

PSYCHOLOGY

World's Greatest Thoughts Contributed by Young Men

Study of Great Philosophers of Past 500 Years Reveals the Later Works Have Less Chance of Greatness

THE WORLD'S greatest thoughts are usually contributed by young men between the ages of 35 and 39, Dr. Harvey C. Lehman, of Ohio University, told the American Psychological Association meeting in Evanston, Ill.

The popular idea that great philosophers are ancient graybeards was blasted by Dr. Lehman when he made a survey of the ages at which philosophers of the past 500 years, generally acknowledged as eminent, produced their best works. The greatest number of these best works were produced during their authors' thirties.

Although these great philosophers have gone on producing profound books, in some instances until past the age of 90, these later works are less likely to be highly regarded by posterity than are those produced by the same men in their thirties.

The philosopher, Dr. Lehman's study revealed, seems also to need a practice period. Before the age of 30, he may be writing philosophical works. But the test of time is unlikely to put them on a par with what he writes a few years later.

The group of philosophers selected for study by Dr. Lehman because their greatness is conceded by writers of the history of philosophy included only one woman—Miss M. W. Calkins.

Few great philosophical works, he found, are the work of collaborators.

Science News Letter, September 6, 1941

Hormone Reduces Sex Drive

PHYSICIANS who find it necessary to prescribe some medication to temporarily reduce abnormal sex tension in women patients were urged to give a trial to one of the sex hormones, progesterone. Although it is a sex hormone, progesterone was successfully used to reduce, rather than to increase, sexual excitability in experiments on monkeys reported by Dr. Josephine Ball, of Johns Hopkins Medical School.

Science News Letter, September 6, 1941

X-Rays Cripple Baby's Mind

AN UNBORN child who was made an idiot by X-ray treatments of the mother was reported to the American Association for Applied Psychology, meeting with the American Psychological Association.

The baby, who suffers from the type of mental deficiency known to physicians as microcephalic idiocy and more popularly spoken of as "pinhead," was described to the meeting by Dr. Edgar A. Doll, of the Training School, Vineland, New Jersey.

Science News Letter, September 6, 1941

Test Picks Out Unstable

FLASHING lights, bright glare, and sounding buzzers can be used to pick out from among would-be airplane pil-

ots, the emotionally unstable boy who might crack up emotionally under strain of flight, Dr. Paul M. Fitts, of the University of Tennessee, told psychologists at the meeting of the American Psychological Association.

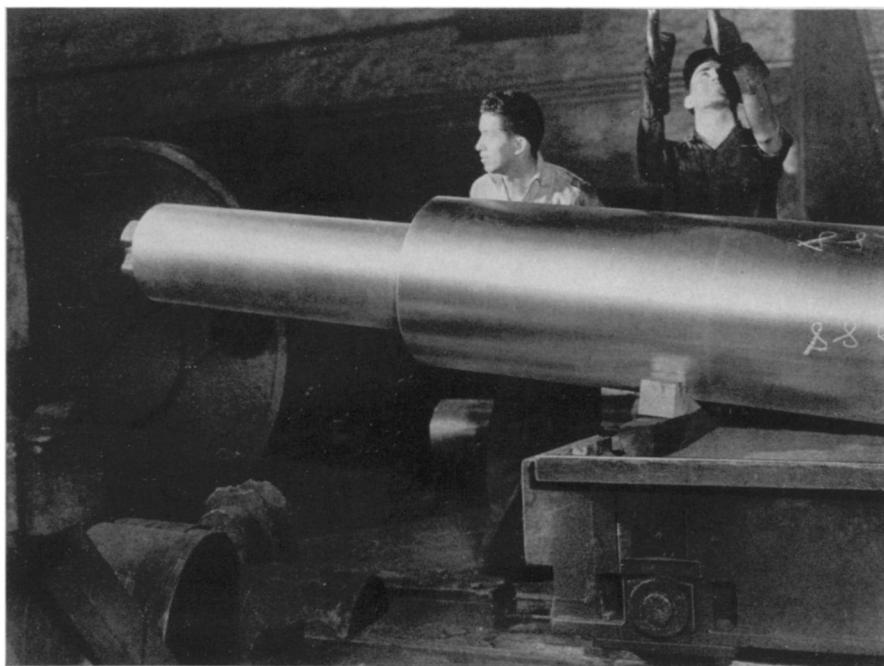
When a boy cannot do his job consistently if it becomes more and more complex and irritating, he is the sort who may break, Dr. Fitts said. He has devised a test which will reveal this weakness in a candidate before he risks his safety in the air.

The candidate faces a panel containing four small bright lights and he holds a "joy stick," which is the steering wheel of a pilot. Whenever one of the lights is turned on, he moves the stick in the corresponding direction.

This much is easy. But then distractions are introduced. A bright glare blinks on and off at irregular intervals right in the middle of the candidate's field of vision. A buzzer is sounded intermittently. His performance under these difficult conditions will show up his emotional stability or lack of it, Dr. Fitts indicated.

The test was tried out on groups of Civil Aeronautics students, athletes, and well adjusted college students and also on a group of neurotic cases.

Science News Letter, September 6, 1941



ROLL

This object which looks so much like a big gun, is really a weapon in America's industrial defense—a seven-and-a-half ton roll for rolling out sheet steel and plate. The roll, which was photographed in Mackintosh-Hemphill Company's Pittsburgh plant, is specially made to withstand the rigors of all-out production.