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EDUCATION

High Schools Are Place For Foundation in Math

➤ **HIGH SCHOOL** is the place for learning high school mathematics, not college, a U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare study shows.

And the skilled mathematics teacher is more important to a student's learning than either class size or various physical teaching devices.

Some 350 colleges participated in the survey of mathematics teaching summarized in an Office of Education bulletin written by Kenneth E. Brown.

Concerning the role of remedial programs in mathematics given in colleges, the report stressed that "no study shows that the college freshman receives, through a short remedial mathematics course, a desirable foundation in high school mathematics." One of the studies also showed a "most significant difference in pupil achievement under the various teachers in the experiment.

Copies of the 73-page report are available from the U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for 25 cents each.

Science News Letter, August 2, 1958

PHYSIOLOGY

Laughter Can Prove Fatal Or at Least Exhausting

➤ **IT IS** possible to die laughing.

Uncontrolled or involuntary laughter can be extremely exhausting, if not fatal.

Involuntary laughter may persist for only a few seconds, or it may deteriorate into a prolonged episode, lasting for hours, days or weeks, resulting in complete emotional and physical exhaustion.

This type of laughter can be caused by epilepsy or lesions of the brain, Drs. Mat-

thew W. Wood, Hendrik J. Svien and David Daly of the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn., report in the published *Proceedings of the Staff Meetings of the Mayo Clinic* (May 14). Victims of multiple sclerosis often experience uncontrolled laughter also, the doctors say.

A case they cited involved a 75-year-old man who was seized by an attack of uncontrolled laughter at his mother's funeral. Death followed three such fits of hilarity. Examination revealed a tumor of the brain.

Other examples included children, middle-aged and older men and women who had uncontrolled giggles in combination with symptoms such as weeping, whining, restlessness or epileptic seizures.

An important step in helping these victims of involuntary laughter is the accurate determination of the source or cause of the laughter, the doctors point out.

Science News Letter, August 2, 1958

PSYCHOLOGY

Competition on Highway Related to Accidents

➤ **IT IS** aggressiveness or competitive speed rather than just a love of moving fast that gets the automobile driver into trouble on the highway.

The fellow most involved in accidents is the one who believes that "It's fun to pass other cars on the highway even if you're not in any hurry."

The most competitive not only have the greatest number of accidents for which they are responsible but they are guilty of the greatest number of traffic law violations.

But as a man grows older, he becomes less aggressive. The number of years he has driven or the number of miles he has covered seem to have no effect on this attitude which is not a matter of experience so much as becoming more mature.

These conclusions are among those reported to the Highway Research Board, Washington, D. C., by Dr. Leon G. Goldstein of the Department of the Army and James N. Mosel of George Washington University.

Science News Letter, August 2, 1958

MEDICINE

Blood Test May Help Detect Rare Disease

➤ **A NEW BLOOD** test that frequently detects a rare but often fatal disease in time for effective treatment has been announced.

Making use of a blue dye, the test helps doctors diagnose LE, lupus erythematosus, a disease that affects the connective tissues of the body and may attack the skin, joints, kidneys and other organs.

The method of detection was devised by Dr. C. David Cooper of George Washington University and Drs. Thomas McPherson Brown, William R. Felts and Ruth H. Wichelhausen of that university and the Veterans Administration Hospital, Washington, D. C.

Science News Letter, August 2, 1958

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