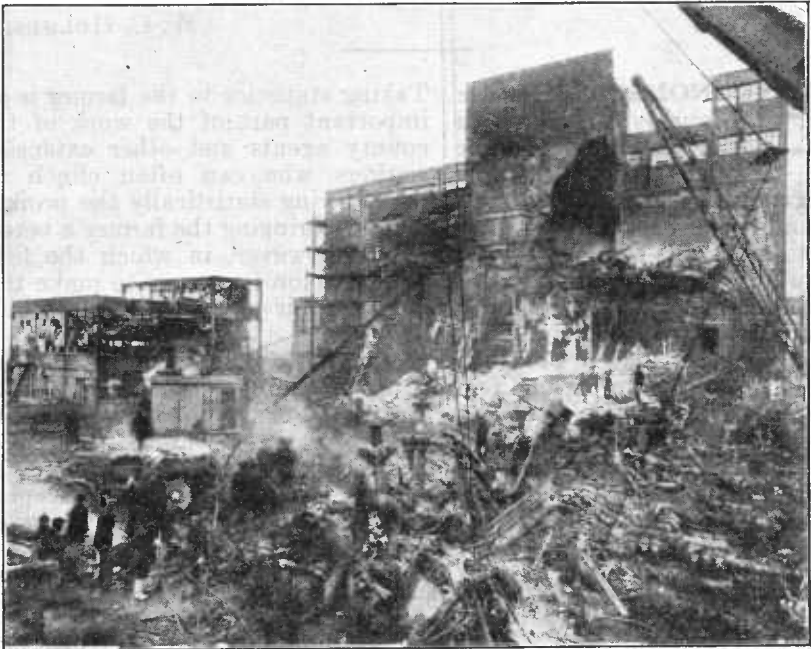


FIGURE 76.—Effects of an explosion of cornstarch dust in a Middle West factory in which 42 men were killed and many others injured

of continuing to cooperate with the industries and other interested agencies in obtaining further information regarding the dust-explosion problem and in rendering all possible assistance in the development and application of effective methods of control and prevention.

DAVID J. PRICE.

## **D**YES Important Both in Diagnosis of Disease and as Medicinal Agents

Much of our knowledge of disease, especially that caused by microorganisms, has been acquired with the aid of dyes. Suitable dyes for this purpose, known as biological stains, are of vital importance to the medical profession. The diphtheria bacillus, mycobacterium tuberculosis and the malaria parasite, for example, as well as numerous other pathogenic organisms, can be detected and identified after being stained with a dye that differentiates them from surrounding substances. Thousands of staining tests are carried out daily upon cultures taken from milk and water and from diseased persons. They indicate the presence and the identity of disease-producing organisms, thereby enabling the doctor to diagnose the disease.

When stained with dye solutions, the tissue of malignant tumor may be distinguished from that of harmless tumors by microscopical examination.

Many dyes render even more direct service to health, in that they destroy or paralyze pathogenic organisms without injuring the normal

body tissues, when used as antiseptics against surface bacterial infection. The importance of dyes in medicine increases every year, and there are grounds for the belief that they may be used eventually to control many of the diseases caused by microorganisms.

W. C. HOLMES.

**E**CONOMICS Literature Taking statistics to the farmer is an important part of the work of the county agents and other extension workers, who can often clinch an argument as to a better practice by showing statistically the proportion of cases in which it has succeeded in bringing the farmer a better return for his labor. The only way, however, in which the field worker can be prepared with the information necessary to make this sort of demonstration is to have a reservoir of general and specific information at his command.

This is not easy to provide in the busy life extension workers lead, with its minimum of time for reading and its maximum opportunity for applying the fruits of such reading to the problems which confront farmers. The monthly periodical entitled "Agricultural Economics Literature," prepared in the library of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, is designed to help in the problem of keeping extension workers informed of useful publications. It is also designed to help the investigator, the professor, or the student in the field of agricultural economics to keep up with the literature of the particular subject with which he deals. This is increasingly difficult as research increases, but, unless an investigator does it, he may fail to apply to a piece of work in hand the findings of another investigator, or he may undertake work already adequately performed.

In Agricultural Economics Literature the material received in the library during the previous month is reviewed, described, or listed, and if the publication is systematically used it should save much time to workers in the field of agricultural economics as well as call to their attention information on their subjects which might otherwise escape their attention.

#### Contents of the Publication

Agricultural Economics Literature contains each month (1) a few careful reviews of new books relating to some phase of agricultural economics, written and signed by specialists in the bureau; (2) a section of descriptive notes and abstracts of books, pamphlets, reports and serials of special interest; (3) notes of bibliographies prepared in the library the previous month for distribution; (4) a list of the publications of the State departments of agriculture, State colleges, experiment stations, and extension divisions, the titles for which are obtained by examining the publications of all these agencies during the previous month and choosing those which are of economic significance; (5) publications of the United States Department of Agriculture, both printed and mimeographed, which are economic in character—those of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and of other bureaus; (6) annotated list of periodical articles obtained by the reading of 111 domestic and 75 foreign periodicals by the staff to find the important articles in the field of agricultural economics; and (7) notes of other accessions to the library which are of more or less