

GERMANS MAKE WOOL FROM PINE NEEDLES

Chemically treated pine needles have worked out as a substitute for wool for certain purposes very successfully. By varying the process a wooly product is obtained that comes either in the shape of fine sheet wadding or in soft fleeces that are used to stuff mattresses. The pine wool has fine, strong fibers not unlike hemp, and finds its best use when woven into heavy materials such as carpets and horse blankets.

The new process has a valuable asset in one of its by-products that results from the chemical treatment necessary to remove the resin from the needles. The sticky residue is shaped into resinous briquettes which have a very high fuel value and which have found a ready use in the manufacture of artificial illuminating gas.

CHARACTER READING BY FACE ALL "BUNK" SAY SCIENTISTS

Time was when tall, blond, blue-eyed men were considered to be the epitome of all the manly virtues of courage and initiative. To the small dark types, on the contrary, were attributed the less positive qualities of timidity and reticence.

Modern science, however, now comes along and demolishes this pleasant theory, that is, pleasant for the blonds. Psychologists have turned the battery of inquiry on the precepts and principles of professional character readers and pronounce the whole matter of character analysis based on physical traits as having no foundation on scientific fact. In other words, it is all bunk.

Prof. G. C. Brandenburg of the department of psychology of Purdue University, Indiana, has collected the results of these investigations of the self-styled character experts in a report in a recent issue of *Industrial Psychology*. Prominent in his account is a resume of a tryout of the so-called color law evolved by a very well-known worker in this fertile field. The law states that blonds possess the dynamic traits that make the world's leaders, pioneers, and explorers, while the brunettes have the negative conservative and thoughtful qualities that make writers, research workers and investigators.

Over ninety disinterested persons were each asked to give character ratings of two blonds and two brunettes of his acquaintance. Examination of the details in the character ratings failed to show any constant differences between the two types on the basis of either their blondishness or brunetescence. "Blonds were found to possess brunette traits to the same extent as the brunettes and vice versa", declared the investigators.

Prof. H. D. Kitson of Columbia and G. L. Donham of Indiana University undertook to check up the contention, stoutly upheld by many character readers, that weight and size are necessary assets in salesmanship. Some two hundred salesmen were examined and their respective sizes and weights compared with their selling records. On completion of the test, it was found that the best salesmen were not on the average the tallest nor the heaviest, but the men of medium size averaging around five feet nine inches with proportionate weight.

Even the significance of the profile, long a favorite character guide with almost everybody, is not allowed to go unassailed. No longer is the convex type

with the prominent forehead and square jaw to be associated exclusively with the strong silent man of initiative and power nor the concave type with the more or less receding chin to be thought of only in connection with the patient, docile underling. Examination of a hundred students, chocking up the judgment of their intimates with their college records, shows that there was only a preponderance of two per cent. of the boys with the convex type of profile who displayed marked qualities of leadership.

In commenting on the researches of his colleagues, Prof. Brandonburg declares that "in the light of critical studies on the question we must conclude that as a method of character analysis the physiognomic system is wholly devoid of any scientific basis."

TABLOID BOOK REVIEW

THE REPRESSION OF CRIME. By Harry Elmer Barnes. New York. George H. Doran Co. 1926. 382 pages.

Here is an unusually satisfactory survey of that important phase of life in America, the great crime wave. Dr. Barnes devotes a considerable part of his book to looking systematically backward at crime in America from Colonial days, and he presents the inevitable conclusion that getting even with the law breaker has never worked. Vengeance taken by the state has never reformed criminals nor deterred other persons from breaking the law. At present, he declares, our legal system has not caught up to modern biology, psychology, and social science. Much scientific knowledge is available, but the legal machinery is still founded entirely on medieval metaphysical and theological presuppositions.

As for the future, the method of dealing with crime advocated by the author is to regard the criminal as a patient to be given the sort of treatment and rehabilitation that will make an honest citizen of him. If this is impossible, he should never be released to menace society again. "The guilt of the accused is far less important than the matter of his potential danger to society," Dr. Barnes holds.

The account is brought very much up-to-date by a critical chapter on recent literature on crime and prisons, Usefulness as a reference book is increased by the listing of "selected references" at the end of each chapter.

THE ORIGIN, NATURE AND INFLUENCE OF RELATIVITY; by George David Birkhoff. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1925. 185 pp.

This book is based on a course of lectures which the author gave in Boston in 1923, and which he repeated in Los Angeles a year later. Now it has been revised and published in a permanent form. Leading up from the Euclidean geometry, he discusses the nature of space and time and then relativity itself, concluding with its philosophic aspects. Though he does not refrain from using occasional mathematical expressions, the non-mathematically trained reader will find much in it of interest that is comprehensible to him.
