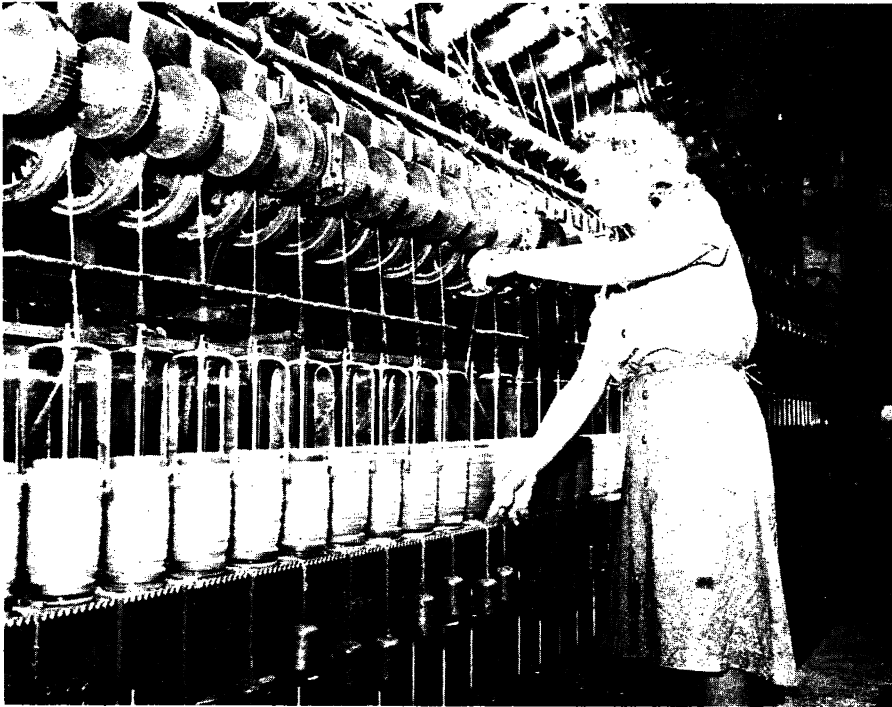




SPINNING

This spinning machine spins loose strands of American hemp into fine yarns. U.S.D.A. photograph by Forsythe.

PSYCHIATRY

Hypnotized Boys and Girls Can Give Meaning of Dreams

Although Knowing Nothing of Freud, Normal College Students Were Able Also To Translate Famous Myths

DREAMS have a language all their own, which can be translated by practically any normal person while he is under hypnosis, the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Boston was told by Dr. Leslie H. Farber and Dr. Charles Fisher of Washington, D. C.

These studies confirm Freud's theories of dream symbolism, but prove that you do not have to be a psychoanalyst to translate them. These research psychiatrists chose a group of healthy young college students who not only produced dreams to order when they were hypnotized, but translated them too. The validity of the answers was then checked in a series of control experiments, described in detail by Dr. Farber and Dr. Fisher.

The psychoanalytic idea of a "universal unconscious language" has been

taken out of the realm of controversy by these experiments, and made available for scientific study.

These college students who had never read Freud translated other people's dreams as readily as their own in most cases giving the classical Freudian interpretations which have aroused a storm of controversy ever since Freud published his "Interpretation of Dreams."

It was stressed by the psychiatrists that these experimental subjects were not neurotics, but normal, average college students who are totally unable to translate dreams either before or after hypnosis.

Also confirming psychoanalytic speculations were the translations obtained of myths—such as Moses in the Bulrushes and the Garden of Eden story—which tallied with Freudian theory.

Dreams of psychoanalytic patients were also translated, and under hypnosis these students were able to make sense out of the "unintelligible" speech of mental hospital patients, reported to them by the hypnotist.

Regarding the controversial question of the sexual nature of Freudian symbol interpretation—which at first sight appears to be completely confirmed by these hypnotic experiments—Dr. Farber and Dr. Fisher suggested another explanation.

The language of the unconscious, they said, as revealed in dreams, myths and artistic creations, is much more primitive and limited than waking language, since it remains comparatively unchanged since early childhood.

In dreams, complicated adult experiences have to be expressed by a relatively small number of concepts, or symbols, many of which refer to the bodily functions most important in childhood. They also stressed the fact that dreams have many meanings, on different levels, and that it is impossible to "interpret" a dream without studying all the circumstances which produced it. Their experiments, they said, were an attempt to study unconscious language, through dreams, by isolating the various factors which operate in dream production.

This technique of producing experimental dreams provides a scientific method for verifying psychoanalytic theory, as well as for general study of the unconscious, including the formation of bodily symptoms in neurosis.

Science News Letter, May 30, 1942

MEDICINE—PSYCHIATRY

Marihuana Found Useful In Certain Mental Ills

MARIHUANA, often blamed for crime and insanity among its users who smoke it in "reefers," "muggles" or "goof-butts," was reported as a drug of potentially "great usefulness in the treatment of drug addicts" and patients suffering from mental depressions and other nervous disorders.

This new and favorable picture of marihuana appeared in a report by Dr. Samuel Allentuck, of New York City, to the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Boston.

