

Social Sciences Notes

TESTING

A First-Year Test of I.Q.

Three University of California researchers have challenged the widely held belief that a child's earliest "talk" is no measure of later intelligence.

In a new analysis of first-year vocalizations, the Californians found a "modest" means of testing one and two-year-old girls for adult I.Q.

The match between early sounds and intelligence, however, was true only for girls, not boys, for reasons unknown, report James Cameron, Norman Livson and Nancy Bayley of the Institute of Human Development at Berkeley.

Their new scale for measuring intelligence includes six kinds of sounds and one movement which appear between 5.6 months and 13.5 months. In order they are: vocalizes eagerness; vocalizes displeasure; uses interjections; says "da-da" or its equivalent; pulls string for a purpose; says two words (at 12.9 months); and uses jargon.

The researchers found this scale by taking apart the California First Year Mental Scale and testing each of its parts in a 26-year study of 74 boys and girls.

The children were tested monthly during their first year and then later at ages 6 through 26.

Results "strongly suggest," said the researchers in the July 21 issue of *SCIENCE*, "that developmental psychologists need to rethink their previous conclusion that infant developmental test scores are unrelated to later measures of intelligence."

EDUCATION

NSF Plans Major Education Boost

The National Science Foundation plans a major boost in its educational research programs.

NSF has asked Congress for enough money to triple its program aimed at improving science education in schools and colleges. It spent some \$2.3 million this year in its Cooperative College-School Science Program.

The Foundation also requested \$12 million for research in computer-based education, according to a report from the American Psychological Association.

With that money, NSF hopes to develop useful computer applications in school rooms by 1970.

MENTAL ILLNESS

Sorting Seashells

A mental patient sunk in depression sorts seashells for days on end, gets fed up, dumps the shells on the floor and is on the road to recovery. It's all part of a novel approach to therapy inaugurated at the Veterans Administration psychiatric hospital in Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Doctors at Tuscaloosa and at the VA hospital in Perry Point, Md., claim the new program, called "attitude therapy" has wiped out long waiting lists of veterans seeking treatment.

Upon entering the hospital, a patient is diagnosed and assigned one of five attitudes. The entire hospital staff thereafter treats that patient with either "kind firmness," "active friendliness," "passive friendliness," "matter-of-

factness" or "no demand." The attitude must be applied consistently by everyone on the staff, if it is to work, according to the Veterans Administration.

In the case of the depressed patient, doctors might insist—but kindly—that he sort seashells.

"When he becomes so emotional about the monotony that he rebels, he is on the road to recovery," says the VA.

Another violent patient might be treated with "no demand" until he tires of his aggression.

The attitude therapy, devised by Dr. James C. Folsom at Tuscaloosa, is coupled with drugs used regularly in the treatment of mental illness.

ADOPTION

Substitute Parents Needed

The rate of illegitimacy in the United States is now nearly twice the rate of adoption, making parent shortage a major problem to adoption agencies, reports the August issue of *TODAY'S HEALTH*, a publication of the American Medical Association.

Illegitimacy has trebled in rate since 1940—to 275,000 a year.

To meet the problem, agencies are easing former policies governing adoption and are aggressively seeking qualified parents.

Of some 2.5 million illegitimate children of adoptable age, only about 31 percent have been adopted. Many of the hard-to-place children are nonwhite.

Occasionally now an agency will allow adoption by a single person, says the report. Though that practice is still a rarity, some 25 children were recently placed with single parents across the nation.

David S. Franklin, director of research at the Children's Home Society of California, says agencies now place as many as six children in one family. Fifteen years ago, the maximum was two.

"No longer should we rule out a couple because they say something questionable. Agencies should help them understand their attitudes, work with them a little longer," he says.

DRIVER BEHAVIOR

Training for a Blank-out

Drivers headed for an automobile accident commonly blank out mentally for about two-and-a-half seconds just before impact.

But a French psychoanalyst has devised a driver training program which he says forestalls such mental paralysis, caused by confusion.

The training combines automobile dynamics and psychology and takes no more intelligence than second grade arithmetic, says Dr. Yves Dienal, who maintains a private practice in Paris.

Basically it consists of teaching the driver how he and the car will behave with an accident impending.

Drivers must understand their own mental reactions, the dynamics of the car, and techniques for controlling it, says Dr. Dienal.

Otherwise, as laboratory experiments have shown, the brain of the average driver who is faced with a baffling situation ceases activity momentarily.