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THE peculiar quality of a study of a population of families over a period of years is that it affords the opportunity to obtain information that is dynamic. Thus it is a valuable method suitable for use in many fields.

The paper "The Longitudinal Study of Families as a Method of Research" by Jean Downes presents a general discussion of this method of research. Its value in the study of chronic illness, especially the incidence of such diseases, is brought out for purposes of illustration.

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Pregnancy is a period of nutritional stress and a number of studies have shown that failure of a pregnant woman to consume sufficient amounts of the foods required to supply the increased nutrient demands increases the risk of an unsuccessful outcome of pregnancy and of prenatal complications. As a preventive measure, therefore, it seems desirable that health supervision of prenatal patients should include some appraisal of the nutritive content of their diets and advice on an adequate diet. However, this aspect of prenatal care is seldom emphasized in prenatal clinics operated by hospitals. With the cooperation of a City Hospital in New York, a pilot experiment in teaching nutrition to prenatal patients was conducted by The Community Service Society of New York and the Milbank Memorial Fund. The results of this experiment are reported in the article entitled "An Experiment in Diet Education During Pregnancy" by Katharine Berry and Dorothy G. Wiehl. It was found that women who had fairly adequate diets, judged by nutrient allowances recommended for pregnancy, had a

lower incidence of pre-eclampsia and had fewer premature babies than the women with less adequate diets. Also, among a group of women given diet instruction, the incidence of prematurity and pre-eclampsia was lower for a comparable group not instructed. Thus, this Study adds to the evidence from previous studies that improved nutrition during pregnancy affords an important preventive measure in a maternal and infant health program.

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The series of reports bearing the general title "Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility" is continued in this issue with an article "Fertility Rates and Fertility Planning by Character of Migration," prepared by J. F. Kantner and P. K. Whelpton. This is an analysis of Indianapolis Study materials collected for testing the hypothesis that "the number, size, and location of communities in which couples have lived affect the proportion practicing contraception effectively and the size of planned families."