

## IMPOSSIBLE TO JUDGE INTELLIGENCE FROM PICTURES

Individuals attempting to judge intelligence from photographs can obtain as accurate results with their eyes closed as with them open is the decision of Dr. Donald A. Laird and Herman Remmers of Colgate University.

Nearly 400 persons were asked to arrange ten or more pictures of persons of measured intelligence. Select the brainiest or most intelligent faces and arrange them in a descending order of intelligence, were the instructions. It was found that women were no better judges of intelligence than the men, but that both men and women had a tendency to rate women a little higher in the scale than men.

Groups of four or five were asked to work together with the same unreliable result. The tests were gone over again by a professional "character reader and vocational expert" and he did not better than the average person in arranging the pictures.

Other conclusions arrived at as a result of the tests were "Older persons have no better abilities in this than do the younger, and the more intelligent persons have no better abilities in this than persons with less intelligence."

"The average-person-at-large still possesses a large modicum of belief in his abilities in 'sizing up' others by appearances," the investigators comment. "The school superintendent demands a picture of the candidates for positions in the public schools. No picture, no job. A picture taken within certain date limits is one of the necessary qualifications for entering the consular service. And so the gauntlet runs from federal to individual in accepting their abilities in estimating certain characteristics from personal appearance, more especially from photographs."

-----  
SEES AIRPLANE AS PLAGUE CARRIER

Spread of plagues into regions as yet free from them is a danger than threatens with the increased use of airplanes in long distance traffic, according to Air Commodore David Munro, of the British air service. In his presidential address to the Society of Medical Officers of Health, Commodore Munro pointed out that though there is at present no yellow fever in India, the species of mosquito instrumental in its spread is abundant, and that it would require only one fever patient to start an epidemic there. Similarly, an air-borne victim of sleeping sickness from Africa might start the disease in some other tropical region at present unvisited with this scourge. At present, with the bulk of travel carried in steamers, quarantine rules are comparatively easy to enforce, but the development of air traffic wipes out sanitary frontiers as effectively as it does military ones.

-----  
CHESTNUT BLIGHT TAKES GIANT LEAP

The chestnut blight, which has till now been supposed to have reached only to central Virginia, has taken a tremendous stride and appeared in southwestern North Carolina, according to G. F. Gravatt of the Office of Forest Pathology, United States Department of Agriculture. On a recent reconnaissance trip in the south Mr. Gravatt discovered a considerable area in the famous Saluda district of the Blue Ridge Mountains which showed signs of severe blighting. He estimates that

the original infection dated back about ten years; the disease is now well underway in Henderson County.

Before this giant leap of the chestnut blight it had been though feasible to check the disease by cutting down all the chestnuts in a wide swathe around the main area of infection and so "firing back" in the way that prairie fires are stopped. The outbreak of the disease in the Saluda district removes all hope of this.

The big chestnut tan bark companies in North Carolina, where the finest stands of chestnut in this country are located, are undecided whether it will be best to lumber over all the available chestnut at once and so drug the market or to cut slowly and run the risk that the blight will get there before the sawmill. Blight-killed trees are useless for the tanning industry.

Chinese and Japanese chestnuts, with which the Department of Agriculture hopes to replace the native species, are reported to be very successful in all trials thus far. The Chinese chestnut promises to fulfill the three requirements of a perfect chestnut; it will develop blight-resistant strains, furnish a bark useful in tanning, and produce good nuts for eating.

-----

#### TUBERCULOSIS DEATHS DECREASE 10 PER CENT. IN YEAR JUST ENDED

The year 1924 has won the honor of having had the lowest mortality rate ever recorded among the wage-earning populations of the United States and Canada. Statisticians of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company have announced that based upon returns from fifteen million records a substantial decline in death rate as compared with 1923 is assured, although all reports are not yet in.

Heart disease, as in 1923 and 1922, will be the leading cause of death but the mortality, nevertheless, will be much lower than in 1923. Since 1911 there has been a decline of 20 points per 100,000 in the heart disease death rate.

The great health achievement of the year has been the marvelous reduction in the death rate from pulmonary tuberculosis. The rate this year will be slightly over 90 per 100,000 persons exposed. This marks a decline of 10 per cent. in one year. In 1911 the rate from this cause was more than twice the 1924 figure.

Pneumonia will be the third cause numerically. For the few diseases that show higher rates in 1924, either the increase has been small or the disease itself is of relatively minor importance numerically.

Present indications are that 1924 will be the first year since the automobile has become a means of transportation that the death rate from its casualties will not increase. Up to December 13 the 1924 rate was identical with that for the same time last year.

-----

Sawdust briquets make excellent fuel for the kitchen range, being cheaper than coal, and having hardly any ash, no clinker, and very little smoke.

-----