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If, as they estimate, population growth slows up and finally ceases within forty years, the adjustments in our national life that will be necessary make the depression and the N.R.A. campaign look like a sprinkle before a cloudburst.

American business has heretofore had an expanding market due to an increasing population. It promises to take longer to come out of the present depression because of the slowing population growth. In addition to increase of purchasing power aimed at by the N.R.A. effort and the other governmental actions since March 4, it will be necessary to abandon the old business idea of always planning for an increasing market. Instead, business campaigns of the present and future must be based on the idea of a population nearly stationary in numbers.

More important than decline in mere numbers is the decreasing number of younger persons and the rapidly increasing number of older persons that will come with America's population stagnation. Compare the population of 1920 with the probable inhabitants of the America of 1980.

The percentage of those in their prime of life, from 20 to 49 years of age will be almost the same, about 43 out of every 100 of the total population. But the youth below 20 in 1980 will constitute only 26 per cent. of the population compared with 41 per cent. as now. For every person from 50 to 69 years of age in 1920 there will be nearly three in 1980, increase (*Turn Page*)

SOCIOLOGY

Young People Get the Jobs In This Old Man's World

ALTHOUGH older people are making up an increasingly large part of the country's population, their opportunities for getting work are not expanding to meet the need. On the contrary, restrictions upon the employment of persons past forty and fifty are tightening. The recent decision of the United States Civil Service Commission to restrict the examining of applicants for the stenographer-typist examination to those under 40 years of age is particularly significant because it is following, not leading, the practice of industry in this regard.

In 1930, when the depression years were just beginning, an official of the U. S. Department of Labor, pointed to the fact that employment was even then becoming increasingly precarious for women between the ages of 25 and 30.

"Paradoxical as it may sound, many a young girl of 29 in search of a job suddenly discovers that she is an old woman," she declared.

Employers of men as well as women have come to place a new value on intelligence, the eagerness of youth, adaptability to new ways, and training in modern schools. They are attaching less importance to experience, settled habits, dignity, and other attributes associated with older people.

Personality Important

Personality is also an important factor in the competition for employment. And the personality of youth is generally preferred to the personality of age.

A woman psychologist, who has done a great measure of productive research since she was retired from the faculty of her university because of age, has made a study of the objections employers make to aged people in industry. Here are the charges: They are too slow, too set in their ways, not inclined to learn the new, too talkative, too critical of both co-worker and employer, they lack initiative, and finally they are sensitive and inclined to feel always that they are being discriminated against.

Are these charges true? The psychologist, Dr. Lillian J. Martin, admits that in many cases they are. But the personality changes of age are not due

solely to the passing of the years, but to a mental slumping on the part of the aging individual and to the fact that the faults excused in youth become more objectionable in age. The talkative flapper is likely to be termed vivacious; the talkative woman of middle age is considered garrulous.

Old people do deteriorate mentally, it is true. But this deterioration is not nearly so rapid as has been thought. Differences between individuals at any age are more important than the differences between persons of 30 and persons of 40. Dr. Walter R. Miles, of Yale University, who has studied the waxing and waning of mental abilities of persons of all ages and all walks of life says:

"Age is usually one of the important factors which define physiological and psychological efficiency. No machine can last forever; action necessarily means the reaction of wear and tear. But there are distinct and measurable efficiency differences between individuals with chronological ages about seventy years, just as there are differences among people who are in their thirties or forties. The average for all who are older than 74 years, for example, may show a decrement of one-fourth to one-third from the general adult mean. But, on the other hand, one-fourth to one-third of these old people may still be as capable, in the functions tested, as the average adult, and to check them off just because they happen to have been born seventy or more years ago may be as unfair to the individual as to drop him because he was born of foreign parents."

Nevertheless, the problem is inescapable—what is to be done with people of the older age levels? It is undoubtedly true that there are not enough jobs for all, and that the younger men and women are preferred and should, after all, be given their chance to be financially independent.

But with the school period extended, and child labor laws gradually pushing up the age of first employment, man's productive years are being curtailed at both ends of life.

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