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to it at all if the rest of the diet is properly balanced. But the cause-and-effect relationship in France is so clear and so common that he calls cirrhosis of the liver *la maladie du gros rouge*. The vast majority of 8,000 victims studied had drunk two to three quarts of the stuff every day.

What Is a Homosexual?

With homosexuality in Britain a matter of government concern and wide-open public discussion (TIME, Dec. 16), the once-taboo subject got a whirl in last week's *British Medical Journal*. First difficulty, reported a three-man research team which had worked at Bristol Mental Hospitals, is to find out just what a homosexual is. So the Bristol psychiatrists went to nearby prisons, got 64 volunteer subjects, aged 20 to 61, doing time for unnatural acts. The researchers exploded a lot of widespread fallacies:

¶ Even among prison cases, homosexuality is no all-or-nothing quality. Only nine of the 64 were 100% homosexual; all the rest were "mixed" cases with varying degrees of heterosexuality. While half definitely preferred the company of other males, 18 preferred that of women (13 were indifferent). Several would have been willing to marry for the sake of having children, but could not bear the thought of heterosexual intercourse.

¶ With only four exceptions, the subjects were no different physically from men with normal drives; they were not unusually hippy, did not have overdeveloped breasts, their pubic hair grew in the normal male pattern.

¶ There was no consistent predisposing factor (such as head injury) as some investigators have alleged. Alcohol was not important in their own lives, but had been in many cases for their fathers, often to the point of breaking up the home.

¶ The difference between the homosexuals' ratio of male-female hormone output and that of normal men used for comparison was negligible.

One disturbing finding: nine of the 64 had been scoutmasters and had had relations with boys in their troops. "This suggests," say the three psychiatrists guardedly, "either that scouting strongly activates latent homosexuality or that homosexuals . . . join the scouting movement because of the . . . opportunities."

Mushroom Madness

In the spotless Basel laboratories of the Swiss drug company Sandoz A.G., a short, trim scientist of 52 performed a strange experiment. Research Director Albert Hofmann meticulously dissolved five milligrams of white crystals in a test tube of water. Then, while tense assistants looked on, he swallowed the potion, lay down on a couch and waited. Within an hour Hofmann began to report: "I am losing my normal bodily sensations . . . My perception of space and time is changing . . . Your faces appear strange . . ." Finally: "Now, as I close my eyes, I see a wonderful but indistinct kaleidoscopic train of visions. They are vividly colored."

Alone with his visions, Experimenter

Hofmann stayed on the couch three hours until the drug's effects wore off. He got up feeling fine. After two years of delicate lab work, he announced last week, Hofmann had managed to isolate a mysterious substance—the chemical that has caused men of many races, through the millennia, to have otherworldly visions after eating certain kinds of mushrooms.

For Hofmann, such chemically induced visions are not new. He is famed among the world's biochemists and psychiatrists because in 1943, by accident, he absorbed (probably through the skin of his fingers, he now speculates) an infinitesimal amount of a potent chemical. For a while it made him wacky. He identified it as lysergic acid diethylamide, now universally known as LSD-25. It has proved an



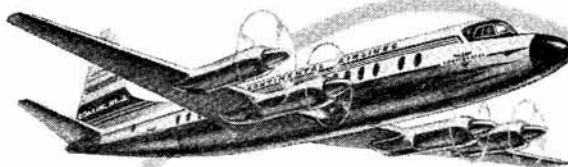
CHEMIST HOFMANN
From hallucinations, hope.

invaluable weapon to psychiatrists seeking to reproduce symptoms like those of schizophrenia (TIME, Dec. 19, 1955).

Researcher Hofmann moved from LSD to mushrooms thanks largely to Ethnologist (and a J. P. Morgan vice president) R. Gordon Wasson and his Russian-born wife, two dedicated, medical-minded mushroom eaters. The Wassons have voyaged all over the world seeking ritual devotees of exotic mushrooms and sharing their hallucinations, reported on their experiences in LIFE and in a \$125 book (only 500 copies printed), *Mushrooms, Russia and History*. A French companion on their travels sent Hofmann specimens of one of the most potent mushrooms, *Psilocybe mexicana*. From its little brown umbrella, perched on a delicate stem, Hofmann isolated the pure chemical (he calls it psilocybin) that induced his experimental hallucinations.

Sandoz will release psilocybin only to highly reputable medical investigators. To them, it means that they can now use a third chemically pure substance—in addition to LSD-25 and mescaline—to induce controllable symptoms like those of uncontrolled mental illness. From such studies they hope to find chemical cures.

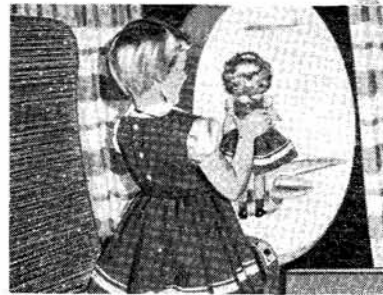
TIME, JUNE 16, 1958



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