Dr. Allentuck used the drug experimentally in cases of mental depression and nervous disorders characterized by listlessness and lack of appetite. The drug was found to increase the appetite, and induce calmness and relaxation in those previously greatly agitated.

Effect of the drug on 77 volunteers from New York's prison population had previously been studied by a special research group appointed by Mayor LaGuardia. These studies showed marihuana was something like alcohol in that it did not create a "new" personality but, by lowering inhibitions, accentuated all traits, both harmful and beneficial.

The aftermath of prolonged use of the drug strongly resembles an alcoholic hangover, it was reported.

Used to combat withdrawal symptoms of narcotic drug addicts who were being taken off their drug, marihuana lessened the severity of the withdrawal symptoms or eliminated them sooner.

"The patient was in a better frame of mind, his spirits elevated, his physical condition was rapidly rehabilitated and he expressed a wish to return to his occupation sooner," Dr. Allentuck reported. He concluded: "There is no evidence to suggest that the continued use of marihuana is a stepping stone to the use of opiates. Prolonged use of the drug does not lead to physical, mental or moral degeneration, nor have we observed any permanent deleterious effects from its continued use. Quite the contrary, marihuana and its derivatives and allied synthetics have potentially valuable therapeutic applications which merit future investigations."

Science News Letter, May 30, 1942

PSYCHIATRY

Navy Psychiatrists Are Saving Manpower for Industry

Men Who Would Be Likely To Break Mentally Under Extraordinary Strains of Battle Are Placed in Jobs

HOW Navy psychiatrists are saving money and precious manpower for both the Navy and local communities by returning to suitable jobs in civilian life those men likely to break mentally under the unusually severe strains of sea warfare was disclosed by Commander Uno H. Helgesson before a joint meeting of the American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychopathological Association in Boston.

Very prompt psychiatric first aid treatment for battle casualties was also urged. He suggested mobile first-aid posts which could be sent right to the scene of battle.

The Navy is not the cold, impersonal machine that military organizations are commonly thought to be, Commander Helgesson said. Consideration has been given to the effects on the individual and community morale of sending a man home after he has been sworn in.

So the Red Cross was requested to furnish psychiatric social workers who act as liaison between the Navy and the community and family. Through local Red Cross chapters, psychiatric social workers at the Navy training stations have been able to get the rejected men into their old jobs or into new ones better suited to them, or they have put them into the hands of competent clinics or welfare organizations for such assistance as they need.

It is explained to the rejected man that as a civilian worker he has a function as important in this war as that of a sailor.

Those rejected include the "weak sisters," the "gripes" and those who resent authority and the "sick bay addicts" who can rarely be counted on in an emergency, as well as men with epilepsy or the early symptoms of actual mental disease. If such men were not removed from duty early in their service, it would deprive war industries of workers and at the same time be a great loss to the Navy.

"The economic loss from this kind of casualty, although it probably would run into the millions in a year's time, is not so serious as the loss in manpower and efficiency," Commander Helgesson said.

"We have no unlimited supply of commissioned officers and petty officers to train our new recruits. All the money in the world can not buy a ready-made experienced commissioned officer or petty officer. Economy of manpower is, therefore, particularly essential among officer and petty officer personnel."

Mobile psychiatric first aid posts were urged by Commander Helgesson to care for psychiatric battle casualties. These acute mental conditions following combat are of quite a different nature from peace-time neuroses, Commander Helgesson explained. They are mental

breakdowns in the face of difficulties which are not the common experience of man. But it is a well-known fact that the majority of these combat casualties can be returned to useful civilian occupations if treated early enough.

The trouble is that naval casualties occur in widely scattered areas and a long time, sometimes weeks, may elapse before they reach a naval hospital.

Among British casualties and also American, there are some who go into a deep stupor like that in some cases of the mental disease schizophrenia. But in the case of the battle casualties, it has been found that prompt treatment results in quick and relatively complete improvement. This peculiar form of psychiatric battle casualty seems to be more common in this war than in any before.

Science News Letter, May 30, 1942

AERONAUTICS

Army Can Use at Least 24,000 Model Airplanes

A REQUEST for thousands of airplane models for the Interceptor Command of the U. S. Army has been transmitted to Science Clubs of America by Brig. Gen. J. K. Cannon, commanding the Army's First Interceptor Command. These models will be used in training airplane spotters. At least 24,000 will be needed.

Science Clubs of America members are being asked to continue to make seven models right through the summer. After the models are completed they should be sent directly to Science Clubs of America headquarters at 310 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y., where they will be picked up by the Army and distributed to the more than 8,000 observation posts scattered from Maine to Florida along the Atlantic seacoast. Science Clubs of America are sponsored by Science Service.

Models for the Interceptor Command may be made from the much more easily worked balsa wood, instead of pine, which is required for Navy models.

The Army will need only seven planes. These may be built on the scale of 1 to 72 or may be enlarged to a scale of 1 to 36. The Navy plans, now in the hands of schools, may be used for the details. Each unit in the Army program will consist of seven planes. One single motored plane of the P-40 type, three bi-motor ships of the B-26, P-39 and DC-3 types, two multi-motors of the B-17 and B-24 types and the Curtiss biplane SBC-4.

Throughout the entire nation high