

Dr. Mills recognizes that strict adherence to optical laws may not always be desirable in painting. However, he points out that, except for the great examples of historical and photographic likenesses in painting, the few paintings which are acclaimed by artists and laymen alike as outstanding and truly great works of art almost without exception show the normal relations of central and side vision.

A brighter future in art, freer from both the mischievous and the unavoidable use of side vision, is suggested by

another of Dr. Mills' comments. In the past eye defects were not so frequently recognized in either artists or laymen. On the continent, however, when impressionistic art was getting its start, no one wore eyeglasses unless forced to because of extreme visual defect. The present gradual spread of better visual hygiene will make the eye defects of the artist much less of a factor in his painting.

It may be that the age of cockeyed art is even now passing.

Science News Letter, February 6, 1937

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ENGINEERING

Air Conditioners Challenged To Remove Bacteria from Air

NEW medical aids by air conditioning in the treatment of disease, houses insulated in winter by the use of ice roofs, scientific studies that seek the answer to the perplexing question, "What is a draft?", and research to improve the "liveliness" of air, were the high point topics coming up for discussion at the meeting of the American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers at St. Louis.

More and more the science of medicine and the profession of engineering are joining forces to combat one major avenue by which disease still spreads. Studies have revealed that hay fever and its kindred ailments yield to treatment in controlled air-conditioned rooms.

Now a new committee of the Society has been organized to investigate the purification of air in hospitals to prevent infection. A hospital, it is pointed out, goes to great lengths to sterilize its oper-

ating rooms, wards, instruments and the wearing apparel of the staff. Air conditioning for increased comfort to the patients and staff is now used in many places. But very few hospitals attempt to kill organisms in the air of the operating rooms or infectious wards for respiratory diseases. Yet science knows that radiation of specific wavelengths can kill bacteria floating about in air.

But the matter of turning this academic knowledge into engineering practice on an economical basis is a real and serious problem. While the heating and ventilating engineers make no claim to medical knowledge they do feel that their engineering experience will bring a more speedy solution to the problem.

Tied in with medicine also, in the field of physiology, is the major research problem of answering the simple question, "What is a draft?" or said another way, "When is a draft not a draft?"

Already it has been found that one person's pleasing breeze is another person's discomfoting draft. There is a sizable touch of physiological reaction tied up with the question of drafts. And it is a problem which air conditioned theaters, as only one example, have to worry about.

Few people, to illustrate, regard a mild flow of air on the face as a draft. Yet the same air flow on the back of the neck will bring wails of discomfort. Other people may have the same dislike for an air flow around their feet or legs.

On the answer to this question rests, in many ways, the future usefulness of forced ventilation—with either heating or cooling—which is the growing trend in making enclosed places more livable.

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