

MEDICINE—EUGENICS

Nearsightedness Could Be Wiped Out By Eugenics

Marriage of Two Nearsighted People Should Be Avoided, Medical Association Is Told; Germans Suffer Defect

NEARSIGHTEDNESS could be eliminated, bred out of the human race, by banning marriages between nearsighted people, Dr. Lawrence T. Post, of St. Louis, declared at the meeting of the American Medical Association in Atlantic City.

The large number of nearsighted Germans today is probably due to the fact that such eugenic mating was not practiced in Germany, he said.

"There is little evidence to show that this is anything but an hereditary defect and is handed down just as other physical characteristics are," Dr. Post stated.

Even if complete eugenic mating cannot be achieved, it may at least be possible, he said, to prevent the marriage of two people afflicted with extreme nearsightedness.

Besides eyeglasses to correct the nearsighted condition, Dr. Post advised the following treatment for the nearsighted child: "a well-rounded diet with a quart of milk or its equivalent in calcium each day; maintenance of a good posture, especially not stooping when reading, in which position the eye hangs by the optic nerve almost unsupported, as a grape from its stem; a good light, work at not too close a distance from the eyes, and if general examination indicates it, adequate dosage of thyroid."

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Vaccinate Mothers

NEW-BORN babies can be protected from whooping cough by vaccinating their mothers during the last three months before the babies are born, Dr. Philip Cohen and Dr. Samuel J. Scadron, of New York, announced.

"Whooping cough is the dread contagious disease of infancy," they declared. During the first two years of life it is the cause of more deaths than measles, diphtheria, infantile paralysis and scarlet fever combined."

Babies are usually born with an endowment from their mothers of immunity against these latter diseases, the immunity lasting about six months.

Against whooping cough, however, they have no such protection and efforts to make them resistant by vaccination early in life have been unsuccessful.

Apparently the new-born baby is not capable of producing antibodies against whooping cough, even under the stimulus of vaccination. But if his mother is vaccinated before his birth, defensive forces against whooping cough which develop in her blood are transferred through the womb to the baby.

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Retards Mental Growth

THE IMPORTANCE of this new method of protecting new-born babies from whooping cough by vaccinating their mothers was emphasized by

the report that when this disease attacks a very young baby, it may prevent his normal mental and personality development.

More than half of a group of 58 children who had had whooping cough before the age of two years showed "definite behavioral, intellectual and personality changes later in life, apparently as a direct result of this infection," Dr. Louis A. Lurie and Dr. Sol Levy, of Cincinnati, reported.

In most cases, the attack of whooping cough occurred between the third and seventh months of life but the children were first brought to the Child Guidance Home at the ages of 10 and 11 years.

Besides the behavior problems, ranging from incorrigibility to behavior indicative of mental disease, below-average intelligence was found in 24 of the 58 children and 10 were definitely feeble-minded. This amount of subnormal mentality is much greater than in the entire group of children at the Child Guidance Home.

Dr. Lurie stated that in all probability the changes found "are due to definite organic lesions (injuries) produced in the brain during the attack of whooping cough."

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DEADLY

The new Flying Fortress, the Boeing B-17E, is described by the War Department as "bigger and more deadly" than any previous Flying Fortresses. Armament includes heavy caliber power turrets on top and bottom of the fuselage, tail "stinger" and side guns.

Babies Acquire Tolerance

BABIES of cigarette-smoking mothers apparently develop a tolerance to nicotine before they are born and are not affected by the nicotine that gets into the milk of all smoking mothers. Studies showing this were reported by Dr. H. Harris Perlman, Dr. Arthur M. Dannenberg and Nathan Sokoloff, of Philadelphia.

The quantity of nicotine that would produce poisonous effects in an infant is not known, the Philadelphia scientists

pointed out to the Medical Association.

The first poisonous symptoms from nicotine, it has been shown, appear after the intake of one to four milligrams. The actual amounts of nicotine obtained in a feeding by the infants in the study were practically all below the poisonous threshold.

No reduction in supply of milk was found in the 55 mothers who had all smoked before their babies were born and continued to smoke within two days after confinement.

