



IN THIS ISSUE

THE paper "The Risk of Disability for Persons with Chronic Disease" by Jean Downes and Marguerite Keller presents an analysis based upon cases reported in the morbidity study in a sample population of the Eastern Health District of Baltimore. When disabling episodes of chronic disease were related to the population at special risk of such episodes, that is, the cases themselves, males had a greater risk of disability from arthritis, heart disease, hypertensive vascular disease, and diabetes than was true of females. Males also had a greater risk of becoming permanently disabled than did females. Data showing the risk of disability among persons with specific chronic diseases in successive years after a first diagnosis of the condition is made are also presented.



Morbidity surveys which are conducted by periodic visits to families offer special advantages in the study of incidence and prevalence of non-reportable diseases, such as rheumatic fever and streptococcal illness, in their population.

The paper "Rheumatic Fever and Streptococcal Illness in Two Communities in New York State" by Jane E. Coulter presents data on the incidence of streptococcal illness and on the incidence and prevalence of rheumatic fever reported in the study of acute respiratory illness in two communities, Pleasantville and Mt. Kisco, in Westchester County, New York.

It was found that a familial susceptibility to streptococcal illness may exist in rheumatic families. These data are in agreement with the belief that rheumatic fever is a disease closely related to streptococcal infections.



The article, "Institutional Factors in Sinhalese Fertility," was prepared by Dr. Bryce Ryan on the basis of his study of the problem while spending several years in the Department of Sociology at the University of Ceylon. Studies such as this are of fundamental importance and it is singularly appropriate to have one with reference to Ceylon. That country affords a striking modern example of the greater ease of reducing death rates than birth rates in underdeveloped areas. Probably largely as a result of widespread spraying of mosquito-breeding areas with DDT, death rates have been sharply reduced in Ceylon during the past decade. Birth rates, in contrast, have remained at their high prewar levels and Ceylon has had a heavy increase in population. Dr. Ryan's article makes it clear that attitudes toward family size are deeply imbedded in the customs, mores, and values of a society. An understanding of these relationships is essential to any intelligent approach to problems of high fertility in agrarian areas.