RUBBER FROM CORN AND SOYBEAN OILS.

From the rubber-producing tree in the Dutch East Indies, 8000 miles away to the corn fields and soybean fields of Illinois in the middle west is a far cry but there is ample reason to believe that a part of the rubber problem which was pitched into the nation's lap by the exigencies of war will find solution in the middle western states where thrives the stately corn and the lush soybean. In recent months, agricultural chemists have labored long and late to take the fatty acids which exist in corn oil and soybean and stretch them into a substance which has the properties of rubber. Already it has moved beyond the experimental stage and is receiving keen attention by those who have been charged with the responsibility of providing synthetic rubber or rubber substitutes. At the risk of being characterized as a prophet without honor, we venture the firm belief that a new industry is in the making which will produce rubber substitutes from the vegetable oils that lie hidden in the corn and soybean crops of the middle west. In 1941, Illinois produced 51% of all the soybeans raised in the nation. It also had a huge corn crop. Hence the importance of this scientific exploration to the farmers of our state. It is estimated that a very satisfactory rubber substitute can be produced from farm crops at a cost of about 10¢ per pound. If so, the sturdy cornstalk may yet displace the Malayan rubber tree as the substance which makes the 3,000,000 cars and trucks of the nation move smoothly and without shock across the highways of the land.

PROBLEM AND TRAGEDY

General Hershey, Director of the Selective Service System testified before the House Appropriations Committee that one of his problems consists of 150,000 young men of military age who cannot read up to the level of a child in the fourth grade and must therefore be classed as illiterates. They look like soldiers; they are physically fit; but they cannot read and hence might make a mistake at a time when a mistake might prove costly. If these young men are permitted to remain at home because of illiteracy, their position will be embarrassing because they will be the objects of curious inquiry as to why they are not in the military service. Moreover, they become extremely embarrassing to their families. Perhaps some type of limited service will be devised wherein they can prove useful. Meanwhile, it is pertinent to ask why we should have 150,000 illiterate young men in view of the expenditures made for education and training in the last generation. Truly, here is a problem and a tragedy.
ON A BICYCLE BUILT FOR TWO.

The hearts of old timers warm with memory as they think back to the days of high wheeled bicycles. It was also the era of smart buggies, be-ribboned whips, flat straw hats, fast horses. The high-wheeled cycle gave way to the more practical rubber-tired "bike" of today even as the horse and buggy made way for the motor car. Somehow, it seemed that even the "bike" was destined to fall before the assault of modern civilization and then came a spurt of interest in bicycling, both as a fad and as a reducing exercise. Strange as it may seem, in the year of 1941, the bike makers of the land produced 1,827,000 bicycles in 10 different models, the average weight of which was 55 pounds. Then came the war and the need for rubber conservation. Interest in bikes took on fresh impetus and now, 12 leading bicycle makers propose to produce 750,000 Victory Models weighing about 34 pounds each and designed to accommodate adults as well as youngsters. They will be minus copper, nickel plated work and other gadgets and will save millions of pounds of copper and about 30,000 tons of steel. But in the sentiment of the old song, if bicycles are to return, what about the old "Bicycle Built for Two."

ILICIT SPIRITS.

Bootlegging was a product of the world war. Prohibition was enacted by the Congress as a defense measure and then remained for sixteen years. Thus the art of bootlegging was born and flourished with abandon until 1933 when the 18th amendment was repealed. And the art is still here. The annual report of the Secretary of the Treasury contains an analysis by the Enforcement Division of the Alcohol Tax Unit for the fiscal year which ended on June 30, 1941 indicating that bootlegging is still a very real problem with enforcement officials. In the last fiscal year, 11,826 stills were captured by Treasury agents having a capacity of 2,000,000 gallons. Other seizures included nearly 7 million gallons of mash and more than 275,000 gallons of finished spirits. Property having a value of nearly 2½ million dollars was also seized in connection with treasury raids, including 4752 trucks and motorcars. The heavy penalties which now attach to bootlegging seem to be but a mild deterrent in view of the fact that more than 26,000 persons were arrested last year for the offense of making and selling illicit liquor. One of the great lures today is the effort to transport and sell liquor in dry states. For this offense 332 persons were arrested, 192 were convicted, 215 cars were seized and more than 12,000 gallons of spirits were confiscated. Thus does an illicit war-apawned industry continue to carry on thro the years.