

ACOUSTICS

Noise Level of Cities

► LIFE IN modern American cities, with increasing traffic and industrial activities, will be easier to bear as methods of reducing the man-made noises are developed.

The problem, long recognized, is now receiving scientific attention, the first step being the measurement of the loudness of the various noises, the second how the loudness can be decreased.

A four-year study, made in Chicago by scientists of the Armour Research Foundation of the Illinois Institute of Technology, has uncovered facts not previously known. Traffic noise affects more people than the noises created by industrial plants, the study shows. Traffic noise is more prevalent and is also louder than industrial noises, particularly in Chicago.

Motor trucks and coaches stand first among the noise makers in traffic, the trucks occupying the first place. Much has already been done to reduce street car noises, the modern street car being far more quiet than the types in use a few years ago. Railroad trains and elevated railways in the cities where they exist are also heavy noise makers.

Passenger automobiles, especially when new, are not accused in the Armour report of being noisy although some have insufficient or defective silencing devices, especially at low speeds. All motor vehicles become more noisy as they increase in age. Trucks are noisy even when new. Trucks and coaches are most offensive when starting and accelerating.

Industrial noises come largely from factory machinery and construction activities. Many factories, however, do not use machines that create loud noises. One-story buildings are said to give out less noise than those of the multi-story type. Trees, shrubbery and grass around the factory are suggested as possible means of reducing the noises that otherwise might reach neighboring homes.

The field studies made by the Armour Foundation in various parts of Chicago used the "sone" as a unit of loudness. The decibel, a widely used sound unit, measures only the intensity of a noise. It is the loudness that is most objectionable to the human ear.

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ENTOMOLOGY

Inspect Plane Passengers

► IF AN airplane hostess looks you over carefully for decorative green and brown beetles trying to stow away, don't be alarmed.

For travelers as well as trucks of vegetables are being suspected of harboring the Japanese beetle, a pest in seven eastern states and the District of Columbia. An embargo is now in effect.

Eventually this pest which invaded New Jersey from Japan sometime before 1916 may reach all parts of the United States, but U. S. Department of Agriculture control measures are trying to slow its progress.

The regulations are aimed at halting the annual beetle blitz on garden truck crops, flowers and fruit trees, causing damage amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars each year.

Although not a pest of economic importance in Japan, the insect has found conditions and the lack of natural enemies here ideally suited for rapid multiplication and spread. In spite of all man's efforts, the Japanese beetle-infested regions marked off on U. S. Department of Agriculture maps as shaded areas continue to grow each year.

During 1951 more than 1,700 localities, including important military and commercial airfields, were scouted in 36 states. One or more beetles were found in 209 localities in 15 states. None was found in

or west of the Great Plains states except for one beetle near the Los Angeles, Calif., airport.

Railroads, truckers and produce shippers in Delaware, the District of Columbia, New Jersey and certain counties in Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia are subject to the quarantine.

Shipments of fresh corn on the cob, cabbage, apples, peaches and fresh beans in the pod, moving interstate to non-beetle areas, must be inspected or fumigated, according to the new regulations.

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METEOROLOGY

Warm Over Most of Nation Until Mid-July

► MOST OF the nation can get set for warmer weather than usual until the middle of July. This is the prediction of the Weather Bureau's Extended Forecast Section.

Only the Far West can expect its weather to be cooler than normal before July 15. New England, Florida and along the Gulf Coast will have about the usual temperatures.

Along with warmer weather will go less rain for much of the nation. However, in the northern third of the country and in

the Rocky Mountain states, frequent but brief showers are expected to produce normal or greater than normal amounts of rain prior to mid-July.

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ANTHROPOLOGY

America First Peopled in Many Waves of Migration

► AMERICA WAS first settled by people from the Old World as long ago as 10,000 years, but that was only the first in a long series of waves of migration.

Immigration was greatly stepped up about 3,500 to 4,000 years ago, when greatly increased numbers came to these shores and spread out over the whole continent.

This is the conclusion reached by Dr. Frank H. H. Roberts, Jr., of the Smithsonian Institution.

These early "displaced persons," were probably not political refugees, Dr. Roberts surmises, but were probably drawn, as were our own ancestors, by the promise of an abundant life.

Evidence of the early immigration waves is found by Dr. Roberts in the carbon-14 dates found for samples gathered from ancient sites.

The oldest samples are about 10,000 years old. There are only a few of these concentrated in the western part of the country, mostly along the eastern edge of the Rockies.

There is another group of samples with dates between 8,000 and 8,500 years old. These are from the western Plains area and the Humboldt Valley. Another group is in the neighborhood of 7,000 years old.

But beginning about 3,500 to 4,000 years ago, another group is found. These are by far the most numerous and are scattered all over the country, indicating a great expansion of population as well as a movement of peoples all over the country.

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