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ETHNOLOGY

Japanese "Book of Genesis" Basis of Claim to Supremacy

Fantastic Story of Japanese Origin Traces Family Beyond Sun Goddess for Several Generations

UTTERLY FANTASTIC, to an Occidental mind at least, are the complicated tales of the origins of the Japanese gods and the making and peopling of the Japanese islands told in the Japanese "Book of Genesis," Ko-Ji-Ki, several copies of which are in the Smithsonian Institution. But fantastic as they are, these stories form the ultimate basis for Japanese claims to world supremacy through divine origin of their race. Usual accounts of the Japanese divine-origin myth start with the Sun Goddess. This old book, however, goes back of that by several divine generations. It starts out with a description of the birth of the first gods:

"The names of the deities that were born in the Plain of High Heaven when the Heaven and Earth began were the Deity Master-of-the-August Center of Heaven, next the High-August-Producing-Wondrous Deity, next the Divine-Producing-Wondrous Deity. These three Deities were all Deities born alone, and hid their persons."

After several generations of such deities, we come to a god and goddess who were brother and sister, and also husband and wife. Their names were Male-Who-Invites and Female-Who-Invites. They made an island named Onogoro by stirring the sea with a magic jewelled spear; the island formed from the drippings when the spear was lifted out of the water. Living on this island, they had children who are the various

islands of Japan, and others who are Shinto gods.

In giving birth to Fire-Shining-Elder, the god of fire, the goddess died, and descended into the Under-World. Like Orpheus, her husband-brother sought to obtain her return, but failed. He fled, pursued by a motley horde of demons.

When he escaped to the upper world, the god bathed in a stream to purify himself, and as he did so, new gods were born of all his garments and of various parts of his body. The Sun Goddess came from his right eye. One of her children, of whose legitimacy she had some doubts, was a certain Jim-mu Tenno, first emperor of Japan.

Of particular interest to students of comparative religion is the fact that this exceedingly primitive account, rivalling for foggy inconsequentiality even the Nibelungen myths of ancient Germany, was not put in writing until the year 712 A.D., by which time such philosophical and religious teachers as Confucius in China, and Plato, the Hebrew prophets and Jesus of Nazareth in the West, had for centuries been the subjects of highly intellectual commentaries by some of the most acute scholars the world has ever known.

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A *waxy corn*, to replace decreasing imports of tapioca, can be put into commercial production in the U. S. corn belt by 1943.

RADIO—PSYCHOLOGY

For Speed in Learning Code, Cut Out the Dots and Dashes

HERE is a tip that will help you learn radio code in a hurry if you are training for one of the thousands of radio jobs Uncle Sam needs to fill right away. It comes from George W. Bailey, chairman of the radio section of the National Research Council's Office of Scientific Personnel.

Don't think of the words "dot" and "dash" in trying to learn the code letters. Don't think of any words or written signs.

Code is a language of sound only. The way to learn it is to listen to the sound of code as it is tapped out on a buzzer or on the radio (it is used a little in commercial broadcasts to introduce programs and in other incidental ways). If you have no buzzer, get somebody to whistle it to you, or whistle it yourself. Learn to take it down directly on a typewriter if possible.

Because it is impossible to put down on a printed page the sound of a buzzer key or even the most expressive whistle, radio men use for the letter "a" the syllables "ditdah." The "dit" is clipped and the "dah" held about three times as long. The victory symbol, if written, would look like "dididitdah."

The speed of this sound letter should be just the same whether the transmission speed is 10 words a minute or 30 a minute. To go slow, make more space between letter sounds and lots of space between words.

When you have learned these two principles—that letters are sounds and speed is governed by space between sounds,—you are over the hump of learning code.

Your next step is to suddenly realize that short words like at, in, on, the, and, etc., are sounds by themselves and you can recognize them as such. You will be astonished to find that you can listen to high speed code and pick out these small words. You are then on your way to being an expert.

But in learning code for speed, don't slow yourself up by bothering with any sort of way of writing the code sounds, Mr. Bailey warns. On the job, you don't have to write out code symbols. You have to know them when you hear them.

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Heat, light and oil or grease are the chief enemies of *rubber*.