



IN THIS ISSUE

IN “Old-Age Problems in the Family,” Dr. J. H. Sheldon, Director of Medicine at the Royal Hospital of Wolverhampton, England, presents the results of a survey of the state of old people living at home and their influence upon family life. He indicates that there is a need to find out more about the natural social biology of old age in the community so that plans for the care of the old-age population may have a more sound basis.

This is one of the series of papers presented at the Round Table on The Family as the Unit of Health, which was a part of the 1948 Annual Conference of the Milbank Memorial Fund.

Another paper from the Round Table on The Family as the Unit of Health, published in this issue, is “The Importance of the Family in the Prevention of Mental Illness,” by Dr. Kent A. Zimmerman, Consultant for Mental Health of the California State Department of Public Health. He describes a program for the typical small health department which may become one of the important methods of getting a practical and meaningful preventive mental health service to larger numbers of people.



One of the round tables at the 1948 Annual Conference of the Milbank Memorial Fund was devoted to the topic “Problems in the Collection and Comparability of International Statistics.” Three of the eleven papers presented at that round table are presented in this issue. All will eventually be available in a volume constituting part of the proceedings of the Conference.

The first paper of this series, “Development of International Statistics,” is contributed by Dr. Walter F. Willcox, Professor Emeritus of Cornell University and esteemed elder statesman

of statisticians and demographers throughout the world. It provides an illuminating sketch of the origins and early development of interest in international statistics. From this account many statisticians will realize for the first time the contribution that Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband, made to the promotion of interest in international statistics.

In the next paper "A Case Study of the International Collection of Demographic Statistics," Dr. Forrest E. Linder of the Statistical Office of the United Nations presents a series of maps depicting the geographic coverage of various types of demographic data. The study is based upon returns up to October 15, 1948 of questionnaires sent to about 250 countries during the spring of 1948.

In his paper "World Health Statistics," Dr. Knud Stowman, Epidemiological Consultant, World Health Organization, traces health statistics as an international enterprise through three main stages of development: "The first period, which lasted up to 1921, was characterized by private initiative. Then came the League of Nations period of a quarter of a century's duration. The third period, barely arising from our blueprints, is under the auspices of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, notably the World Health Organization."



The ninth of a series of articles being published in the *Quarterly* under the general title "Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility" appears in this issue with the subtitle: "Fertility Planning and Fertility Rates by Socio-Economic Status." The authors, Clyde V. Kiser and P. K. Whelpton, undertake to test one of the twenty-three hypotheses being considered in the Indianapolis Study: "The higher the socio-economic status, the higher the proportion of couples practicing contraception effectively, and the smaller the planned family." Specifically, the paper is concerned with (1) the relation of fecundity status to socio-economic status, (2) fertility rates by socio-economic and fecundity status, (3) the relation of fertility-planning to socio-economic rank, and (4) fertility rates by socio-economic and fertility-planning status.