

is an oak-hickory association, with patches of other mixed hardwoods on the ridge and the creek bottoms. Among the species infrequently found in this region she lists blue ash, pin-oak, catalpa and Kentucky coffee tree, together with the large shrubs, service-berry and wahoo.

After Miss Sawyer's parents bought the tract as a site for their home, they had a considerable number of over-mature and defective trees felled and sawed into lumber for building. From now on, however, only limited cutting is planned. Miss Sawyer states:

"In the future, with due regard to its natural inhabitants, we plan to 'farm' the woods. All dead trees will be cut

and left to decay. Most of the over-mature trees will be cut, but a few will be left around the building site for their esthetic value. As the young trees reach maturity, they will be cut for lumber and their tops used for fuel. Crowded, deformed and defective trees will be taken for firewood.

"With the good management which we plan to give the tract, it can be not only a pleasant place to live but also a sound financial investment. It can continue to be representative of the original forest of southwestern Indiana."

Miss Sawyer is one of 40 winners in the nation-wide Seventh Annual Science Talent Search.

*Science News Letter, February 21, 1948*

## PSYCHOLOGY

## Clearer Voice on Phone

➤ THE noise of escaping steam heard in one ear makes it easier to hear conversation over the telephone with the other ear.

You might think that the two noises would mix in your head making the speech unintelligible, or that the "Sh-h-h" noise would drown out what was being said.

But tests conducted at the Harvard University Psycho-Acoustic Laboratory by Dr. James P. Egan, now at the University of Wisconsin, showed that if the noise is kept at a moderate level of loudness it actually makes the speech heard with the other ear seem both louder and more distinct.

Listeners said, "When the noise comes on, it sounds as if the talker raises his voice in order to make himself heard above the noise," or that the speech sounded more "crisp."

Not only does the speech sound louder when the noise first reaches the other ear, but it continues to appear louder even after the noise has been turned off for a while. And the effect does not wear off after repeated exposures to the noise.

Dr. Egan gives two possible explanations of the odd experience. It is possible, he suggests, that the noise in the opposite ear has an effect on the muscles of the middle ear of the telephone ear. This theory fits in with the observation that the apparent loudness of the speech fades slowly back to normal after the noise is turned off.

The other explanation is based on certain observations regarding judg-

ments of loudness. If you hear exactly the same note with both ears, it seems louder than the same sound does with either ear alone. But if the notes or sounds are very different, then the two do not add up to make a louder sound. The extent to which the two sounds add up depends upon the similarity in frequency of the two sounds.

The reason why the "Sh-h-h" noise like escaping steam makes speech sound louder in the other ear might be because there is some similarity between the noise and the voice which, in the case of the tests, was reading Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations."

Details of the experiments are published in the *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* (Jan.).

*Science News Letter, February 21, 1948*

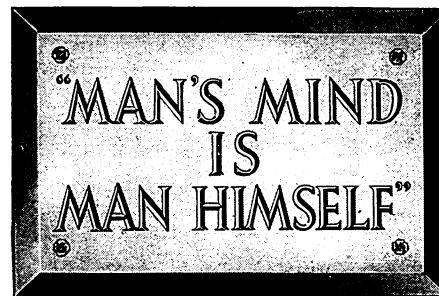
## CHEMISTRY

## Hair Shampoo Being Made From Sub-Standard Coffee

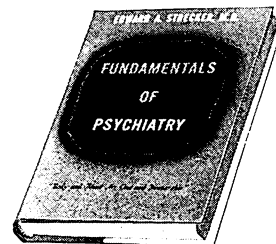
➤ HAIR SHAMPOO is now being manufactured from sub-standard and other coffee which cannot be used for beverage purposes. Other products developed to utilize coffee that would normally be wasted are scheduled to be introduced later in the year.

The oils, glycerized materials and tannic acid contained in coffee beans form the basic ingredients in the new shampoo produced by Coffette Products, Inc., Brooklyn, N. Y. These natural raw materials, with no alcohol or harsh chemicals added, are said to give the shampoo unique qualities.

*Science News Letter, February 21, 1948*



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