

GENERAL SCIENCE

Soldiers' Ideas Aid Army

Suggestion system is producing hundreds of valuable ideas to speed victory. Used by Army Engineers Corps in many fields.

► PERHAPS the most valuable natural resource of America—brains of soldiers in the ranks—is now being mined for valuable war ideas by the Army Engineer School at Fort Belvoir, Va.

Operated on a limited test basis during the past year, the suggestion system is already producing hundreds of ideas which will speed victory. About 11% of the suggestions received have been approved and put to use.

Convinced that the system is practical and of great value in the war, Army officers have now set up a long-time program and inaugurated regular publicity to encourage engineer soldiers to submit their ideas for new devices and methods.

Instead of being passed from hand to hand through "proper channels," ideas can now be sent direct to the Engineer School of the Army. Each suggestion is acknowledged and judged by competent authorities. Source of the idea is deleted, private and brigadier receiving like consideration.

Suggestions from civilians and other branches of the service are also welcomed. No useful idea is too small to report to our democratic Army. When a valuable but undeveloped idea is turned up in the thrill-freighted mail of the Engineer School, it is forwarded with recommendations to research experts for further development.

This suggestion system, unique in the armed forces, is operated as one func-

tion of the Research Section of The Engineer School. They list some thirty subjects about which the Army Engineer Corps wants ideas, such as strategy, photography, tactics, methods, camouflage, construction and maps.

Many ideas useful in industry can be adapted to these war uses, Army officials point out. Even the sketch of a day-dream, such as the one accepted from a soldier who couldn't write English, may prove helpful in winning the war.

The originator of a useful idea receives full credit and a report on what happens to his brainchild. Army authorities feel that this system will have important morale value; the soldier will realize that he can think and that his thinking may be valuable to Uncle Sam and his fellow fighters.

Science News Letter, February 27, 1943

PSYCHOLOGY

How You Can Tell What Baby's Cry Means

► FOR A GOOD MANY new mothers the first night home from the hospital with the new baby is an unexpectedly alarming experience. It seemed easy enough to bathe baby in the hospital nursery with the nurse standing by to give directions and help. Changing and feeding and putting baby to bed for the first time with no one but an awkward and probably scared male parent to help may prove quite a trying experience. If the baby sleeps in his mother's room, which he did not do at the hospital, she will be further alarmed when she first hears the grunts and other strange sounds he makes in breathing. Then he cries for the first time, and mother is frankly terrified.

Some advice about baby's crying has just been issued by the Illinois State Medical Society. Baby's crying, it is pointed out, is his most useful way of attracting attention. Since he cannot speak, he cries to tell you what he wants or needs. There are very distinctive cries for different things.

There is the hunger cry which usually comes at regular intervals as he becomes

hungry at regular intervals. It is usually a "harsh persistent tone repeated with such fervor that the only time he stops is when he has, momentarily, lost his breath," the medical society bulletin explains.

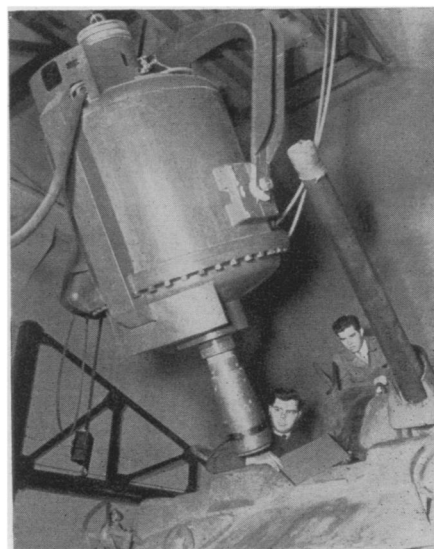
The cry of pain is usually a "sharp, pathetic agonized cry." If due to colic, it usually appears at a regular time, day or night, and the baby may hold his thighs close to his stomach.

A wailing or whimpering cry, with no urgency in the tone and rests between wails or whimpers, is a cry of discomfort. Baby may be uncomfortably wet, or hot or cold, or may have wriggled into a painful position in his crib or gotten his clothes uncomfortably bunched under him. Sun in his eyes or a fly crawling on his face may cause this wailing cry. He may also cry this way if he is overtired from too much playing or too many people handling him just before he goes to sleep.

Science News Letter, February 13, 1943

Over 3,000,000 pounds of scarce copper, zinc and nickel will be salvaged from recent collection of old keys.

Continental United States uses less than six pounds of rice per person per year, while Puerto Rico uses 128 pounds and Hawaii 177 pounds.



WAR X-RAYS—This 1,000,000-volt X-ray unit built by General Electric is being used to check welded seams in an Army tank. Energy is produced equivalent to \$90,000,000 worth of radium. Thicknesses of metal can be inspected in minutes which formerly required hours.

Don't Delay

getting that **new book** you want to read. SCIENCE NEWS LETTER will gladly obtain for you any American book or magazine in print. Send check or money order covering regular retail price (\$5 if price is unknown, change to be returned) and we will pay postage in the United States. When publications are free, send 10c for handling. Address:

Book Department

SCIENCE NEWS LETTER

1719 N St., N.W. Washington, D. C.