

PUBLIC HEALTH

Alcoholism Prevention Possible in a Few Years

➤ ALCOHOLISM, believed this country's fourth most important disease, can be effectively prevented "within a very few years," Dr. Roger J. Williams, director of the Biochemical Institute, Austin, Tex., has reported.

Both detection and treatment of alcoholism-prone individuals, before they become alcoholics, appear possible in the near future, Dr. Williams told the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Indianapolis, Ind. In doing so, he agreed with many scientists who believe alcoholism probably has a psychological basis, not one of nutritional deficiency.

Dr. Williams said that anatomy, physiology, biochemistry and psychology all contribute to the disease.

Other highlights of the AAAS meeting:

There is no significant difference between death rates in cities where the water is fluoridated to give protection from tooth cavities and cities where it is not, Dr. Thomas L. Hagan, dental officer with the U. S. Public Health Service in Washington told the Association. He said his studies confirmed previous research showing there is no basis for charges that water fluoridation has caused an increase or decrease in mortality.

Dr. Hagan said his studies also provided another link in the chain of evidence supporting the safety of water fluoridation. He compared the "recorded" and "expected" death rates for five cities before and after controlled fluoridation was started, eliminating mathematically such variables as age, race, sex and declining mortality.

Nearly two-thirds of all the new inmates entering American prisons each year have been in prison before. Within the prison, four-fifths of those sent to solitary confinement have been in solitary confinement before.

These figures show that the problem of getting lawbreakers to conform to accepted behavior patterns remains unsolved, Dr. Vernon Fox, professor of criminology and corrections, Florida State University, told the meeting. He said it remains unsolved because there is a basic conflict between the needs of social authority and of the non-conforming person.

Science News Letter, January 4, 1958

Do You Know?


Nearly seven percent, 142,000 persons, of a total of 2,000,000 Federal employees in 1953-54, were engaged in research and development.

World agricultural production increased by about three percent in the past year, slightly above the rate of population growth.

In general, insects come through the winter in good shape, even where temperatures drop to 25 degrees below zero.

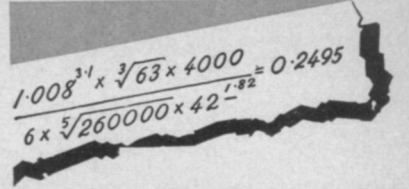
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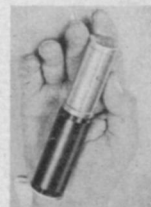
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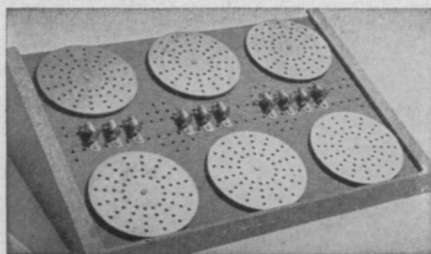
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