

Medical Sciences Notes

NEPHROLOGY

British Kidney Machine

The first kidney machine on the European market to use the peritoneal dialysis technique eliminates nurse supervision. It will cost \$2,200, and is expected to pay for itself in 18 months in nurses' time, Prof. Harold Scarborough of the Royal Cardiff Infirmary says. Fail-safe alarms operate in an emergency.

Developed by the industrial automation division of Hawker Siddeley in Coventry, England, in cooperation with doctors of the Welsh National School of Medicine, the machine is expected to be in full production in May or June of 1967. It will be named the Cardiff machine.

In the United States, this type of machine has been used for several years.

In peritoneal dialysis, a fluid is pumped into the sac lining the abdominal cavity (peritoneum), removing wastes that are normally extracted by the kidneys. The liquid is removed and the cycle repeated, a simpler technique than the better-known method in which the patient's blood is "washed" as it passes through a machine. A high percentage of patients can carry on active lives when treated periodically.

SMOKING

Better Grades Among Nonsmokers

Only 16.7 percent of freshmen students with an "A" average at the University of Illinois, Urbana, were found to smoke cigarettes, a study of 3,567 revealed. In contrast, 59.1 percent of "E" average students smoked.

Colleges and universities should start programs to take the social pressure to smoke off freshmen, Dr. Dorothy F. Dunn of the university's Student Health Center Department declared in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Her study was financed by a grant from the AMA Education and Research Foundation.

Nine in 10 freshmen surveyed said they believed the cigarette smoker had a greater chance of developing lung cancer than the nonsmoker.

Most freshmen believed that teenage smoking is a major public health problem, although only four in 10 of them smoked. Of those who smoked 12 months ago, 56% had increased the number of cigarettes smoked per day (50 percent of the men and 69 percent of the women) and 43 percent wanted to stop smoking.

Social Sciences Notes

SOCIOLOGY

Honduras Faces Problems

The country of Honduras faces staggering mental health problems with incredibly meager resources, according to New York psychiatrist Ari Kiev.

Dr. Kiev reported in *The Winter Cornell University Medical College Alumni Quarterly* that the country's alcoholism and homicide rates are among the highest in Latin America and reflect very poor national conditions. Family breakdown is evident in the "tremendous" number of street urchins, said Dr. Kiev. Nearly 90% of the fathers are irregularly employed; frequently they live away from home.

The country currently has four psychiatrists and one main psychiatric hospital where, because of crowded and poor conditions, "violence, homosexuality, criminality, rape and the like are rampant." But the hospital has one bed for every two patients—a better ratio than in the slums said Dr. Kiev.

Honduras is one of the original "banana republics." Currently United Fruit represents its largest source of income.

REMEDIAL READING

Reading Mumbles Cured

A speedy cure for the mumbles, whispers and swallows of slow readers was announced last week by a team of University of California psychologists.

The technique is a simple one, consisting of an electrical device placed over throat muscles to pick up and

amplify subvocal activity. Mumbles and swallows are then played through earphones. A swallow, for instance, becomes a burst of static in the reader's ears.

Apparently, once the reader hears his habit, he is able to end it by conscious control.

Every college student who took the cure lost his habit in one session, reported Berkeley researchers Dr. Curtis D. Hardyck, Dr. Lewis F. Petrinovich, and Delbert W. Ellsworth.

This was surprising, they admitted, since longstanding habits are not usually extinguished so quickly and easily. The subvocal habit is particularly pernicious in that it tends to hold the reader to a reading rate of 150 words per minute—actually a speaking rate.

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW

Study Underway

The National Academy of Sciences has opened its major 30-month investigation into the social sciences—their strengths and weaknesses, boundaries, relationship with other sciences, and application to national problems.

In delineating the domain of the social sciences—psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics and political science—the Academy will perform a vital function. Boundaries have become fuzzy in recent years as the social sciences reached deep into the physical and biological sciences on one hand and into national social policy on the other.

Chairman of the survey committee is psychologist, Ernest R. Hilgard, of Stanford University.