

medicine at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine.

Dr. Stern blames the condition on blockage or inflammation of very tiny blood vessels within the walls of the arteries themselves. As a result of such blockage of these tiny vessels, called vasa vasorum, cells of the artery walls which are normally nourished with blood from the tiny vasa vasorum are deprived of the oxygen and food they need. Consequently they degenerate with the changes known as arteriosclerosis or hardening of the arteries.

Up to this time, Dr. Stern said, it has not been fully accepted by scientists that the walls of arteries are penetrated beyond the outer one-third by these nourishing blood vessels or vasa vasorum. Dr. Stern presented evidence for his belief that the entire artery wall is permeated by these very small blood vessels.

Injury, certain poisons, and increased stickiness of the blood itself are among the things that may cause blockage of the blood vessels of the artery walls. Other things causing blockage, Dr. Stern said, may be clumps of bacteria, fat globules, and masses of white blood cells.

Science News Letter, December 3, 1938

ARCHAEOLOGY

Metal Art Proves Glories Of Persian Wonder Throne

IF YOU have heard of the wonder throne built for Persian king Chosroes the Second, and if you doubted that any monarch really enjoyed quite so curious a contrivance you need doubt no longer.

The king really did have a throne that was a pavilion, big enough for himself and hundreds of his courtiers besides. The whole thing really did turn, so that it could face the heavens most favorably in different seasons. And it was royally beautiful, and set in the midst of a lovely garden.

The throne itself can never be found, because Romans burned it when they overthrew the powerful Sassanian dynasty of Persian kings in the seventh century A.D. But in the State Museum at Berlin there is a big bronze salver made about that time, which is engraved to show a building in the center of a radiating garden.

This metal picture has been identified. Dr. Phyllis Ackerman of the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology, says it represents the lost throne of King Chosroes.

The engraving shows a pavilion with small central dome and four corner



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domes. Such construction must have been wood—as the light-weight throne on its turn-table reputedly was.

A curtain encloses the domed area. Near the roof is a graceful arcade, which in winter was also curtained, with beaver fur and sable, to keep the king warm. His nobles sat outside on three columned porches, and took the weather.

Dr. Ackerman even points out a row of spool-like wheels under the building,

indicating the mechanism for turning the throne. Horses in a pit beneath pulled it around.

Astral symbols pervade the construction, visible even in the somewhat sketchy engraving. When Chosroes was king, he and the stars, and planets, and fire, and thunder played leading roles in ceremonies for which the fantastic throne-pavilion provided a perfect setting.

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ANTHROPOLOGY

People of Future Will Be Bigger But Maybe Not Better

TALLER, more robust men and women, but with poorer teeth than we have now, will make up the population of the future if trends of the immediate past and the present continue, Dr. Harry L. Shapiro, anthropologist of the American Museum of Natural History, told the American Philosophical Society in a symposium arranged by the Population Association of America.

But while Dr. Shapiro was willing to forecast what the people of the future will look like, he would undertake no prophecy as to their mental and biological quality. Bigger doesn't always mean better, he reminded his audience.

A great deal will depend on what living conditions are provided for future generations, he said. There is no certainty that the change for the bigger observable in such diverse groups as college students, army recruits, and the children of Japanese immigrants in Hawaii is part of a general evolutionary sweep. More likely it is simply a matter of better nutrition and living conditions. And there is no assurance that the higher IQ level observed in these bigger individuals of the younger generation has any necessary connection with their size.

Mixing of races, which it is now fashionable in some circles to view with alarm, Dr. Shapiro was inclined to think on the whole a good thing. His only concern over the American melting-pot was that in recent decades various stocks had been dumped in so fast that they have tended to form clumps that refuse to melt together. He spoke favorably of such internal migration movements as the drifting out of part of the old native New England stock and their replacement by French Canadians, Italians and

Poles who intermarry with the stay-at-home Yankees.

Farm Families Smaller

FARMS of the future will become larger and farm families smaller, if present and recent trends continue in the better farm areas of the nation, Dr. C. C. Taylor, head of the division of farm population and rural life, U. S. Department of Agriculture, ventured as his prophecy.

"Under normal price levels, farms in these areas will become more profitable, net incomes per farm and family will be higher, levels of living will be higher, urbanization will increase, and birth rates will fall," said Dr. Taylor. "The poorer land areas of the nation, on the other hand, unless zoned against occupancies of certain types, will continue as small farm areas, incomes will remain low, mechanization will advance slowly if at all, birth rates will continue considerably above the national level, and although there will be migration out during periods of prosperity, there will be considerable in-migration in periods of depression."

Mechanization of farming, as seen by Dr. Taylor, has made vast changes not only in the material standards of living and of labor on the better American farms; it has changed the farmer's way of thinking. He is essentially a businessman, producing goods for the market. The pioneer way of living and thinking, wherein most goods for family consumption were produced and processed at home, and most thinking accordingly centered at home, survives mainly now in what we are pleased to call the "backward" areas.

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PSYCHIATRY

Mental Disease Cases Will Be Doubled By 1960

BY 1960 the amount of mental disease in the nation will be double what it now is if it progresses at the same rate as at present, Harold F. Dorn, statistician of the U. S. Public Health Service, predicts in a survey of the situation just published by the federal health service.

Increasing age of the population, and not the stress and strain of modern life, is the factor that will double the amount of mental disease in the nation, according to Mr. Dorn's findings.

From 110,000 to 120,000 of the 2,144,800 infants born during 1936 will eventually be committed to a hospital for mental disease, Mr. Dorn states, unless there is a decrease in the rate at which patients are admitted for the first time to mental hospitals.

By 1960 Mr. Dorn estimates that about 135,000 persons each year will be committed to a mental hospital for the first time, if the commitment rates for the whole nation then are no greater than they were for New York State during the three-year period 1929-31. This is nearly twice the present number of first commitments.

Analysis of the number of first admissions to mental hospitals in Massachusetts, New York and Illinois, Mr. Dorn says, does not bear out the belief that mental disease has increased alarmingly in recent years as a result of modern living conditions.

The number of first admissions per 100,000 population decreased among women under 70 years of age in each state. In Massachusetts the same was true for men. In New York and Illinois commitment rates decreased at the younger ages but after age 45 or 50 some increase occurred.

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The eye disease trachoma was a plague in ancient Egypt, as it is today.

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