

MEDICINE

Alcoholics Not "Skid-Row"

Records of outpatient clinics show a new group of alcoholics who are not "common drunks" from "skid row" destined to end in jail.

➤ A NEW group of alcoholics, "perhaps the most significant element in the entire alcoholic population," is coming to light through the growing outpatient clinics for treatment of alcoholism.

Previous lay and medical opinion about alcoholics is being proved wrong by the records of these clinics, Drs. Robert Straus and Selden D. Bacon of the Yale Center of Alcohol Studies report in the *QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF STUDIES ON ALCOHOL* (June).

Alcoholics are not all "common drunks" from "skid row," destined to end in the jails or mental hospitals, the Yale scientists find. In a study of over 2,000 men patients at nine outpatient alcoholism clinics, they found the following facts:

1. Over half married and living with their wives. The percentage who had never married no greater than normal expectancy. Three out of four living in an established household, nine out of 10 at least two-year residents of the same town.

2. More than 80% under 50 years, a fourth under 35.

3. Nearly two-thirds gainfully employed. Over half with steady employment on the same job for at least three years, 25% for at least 10 years. At least seven out of 10 holding jobs involving special skills or responsibility.

4. A fifth of the patients came to clinics on their own initiative, another fifth at suggestion of friends or relatives, 12% through Alcoholics Anonymous and 12% through the courts. Only two per cent referred by employers.

Cure figures are not given, but clinic staff members estimate that 40% to 60% of the patients who keep in contact with the clinics "have been measurably helped in respect to their alcoholism as well as in their underlying problems of adjustment."

Because this segment of the alcoholic population has not yet deteriorated to "skid row," and because of the investment in those holding positions of skill and responsibility, the Yale scientists point out, public outpatient clinics which rehabilitate alcoholics are playing an important role.

Science News Letter, July 21, 1951

Simultaneously, the FCDA published a four-page brochure describing the essential requirements for a home first-aid kit. Twelve million copies of this brochure were printed. Also this brochure makes up the four middle pages of "Emergency Action to Save Lives," the "what not to do" booklet.

The "what not to do" booklet tells untrained persons to leave the injured alone, unless they are in danger of further injury or death from falling buildings, debris, fire or flood.

FCDA and the American Red Cross hope there will be enough trained first-aid personnel around to take care of A-bomb victims. The Red Cross has said that more than 10,000,000 first-aiders are wanted.

The four-page first-aid kit brochure recommends the simplest essentials, such as old towels to be used for bandages, salt and soda. Most of the kit's equipment, it is believed, can already be found in the average home. None of the pamphlets bears the FCDA name, rather a space has been left for the names of state civil defense organizations and the 12,000,000 are being distributed to the states.

The 6,000,000 "Emergency Action to Save Lives" pamphlets, however, bear the FCDA label.

Science News Letter, July 21, 1951

TECHNOLOGY

Anti-Bacterial Cement Effective in 9-Year Test

➤ A CEMENT treatment that checks the growth of bacteria and fungus on the floors and walls of dairies, school gymnasiums, locker and shower rooms, restaurant kitchens and chemical plants is reported to be satisfactory after nine years of testing.

Dr. William J. Knapp of the University of California at Los Angeles helped Dr. Charles R. Amberg develop the anti-bacterial cement at the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred, N. Y. Anti-bacterial cement carries seven-tenths of one per cent pentachlorophenol, a fungicide sometimes used to preserve railroad ties and telephone poles.

A dairy floor laid in 1942 is still proving highly anti-bacterial, says Dr. Knapp. Tests have shown that the new cement held from 54% to 96% less bacteria than ordinary cement.

Scrubbed and washed with strong soaps, the anti-bacterial qualities of the cement actually increased. This is because the bacteria inhibiting agent is less soluble in water than cement itself.

However, the anti-bacterial cement has no effect on normal human skin. A pat of the cement was taped to a man's arm for 52 hours without results of any kind. The skins of guinea pigs showed no reaction after being rubbed with the cement three times a day for two weeks.

Science News Letter, July 21, 1951

GENERAL SCIENCE

Survey Science Manpower

➤ SEVERAL STUDIES to determine where the nation stands on one of its most precious and scarce defense resources—scientific manpower—will shortly be undertaken by the government.

Right now, future needs for physicists, chemists and engineers to develop new weapons and equipment and to keep up the civilian economy are not known. Wide discrepancies appear in the various estimates, although most officials are agreed that the nation is faced with a serious shortage in the years ahead.

Future needs for engineers, for instance, are estimated as between 30,000 and 85,000 new graduates each year. In other fields the informed guesses are just as varied.

The Manpower Division of Charles E. Wilson's Office of Defense Mobilization will shortly set up a task force to bring some order out of this statistical chaos. A five-man group representing the Defense Department, the Labor Department, the National Research Council and other interested parties will establish a master plan for getting the required information. Once this plan is devised, probably by the end

of July, defense planners will have a chance to know just how short the scientific manpower shortage will be in future years.

Another study, which will mesh into this one, will be conducted by the National Research Council's Office of Scientific Personnel for the new National Science Foundation. This will be an annual inventory of young men and women in training in the nation's colleges and graduate schools in the various sciences.

With the two studies the nation will know what scientific manpower needs are and what is coming from the schools to fill those needs.

Science News Letter, July 21, 1951

GENERAL SCIENCE

18,000,000 Civil Defense Pamphlets on First Aid

➤ THE FEDERAL Civil Defense Administration has published 6,000,000 copies of a booklet telling untrained first-aiders what not to do to persons injured in A-bomb attacks.