

First World Sex Congress

By MAXIM BING

Dr. Bing, Science Service's Berlin correspondent, here reports the highlights of the first sex congress recently held in Berlin.

The First International Congress on Sexual Research is regarded by European sociologists, psychologists and scientists as a long step in advance in handling delicate and difficult questions that have in the past been suppressed and silenced, with much resulting mischief. The mere fact that such a meeting could be held at all, and problems of sex frankly discussed, is pointed out as an index of modern progress away from the ideas our forefathers entertained on the subject.

The chief problems dealt with were the questions of the correlation of internal secretion and sex life, rejuvenation, psychology of sex instincts, new laws concerning the criminality of sex, questions of heredity, of compulsory sterilization of criminals, the attitude of the churches towards questions of sexual ethics and the values of juvenile witnesses in law cases involving sex crimes. The collective opinion of the congress on the question of rejuvenation by surgical means may be summarized by saying that the German theoretical researches entirely accepted the scientific views of Prof. Steinach of Vienna, even hailed him as founder of a new branch of medicine and biology. It was agreed by the majority that his methods applied by surgeons on human beings in cases of premature senility have satisfactory results, although the duration of the effect of this cure is not yet definitely determined. Dr. Harry Smith and Dr. Benjamin of New York lectured on the results of over 500 operations. Prof. Haberland of Cologne disagreed with the majority opinion and showed a number of microscopic sections which he stated showed that the implanted glands are absorbed by the system in a short time, their place being filled up by indifferent tissues. Although he did not absolutely deny an effect if the glands implanted are human ones, he declared that animal glands are absolutely useless.

At the session of the psychoneurologic division it was declared that the sexual instinct can not be regarded as a single undivided impulse, but that one has to distinguish at least two separate desires, one being the erotic aiming at sexual union, the other being the parental one, directed at "filling up the universe with human life" as Mrs. Dora Russel of London expressed it.

Socially important was the work done on the problem of curing and protecting against venereal disease. A certain caution was advised in the sexual enlightenment of youth. Progress in the combating of venereal diseases by means of the late Prof. Paul Ehrlich's salvarsan was generally acknowledged.

The attitude of the churches towards the problems of sexual life was dealt with from the Protestant point of view by Prof. B. von Rohden of the theological faculty of Halle University. According to his optimistic notion of life, the erotic instinct of man is regarded as a noble one, which helps men to overcome their egotism, sacrificing their interest to that of companion and family. The Roman Catholic point of view was referred to by Prof. Johann Ude of the theological faculty of Graz University. He stood firmly for the indissolubility of marriage, the absolute refusal of any birth control measures, declared as an aim of love exclusively the production of offspring, declared every other aspect to be sinful.

The practice of compulsory sterilization of sick and criminally disposed individuals, was deprecated by the congress, on the ground that the present knowledge of heredity is insufficient for such drastic measures. Such measures should be taken exclusively as the result of the free, uninfluenced consent of the person in question. The next meeting will be held in 1929 at Rome.

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BIOLOGY

Anti-Evolution In Arkansas

The battles of Tennessee, Mississippi and other Southern states are to be fought over again in Arkansas this winter, according to the *Baptist Advance*, a Fundamentalist publication of Little Rock. While denying the possession of any inside information, the Baptist journal says:

"It is our opinion that a bill will be introduced and passed by the next legislature prohibiting the teaching of evolution (as commonly understood) in the state schools of Arkansas. We believe absolutely that such a bill ought to be passed and we think it likely that it will meet very little opposition if it is drawn in a sensible form."

The editor states that it is his belief that 99 per cent of the preachers of Arkansas and an overwhelming majority of the voters are in favor of such a law.

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Egypt's Inscriptions Saved

Ancient Egyptian buildings along the River Nile are in such condition that the great inscriptions on their walls will be lost forever unless exact reproductions and records are soon made. This fear is expressed by Dr. James H. Breasted, leading Egyptologist and director of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, in a report to the journal of the Archæological Society of Washington, *Art and Archæology*.

Inscriptions on the walls of the Medinet Habu Temple at Luxor are being recorded by field workers of the Institute. The process now used combines in one record three things, Dr. Breasted states: the speed and accuracy of the camera, the skill of the trained and experienced draftsman, and the completeness that is only made possible by the ability of the epigrapher who can read and understand the inscriptions. Making these exact reproductions for scholars to study at leisure in their libraries is a long task. The photographer makes small negatives of the pictures and symbols, section by section. These go through a series of processes of enlargement and tracing to bring out each detail of the ancient signs. At last, the epigrapher takes the final copy that shows the signs as perfectly as the draftsman can make them and goes out to the temple walls to proof read his manuscript from a ladder or scaffold.

To complete and publish the records of this temple will take at least two or three more years, it is estimated.

"It is hoped," Dr. Breasted says, "that this work of 'inscription salvage' may be placed upon a basis sufficiently permanent to permit its continuance to include all the great temples of Egypt, passing from Medinet Habu to the Ramesseum, thence to the Luxor temple, and especially to Karnak, which contains the greatest volume of inscribed records which have survived from the past in a single building. Besides these temple documents there remain furthermore the numerous body of tomb inscriptions and reliefs."

To rescue all of these records would require the work of another entire generation, if not longer, Dr. Breasted believes.

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Only three cases of yellow fever were reported in all North and South America during 1925, according to the Rockefeller Foundation.