

Borneo Calling South Pole

The jungles of Borneo will soon be talking with the icy wastes of the Antarctic continent where Commander Byrd's men are wintering. Borneo has already talked with Washington and Chicago, by means of a short-wave radio set in the hands of the scientists of the All-American Lyric Expedition, now far into the jungles of the world's largest and least-known island.

John H. Provinse, anthropologist of the expedition, has just communicated with his chief in Washington, Prof. Fay-Cooper Cole of the University of Chicago, chairman of the division of anthropology and psychology of the National Research Council. He transmitted his message through Station W8GZ, Columbus, Ohio, a member of the American Radio Relay League. The same station has undertaken to send the return message.

The speed with which the message

came from the opposite side of the world contrasts strongly with conditions prevailing only six years ago, when Prof. Cole went into the same territory on a preliminary scouting expedition. At that time messages could be sent only by mail, from the Dutch station at Poeroek Tjahoe, a town on the Barito River, and the explorer had to bring them there in person. From there they were carried to the coast by a flat-bottomed steamboat, which plied once in two weeks at the oftenest. Under the most favorable conditions a letter could thus reach the United States in about ten weeks; usually it took much longer. But the short-wave radio now brings central Borneo as close as the nearest telegraph office.

Mr. Provinse is in Borneo for the purpose of making a scientific study of the Siang Dyaks, a native Malay

people never before subjected to thorough anthropological examination. He states that he has established himself in a Siang kampong or village two days up the river from Poeroek Tjahoe, where he finds the people friendly and conditions favorable for his work.

Among Mr. Provinse's notes are entries indicating that he is very decidedly "east of Suez". He attended a "tiwah" feast attended by over 400 men from 32 villages, where everybody got somewhat more than he could hold of a native brew called "tuak". Out of courtesy he had to drink half a carabao horn full of it, but it was a good deal more than he wanted, especially since the genial Siangs had not been at all particular about straining out ants, small flies and other unnecessary foreign substances.

Science News-Letter, October 12, 1929

Marriage and Death

Your chances of marrying and dying within five years are seven in one thousand if you are a young bachelor of 25 years, statisticians of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company have computed. But your chances of marrying and dying in twenty years are seven in a hundred. Similarly a single young woman of 25 years has seven chances in a thousand of marrying and dying within five years, but she has over six in a hundred of marrying and dying within 20 years.

A girl of 15 has the same chance of marrying and dying within five and one-half years as a woman of 35. This is because the younger girl has a much greater chance of marrying within the specified period, but she also has a considerably smaller chance of dying within that period than the older woman.

The probability of marrying and dying within a specified period is relatively small throughout life, but much smaller than the probability of marrying and surviving to the end of a specified period, the statisticians pointed out. This is due to the fact that either the chances of dying are relatively small, as in the case of younger persons, or the chances of marriage are small as in the case of older persons.

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Seventy Years Still Life's Limit

When Moses stated that 70 years was the length of a man's life, save for exceptional cases, he set a limit that all our modern science has not been able to overstep.

In spite of the remarkable progress in public health practices and in medicine during the last century we cannot hope that the span of human life will be lengthened, Dr. Louis I. Dublin told members of the American Public Health Association.

A study of the mortality figures since 1920 among the general population of the country and among the insured of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. show a decreased ability for people to live much longer than 65 years, Dr. Dublin said.

"The expectation of life has increased, but the span of life has remained stationary. A fundamental distinction must be made between the two. The former, which is the average length of life of people in a stationary population, has shown appreciable gains and will continue to increase as public health improves and more and more diseases are brought under control. The latter has remained stationary for a long time, and it is altogether unlikely that man will be able to do anything to change it. The span of life seems to be fixed by the nature of man himself. His internal structure wears out after so many

years of work and use and he appears unable to master its weakness or give it stamina to last longer.

"That twenty years have been added to the average length of human life since public health work began to be actively practiced in the early eighties of the last century is true. But this gain can be traced to the reduced mortality of infants and to the cutting down of the unnecessary and preventable deaths of young people from typhoid fever, diphtheria, scarlet fever, smallpox and a host of other diseases which for the most part affect persons under forty years of age. Improvement, after age forty, has been slight and almost altogether limited to women. This lack of improvement is all the more striking in view of the great effort that has been made to interest those in middle life in the conditions of their health. Such campaigns as center around the physical examinations are very desirable, but their value, so far as they go to extending the life span, is questionable. Their greatest worth is in making old age freer of discomfort," Dr. Dublin declared.

In other words, more babies will survive the perils of infancy and childhood and grow to be men and women, but the grown men and women today will die at the same age as they did a century ago.

Science News-Letter, October 12, 1929