

## IN THIS ISSUE

MORTALITY among young men aged 20-34 has declined nearly 30 per cent since the World War. However, results of Selective Service examinations do not indicate a similar improvement in the physical status of living young men. These significant facts are discussed in the article "Physical Status of Young Men, 1918 and 1941," by Mr. George St.J. Perrott. Because the health status of the civilian population is of grave concern to us in our program of national defense, the leading causes of rejection of young men called for military training should be seriously studied. Mr. Perrott points out that they may serve as a guide in the planning of future health services to the end that future generations of young men may have the maximum possible health and vigor.



Defective teeth is the leading cause of rejection among young men called for military training. Eight per cent of the total men examined have been excluded for this reason. Since present knowledge is not sufficient for the prevention of initiation of caries, prevention of serious dental defects is dependent upon procedures of dentistry. In the article, "Dental Status and Dental Needs of Young Adult Males," Dr. Henry Klein discusses not only the present needs but also points out how the prevention of dental rejectability may be obtained by means of a program of systematic dental servicing.



In "The Regional Approach to the Study of High Fertility," Dr. Rupert B. Vance draws upon material from a larger investigation, *The Southern People*, a project at the Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina. The dual purpose of the paper is to

present available data concerning the extent and causes of high fertility in the Southeast, and to offer a methodological framework for such studies. In the first part of the paper, the author utilizes available official data for a factual description of the problem and for ascertaining the extent to which factors of a demographic nature are responsible for the excess fertility of the area. He finds that less than half of the excess fertility in the Southeast can be accounted for by differences in racial, rural-urban, and age composition. In the second part, Dr. Vance emphasizes the need for supplementing statistical data with studies of the culture complex of high fertility areas, of the values and attitudes of the group. His description of the Southeast from this standpoint is designed to be suggestive rather than conclusive, but it provides specific recommendations which should be of value in studies of the cultural and psychological factors affecting human fertility.

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Trends in morbidity rates are rarely available, even for short periods of time or for small population groups. For a child population, changes in the frequency of illnesses causing school absence during the past twenty years are discussed by Antonio Ciocco, W. R. Cameron, and Elizabeth Bell in the article entitled: "A Comparison of the Morbidity of Hagerstown, Maryland, School Children in 1921-1925, 1935-1936, and 1939-1940." In the later periods absenteeism was higher for both boys and girls of different ages than in the earliest period. Since the increase was found chiefly in absences caused by minor disorders and ailments, the authors suggest that the actual incidence of these illnesses may not have been higher but that parents are now more likely to keep a child at home for such complaints. Careful study of these data will repay public health workers who are concerned with the prevention and reduction of illness.

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Case-finding in tuberculosis is a costly procedure, but when measured against the estimated monetary losses caused by the disease, the expenditure for the discovery of cases seems relatively small. Even so, methods of case-finding should be constantly tested for their efficiency; one important criterion of their relative value is the cost of each. Dr. H. R. Edwards, E. Rocks, and A. V. Biorklund present a method of cost account-

ing in the article, "The Economics of Mass Examination for Tuberculosis." They stress the need for comparable methods of analysis of cost of procedures in the control of tuberculosis. The authors express the hope that this report will stimulate administrators to make detailed cost studies of the various methods of case-finding which they are employing so that others may profit by their experience.