

IN THIS ISSUE

ALTHOUGH the summer season is the most favorable for obtaining an adequate diet at low cost, a survey of relief families in Washington, D. C., in July, 1938, disclosed that the food supply of many families at the time of the survey was insufficient in quantity and did not provide all the needed nutritive elements. This investigation by the United States Public Health Service is described in "Summer Diets of the Poor in Washington, D. C.," by Dorothy G. Wiehl and Carroll E. Palmer. The findings of this study are in accord with those from other investigations of the dietaries of low-income families. The method of the survey is of more general interest because it presents a simple method for a rapid, large-scale survey to provide current data on family dietaries in a community.

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What type of service does the public health nurse perform in the tuberculous family? Since public health nursing constitutes a substantial part of the present program for the control of tuberculosis, the answer to this question is of considerable interest. In the article, "A Study of Public Health Nursing Service in Tuberculous Families in the Mulberry District of New York City," by Miss Jean Downes of the Fund's staff and Miss Clara R. Price, R.N., Director of the Nursing Staff of the Mulberry Health Center, the various types of nursing service rendered in tuberculous families in the Mulberry district are described and are evaluated in relation to the main objectives of the public health nursing program in tuberculosis. It is believed that such an appraisal affords some indication of the value of the nursing service.

Past studies have indicated that roughly of the order of 18 per cent of native white urban couples of completed fertility are without offspring, but these leave unanswered the question concerning the extent to which such childlessness is voluntary and the extent to which it represents physical inability to have children. In an article, "Voluntary and Involuntary Aspects of Childlessness," Clyde V. Kiser of the Fund's staff presents results from an investigation of a small but apparently fairly representative group of white childless couples in New York City. The core of the analysis concerns the extent of contraceptive practice among 291 wives reporting that they were never pregnant although they had been married ten years or more and were under 40 years of age at the time of marriage.

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Studies of contraceptive practice in selected population groups have indicated that, for the groups studied, differences in the prevalence and effectiveness of contraception were factors of the greatest importance in variations in fertility.

"Birth Control in a Midwestern City" by Regine K. Stix, M.D., the first of a series of articles on the clinics of the Cincinnati Committee on Maternal Health, discusses the effect of contraception on the fertility of clinic patients before they applied for instruction at the clinic. In this group, as in others differently selected, birth and pregnancy rates differed by social class. The differences in rates were due mainly to differences in contraceptive practice.

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The chronic diseases and defects of adult life are matters of increasing concern to health workers. In the study of these problems the emphasis has been largely upon the clinical and laboratory approach. In "Elevated Systolic Blood Pressure in a Rural Population," Dr. Ralph E. Wheeler has explored the extent to which field studies may offer solutions to the question of the prevalence of high blood pressure in a group of essentially well persons, and to the question of what other medical findings occur more commonly in persons with high blood pressure than in others.