

PSYCHOLOGY-PHYSIOLOGY

**Moderate Drinking
Makes Driving Hazard**

MODERATE amounts of alcohol consumed as whiskey or beer cause autoists to drive faster and make more driving errors, Dr. H. M. Vernon, of the Industrial Health Research Board, reported to the British Association.

"Some drivers maintain that moderate quantities of alcohol have no effect or improve their driving," Dr. Vernon explained.

Then he told of tests on fifteen experienced autoists and five non-drivers who bravely subjected themselves to "experimental doses" of whiskey or beer taken on an empty stomach. An ounce of whiskey was administered, rather more than an Englishman gets when he orders a "large whiskey." The beer dose contained only a sixth of an ounce of alcohol.

The human guinea pigs were not allowed to drive on real roads in the interest of safety and scientific accuracy. Instead they were put at the wheel of a dummy car and directed to drive it along a track projected as a moving picture on a screen. The path taken by the car was automatically recorded.

The mild beer had no effect on experienced drivers, but it affected the five non-drivers more than the whiskey. For the experienced drivers the whiskey caused an increase of six per cent in driving time and an increase of twelve per cent in driving errors. The effect of alcohol differed greatly among the persons tested, but half of them speeded up ten to twenty-four per cent.

"As a rule the drivers were quite unconscious of any speeding up after drinking alcohol," Dr. Vernon concluded, "and this suggests that even moderate quantities of alcohol should be avoided before driving."

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ARCHAEOLOGY

**Finds Traces of Ancient
Civilization in India**

A DISCOVERY that is expected to push back the age of known human habitation in India and throw much light on its culture was reported by Mlle. Simone Corbiau, Belgian archaeologist who conducted an exploration for the Brussels Museum.

Digging at a site that was supposed to contain only remains of the Greco-Buddhist times, Mlle. Corbiau found evi-

dence of a far more ancient civilization. The age of the archaic pieces she discovered is believed to be about 4000-3500 B.C., some 6,000 years ago.

The region in which Mlle. Corbiau made trial diggings is the Peshawar district in the uppermost corner of the Northwest Frontier Province of India.

Mlle. Corbiau believes that a very early stage of Indus Valley civilization has been discovered, which is paralleled by finds in Sumerian Mesopotamia of the Jemdet Nasr period, protohistoric Aegean, and at the prehistoric site of Anan in Russian Turkestan.

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SOCIAL SCIENCE

**Urges More Vigor In
Studying Science of Man**

MAKING a plea for the application of research to the "science of man" with a vigor equal to that used in the recent exploration of the physical world, from atom to universe, Sir Josiah Stamp, the British economist, delivering the presidential address at the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, declared that the shortcomings of the active world are to him "but the fallings short of science."

"Wherever we look we discover that if we are to avoid trouble we must take trouble—scientific trouble," Sir Josiah said. "The duality which puts science and man's other activity in contrasted categories with disharmony to be resolved, gaps to be bridged, is unreal. We are simply beholding ever-expanding science too rough round the edges as it grows."

An attack along the social sciences front from politics and education to genetics and human heredity is long overdue in Sir Josiah's opinion. Expenditure on the natural sciences is some eight to ten times greater than that on the social sciences. As an example, hardly any money at all is available for research into the immense and vital problems of population in all its qualitative and quantitative bearings.

"In some ways we are so obsessed with the delight and advantage of discovery of new things that we have no proportionate regard for the problems of arrangement and absorption of the things discovered," he remarked. "We are like a contractor who has too many men bringing materials on to the site, and not enough men to erect the buildings with them. In other words, if a wise central direction were properly allocating research workers to the greatest marginal advantage, it would make some

important transfers. There is not too much being devoted to research in physics and chemistry, as modifying industry, but there is too much relatively to the research upon the things they affect, in physiology, psychology, economics, sociology. We have not begun to secure an optimum balance. Additional financial resources should be applied more to the biological and human sciences than to the applied physical sciences, or possibly, if resources are limited, a transfer ought to be made from one to the other."

Sir Josiah deplored the common notion that economics should be judged by its ability to forecast, especially to a particular date. This idea is fallacious because the prophecy if "true" and believed must destroy itself. People will act to anticipate the date and thus destroy the prediction.

The changes brought about by the impact of science upon everyday economic life were classified by Sir Josiah as "work creators" and "work savers." One tends to offset the other. Dislocations caused by labor-saving machinery can most easily be made good by a due balance of new labor-creating commodities.

Because increase of population has slowed down in recent years, slackening the increase in demand for commodities, he suggested that "perhaps birth control for people demands ultimately birth control for their impedimenta."

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LANGUAGE

**System of Signs Ideal
International Language**

A SYSTEM of making signs was recommended by Sir Richard Paget as the ideal international language, that would be natural to all races as well as easy to learn and remember.

His study of sign language and his conclusion that speech is simply mouth gestures expressing meaning gave rise to Sir Richard's suggestion.

The proposed world sign language would be controlled from the start, he suggested, by a world commission that would promulgate its decisions by means of movies and television.

"Man is not primarily a tool-using animal," Sir Richard said. "He is rather a symbol-using animal."

"Speech was born when separate signs were evolved for separate ideas. The corresponding mouth gestures were combined with the emotional language of grunts, chuckles and cries, and ultimately produced speech."