

PSYCHIATRY

Alcoholism No Problem When Soldiers Have a Good Time

Army Psychiatrist Recommends Encouraging Drinking In Moderation Among Men; Only Few Are Alcoholics

THE PROBLEM of "Alcoholism in Military Service" has two aspects, according to Major Merrill Moore, Army psychiatrist, in *The Military Surgeon* (July), but apparently neither one would be solved by prohibition.

The first problem is the small percentage of real alcoholics who still get into the armed services, either because of the inadequate time allowed for psychiatric examination, or because their relatives are so anxious to get rid of them that they do not give correct information to the examining officers.

But the alcoholic is a sick man, says Major Moore, just as a diabetic patient is sick, and the Army cannot use either one.

"The public must learn that the qualifications for success in the Army are essentially the same as in any other profession," he states. "Stable and mature persons are needed."

If this had been fully recognized in

the last war, he points out, there would be fewer alcoholics and drug addicts being cared for in Veterans' Hospitals today.

The second problem is excessive drinking among enlisted men, due to lack of sufficient activity and recreation. One officer quoted by Major Moore told how this problem had been solved. Opportunities were provided for swimming, tennis, bowling, etc., through clubs and social groups. Dances, parties and picnics were planned.

"We found that the more we saw to it that the fellows had a fairly good time, the less difficulty they had with the sort of desperate and destructive drinking that military men sometimes go in for," Major Moore quotes this officer as saying.

As for the question of whether or not beer should be sold near military posts, Major Moore thinks emphatically that it should, and that drinking in modera-

tion should be encouraged. "Not alcohol, but the intemperate use of alcohol, is the problem in the Army as well as in civilian life."

This applies to the training period, when enlisted men need relaxation, but not to active war duty when a soldier needs heightened efficiency. Although listed as a stimulant in some of the old textbooks, alcohol is actually a depressant, explains Major Moore. Unlike the Continental soldiers who were given rum rations, our modern streamlined Army gets no alcohol while on duty.

While the "man who cannot live without alcohol" is an exception, taking liquor away from him is no solution. He is still a sick man, with drinking merely a symptom of his illness. He needs psychiatric care, and the Army is no place for him. Major Moore says that great strides have been made since the last war, not only toward keeping the alcoholics out of the armed forces, but also toward providing more adequate psychiatric measures of prevention and cure in civilian life.

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CHEMISTRY

Method for Making Butylene Glycol Developed by U. S.

See Front Cover

A SHORT and economical process for making the relatively rare chemical butylene glycol has been developed at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Northern Regional Research Laboratory at Peoria, Ill.

By the fermentation of plentiful farm crops, such as corn and wheat, the butylene glycol is now being produced on a pilot-plant or semi-commercial scale.

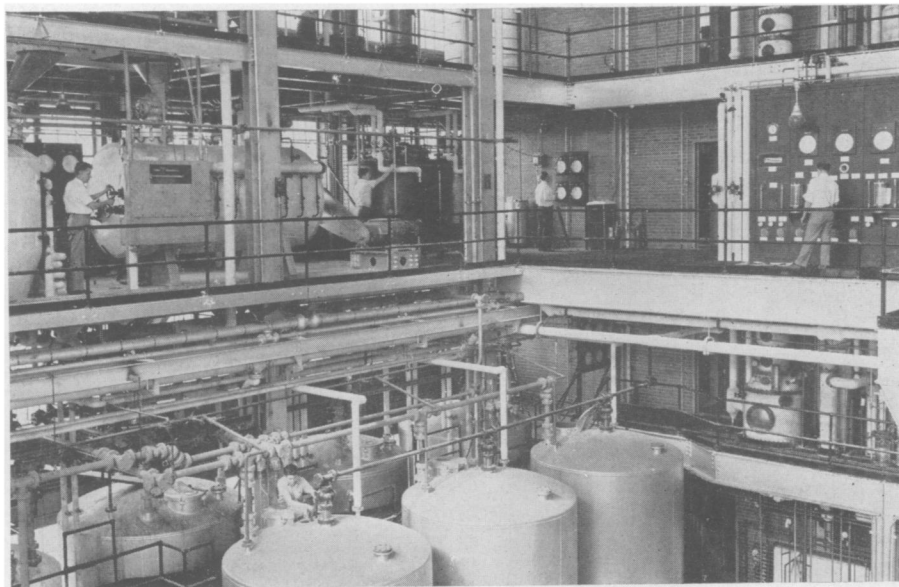
The chemical has a number of industrial chemical applications for war industries. It may be used in making anti-freeze for automobile radiators and in the production of commercial solvents.

The laboratory is also studying butylene glycol as a possible link in the production of butadiene for synthetic rubber.

The illustration on the front cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS LETTER shows Dr. Lynferd J. Wickerham selecting the bacteria that will convert corn into butylene glycol.

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Each of the 200,000,000 cells in a cubic inch of *cork* holds imprisoned a microscopic bit of air.



PILOT PLANT

Here is being tested on a semi-commercial scale the making of alcohol from various plentiful farm products such as corn and wheat. It is possible that a way may be developed to turn the butylene glycol, formed here from farm products, into artificial rubber.