



Censuses have served wars, from the days when Moses counted "all that are able to go forth to war in Israel." Peaceful though the United States is, and wants to be, it is conscious of defense these days, and wants to know its man power. The census of 1940 will provide army and navy with information regarding men in different age groups; also the regions where specialized workers

are grouped. The army would have liked specific information from the population census—names and addresses of types of workers and specialists valuable in military service. But the Census Bureau clings to its policy of assuring anonymity to the public. Your census return is confidential, and even the War Department may not consult it. Only statistics are released.

Science News Letter, March 23, 1940

PUBLIC HEALTH

More Sickness Among Children Than Most Other Age Groups

THE COMPLACENCY Americans are apt to feel over the health of the nation's children, based on low child mortality rates, is dealt a severe blow by figures on child sickness which the U. S. Public Health Service has just released. (*Public Health Reports*, Jan. 26.)

Children under 10 years of age get sick oftener than any other group in the population than the aged, it is shown

by these figures, compiled by Miss Dorothy F. Holland, one of the federal health service statisticians.

The figures refer to frequency of illness lasting for one week or more as found in a survey of 500,000 children in 83 cities of varying sizes in 18 states during one year. The very highest frequency rate for disabling sickness among white children was found at the ages five to nine years. This rate was 305 per 1,000. For Negro children the highest disabling illness rate occurs in the ages under five years.

Acute communicable diseases of childhood and the respiratory diseases caused eight out of ten disabling illnesses among children under 15 years of age. Among these eight cases, five were acute communicable diseases of childhood and three were cases of acute respiratory diseases. Measles showed a higher frequency than any of the other childhood diseases, though the marked excess of measles shown in the survey reflects the unusually high incidence of measles during the

survey year (1935). Mumps, whooping cough and chicken pox also were frequent causes of disabling illness. Among the respiratory diseases, tonsillitis, influenza, colds, pneumonia and bronchitis led in frequency.

Infantile paralysis caused 56% of all orthopedic impairments due to disease among children under 15 years.

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Specifically, fatty acids with long side-chains must be converted by oxygen to acids with short side-chains. If the flow of bile is stopped ferments from bacteria or from white blood cells may provide the oxygen for changing the long fatty acids into short ones with consequent formation of the stones.

Science News Letter, March 23, 1940

Danger in Benzedrine

FOR reviving those who have passed out after imbibing moderate amounts of alcohol, benzedrine is effective and relatively safe. But this wake-up drug may be dangerous when more than moderate amounts of alcohol have been taken.

This is the conclusion that may be drawn from experiments on rabbits reported in New Orleans to the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology by Dr. E. C. Reifstein, Jr., of Syracuse (N. Y.) University.

Benzedrine (technically, amphetamine sulphate) has been known previously to be useful for sobering-up. It is used also in preparations for relieving stuffy noses. And recently it was reported useful for treating nervous patients and even problem children.

Dr. Reifstein's rabbit experiments show that the drug has no restorative effect after lethal amounts of alcohol and even increases the toxicity of near lethal quantities of alcohol.

Alcohol, in rabbits at least, counteracts the effects of amphetamine, protect-

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