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Roads Threat to Drivers of New, Lower Vehicles

Washington, (Science Service)—Many roads and highways traveled today by drivers of fashionable low-slung cars pose a safety threat in the form of reduced visibility. Today the average driver's eyes are less than four feet above the pavement, Clyde E. Lee, assistant professor of civil engineering at the University of Texas, told the highway research board meeting here. But many well-traveled roads have been designated by highway experts using the 4.5 feet previously recommended as the average height of the driver's eyes above the pavement.

Drivers Plagued
As a result, drivers of smaller, lower cars are plagued by restricted visibility at times. Their horizontal sight distance is restricted at many locations, for instance, by stationary objects such as guard rails, wing walls and parked vehicles, he said.

The threat to motorist safety can be corrected through minor changes in road design if the designer recognizes that drivers' eyes are not as high as they used to be, Lee said.

Suggestions Made
K. A. Stonex, assistant director of General Motors proving grounds, Milford, Mich., suggested that guard rails be eliminated where possible to improve new highway safety. Next to skidding, he said, side slopes prove to be the big factor in a car's rolling over if it leaves the highway. To improve safety, he suggested the slopes be gentle, smooth and clear of obstacles, and be built of firm material.

To cut down chances for bad skids, fine bituminous mixtures can be given a sand additive. Profs. Jack E. Stephens of the University of Connecticut and William H. Goetz of Purdue University reported that mixtures made with sand having rounded particles gave the best overall anti-skid performances. Mixtures made with sand having particles with sharp points at first gave higher skid resistance, but these sharp edges soon wore off.

Doctor Worries About Lack of Medical Students

New York (Science Service)—Fewer students applying to the nation's medical schools and the lower grades of those that do apply can mean disaster for U.S. medicine.

If something is not done about the shortage of top-grade candidates for medical schools, "medicine will deteriorate and we will fail miserably to provide the physicians" the U.S. needs, said Dr. Robert A. Moore, president of the State University of New York Downstate Medical center.

He told scientists attending the annual William Henry Welch lecture at Mt. Sinai hospital here that the percentage of college graduates applying to medical schools has declined from 11 per cent in 1928 to about 4 per cent today. At the same time medical schools have increased their enrollment by 1,671. Today 18 per cent of the applicants have "A" averages compared with 40 per cent 10 years ago.

Reasons Listed
There are several possible reasons for medicine's inability to attract more of the best graduates, Dr. Moore said. These include: long preparation time; high education costs; limited scholarship funds; inflexible program, and the general public's misconception that it is difficult to be admitted to a medical school.

Dr. Moore urged that this serious challenge to medical education be analyzed as a "scientific research problem." Active recruitment and a shortening of the total period of preparation to become a doctor were two remedies he suggested.

Petty Attends Meeting in Eugene

Ashland—Raymond E. Petty, regional representative of the state system of higher education's general extension division, Friday attended the monthly meeting of the division's staff members in Eugene.

Slated for discussion at the meeting were plans for assigning instructors for spring term evening classes, budgetary problems and the division's activities during the current winter term.