

MEDICINE

Doctors Are Reading—

► PEDESTRIANS WHO DRINK or disobey safety regulations make up a large percentage of those killed by auto accidents, a joint study by the New York City Police Department and Cornell University Medical College, New York, reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 180: 127, 1962.

In more than three-fourths of 200 fatal pedestrian accidents studied, the pedestrian himself was to blame. Crossing against signal lights and between intersections made up 80% of the causes of these accidents. Alcohol was found in more than 40% of persons killed, the majority being male alcoholic derelicts.

But 300,000 pedestrians of varying ages throughout the United States each year are struck by motor cars. In cities pedestrians make up the great majority of cases involved in motor accidents.

Automotive designers, the researchers pointed out, have eliminated many sharp external angles and projections on automobiles, with the result that when pedestrians are struck, their injuries are largely internal.

Drs. James R. McCarrroll, Paul W. Braunstein, William Cooper, Milton Helpert, Michael Seremetis, Preston A. Wade, and Sidney B. Weinberg, all of New York, reported the findings. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner cooperated with the Police Department in the joint study.

Appendicitis and Histoplasmosis

Two editorials in the *Journal* comment on articles on the current status of appendicitis and histoplasmosis.

Acute appendicitis develops in more than 200,000 patients each year in this country, and accounts for more than 2,000 deaths.

Researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, analyzed data on deaths from 5,000 cases of appendicitis occurring over a 23-year period. Although the death rate has gone down, early diagnosis before the appendix perforates would reduce the mortality figures further. Drs. Benjamin A. Barnes, Glenn E. Behringer, Frank C. Wheelock and Earle W. Wilkins reported the appendicitis study (p. 122).

Severe chronic pulmonary histoplasmosis, the fungus disease often caused by droppings of pigeons and chickens, is increasing in the United States.

The editorial said that with an "average follow-up of less than five years, one-third of the patients were dead, and two-thirds of the remainder had shown progression of their disease."

Reporting the study (a group of nearly 45,000 patients in more than 80 hospitals were screened) were Drs. M. L. Furcolow, Fred E. Tosh, and H. J. Lynch Jr., with Irene L. Doto, all of Kansas City, Kans., and Dr. Joseph Schubert of the Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, Ga. (p. 109).

Many of the histoplasmosis cases are mistaken for tuberculosis and some may be accompanied by T.B.

The editorial advises physicians to use skin and blood tests with patients who have any undiagnosed pulmonary disease. Some 8,200 histoplasmosis patients annually are being admitted to T.B. sanatoriums, according to estimates.

No Deafness From Shavers

Unless you shave as long as 50 minutes or more a day, the noise of your electric razor will not impair your hearing, a physician was told who inquired about a patient who had developed tinnitus (an ear affection characterized by buzzing, ringing and whistling) (p. 183).

• *Science News Letter*, 81:271 April 28, 1962

GENERAL SCIENCE

Twins Win Top Honors In Idaho Science Fair

► SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD twins, Joe and Ward Parkinson, are science winners who will go to the National Science Fair-International at Seattle, May 2-5, an activity of SCIENCE SERVICE, Washington, D. C., made up of winners from more than 200 local and regional fairs. The national fair is being held in connection with the Seattle World's Fair.

The twins will not be competing against each other, because as the producers of the top science exhibits in the Southeastern Idaho Science Fair they are in different fields of science. Joe is in biology, with a project on "Extra Corporeal Cardio-Pulmonary Perfusion," and Ward's project is on controlled thermonuclear reaction.

Another set of twins, Janis and Janet Yancey, sophomores at Blackfoot High School, also were award winners in the Idaho fair. Like the two boys, these twin girls are not in the same science fields. Janis was second in zoology, while Janet was second in the earth and space science division.

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PSYCHIATRY

Mothering Last Function Impaired by Mental Ills

► WHEN A PSYCHOTIC mother is being treated by drugs and can be returned to her home as an outpatient, the doctor need not fear for the children she cares for.

This reassurance may be gained from a study reported to the American Orthopsychiatric Association in Los Angeles by Drs. James N. Sussex, Frances Gassman and Sherman C. Raffel of the Medical College of Alabama, Birmingham.

The study, they said, supports the conclusion that "mothering is frequently the last function to be impaired by mental illness." The study showed that all children between six and ten whose mothers were outpatients at the Medical College clinic had high ratings on their mental health.

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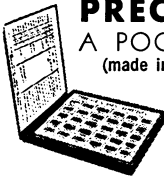


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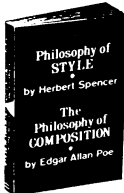
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