

Candidates on Science

(Continued from p. 83)

have replaced men digging with shovels and straining at heavy weights. And each advance—each more efficient machine—has not only increased production and raised our standard of living, but it has also improved drastically the hours and the conditions of labor. In an eight-hour day, five-day week, the modern worker produces more than twice as much as his grandfather did, working twelve hours a day, six days a week.

And there is no reason why the advances of the future—like those of the past—should not bring even greater changes, easing the conditions of labor, shortening hours, lightening work, and bringing new and cheaper and better products into every American home.

But if this vision of a stronger and more prosperous America is to become a reality—if automation is to be the key to a brighter future rather than the forerunner of economic distress—then labor and management and Government must work together to ease the inevitable dislocations and hardships which this new industrial revolution will bring. No one—especially labor—is opposed to economic progress. No one wants to work the old, back-breaking way if there is an easier way to do the job. No worker and no labor leader wants to stand in the way of America's economic growth. No one wants to keep his fellow worker from sharing the benefits of increased productivity. But our workers do want assurance that they will not be tossed on the scrap heap and forgotten like so many obsolete machines—that they will not be the neglected victims of industrial change, shut off from the new richness which their skill and labor has helped to create.

This, then, is the challenge to American leadership: to welcome and stimulate technological progress—with its promise of increasing productivity—while providing new jobs and new hope for the victims of industrial advance.

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PSYCHIATRY

Do Not Try to Jolly Suicidal Person

DO NOT TRY to jolly a deeply depressed person who is threatening suicide out of his "blues," Dr. Joseph Hirsh of Yeshiva University, New York, warns. Not only is argument or jollying ineffective, it may actually increase the person's depression and push him closer to suicide, he indicates.

Do not take lightly suicide threats, Dr. Hirsh warns. In a study of the history of a group of suicides, it was found that 68% had previously expressed suicidal ideas and 38% had specifically stated that they intended to kill themselves.

It is not wise to take lightly even what appears to be casual talk about suicide. The various fantasies and ideas, or more specific statements of intent should be taken with the utmost seriousness, Dr. Hirsh advises.

Psychiatrists have questioned the wisdom of putting the depressed person who is brooding about suicide into a mental hospital. Taking him away from his job and his home may make him desperate enough to turn his suicidal thoughts into suicide itself.

But neither should the mental hospital patient be prematurely discharged from the hospital. A number of depressed patients have killed themselves within eight months after discharge from a psychiatric hospital.

Suicide prevention and control should not be left entirely to the medical profession, Dr. Hirsh says in *Mental Hygiene*, 44:382, 1960.

"Suicide prevention is everyone's business, and the sooner the recognition that suicide is more than a final fact but a long process with many prominent and measurable antecedents, the greater is the likelihood that much can be done to prevent it."

Susceptibility to suicide is lowest among those who have strong family ties, church, work and community relationships. Single persons, the widowed and divorced generally have higher suicide rates than married people.

For persons in depression, the early morning hours may be critical from a suicidal point of view.

Suicide is rarely an impulsive, highly agitated, unpremeditated act. It is generally a well-defined, deliberate act.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Parents Love Children They Put in Institutions

PARENTS who put a retarded child in an institution love him just as much as those who keep him at home. Four completely different factors influence the institutionalization of retarded persons.

At a conference on scientific study of mental deficiency held in London, England, Dr. Gerhart Saenger, director of the Research Center of New York University's Graduate School of Public Administration and Social Service, presented the findings of a two-year study of factors influencing institutionalization of retarded persons in New York City. The study was released in Albany, N. Y., by Dr. Paul H. Hoch, New York State Commissioner of Mental Health.

The four factors are:

1. The degree of mental retardation. (All with an intelligence quotient of less than 20 are normally committed.)
2. The family income and racial background.
3. Family adequacy. (Conditions in substandard homes or slum areas often determine that a child shall be put in an institution.)

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4. Adjustment of the retarded child to the community. (Sexual offenses were found to lead almost invariably to placement in an institution.)

One of the most significant findings of the study was the fact that parents do not love their retarded child less if they decide to send him to an institution.

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INVENTIONS

Automobile Owners Benefit from New Patents

AUTOMOBILE OWNERS and drivers may well profit by one of the 942 patents issued this week—a burglar alarm that may be placed anywhere in the car.

The burglar alarm, for which Otto C. Wehrig of Seguin, Texas, was awarded patent No. 2,946,867, is simple in design, consisting of a block of some material such as wood or plastic, two wires and a steel ball.

The block contains a funnel-shaped hole in the top that leads into a horizontal tube through the block. At the top of the funnel there is a ledge with a slight rim on the inside and a relatively high wall on the outside. Two parallel wires are set in the floor of the horizontal tube so they do not touch one another, and these are connected into the horn circuit.

To set the alarm, the steel ball is placed on the ledge at the top of the block. Unauthorized activity in the car will jolt the ball off the ledge so that it will drop through the funnel into the tube to form a contact between the two wires. The horn will sound and continue to do so until the steel ball is removed or the battery runs down.

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