

The doctors and nurses told me that I seemed to know something of what was going on, and answered their questions lucidly, though they could see I was not suffering. But I don't remember anything about that.

I went to the hospital for my next

child's birth with entirely different feelings from those I had the first time, I can assure you. I feel willing now to have any number of children, if I can have them all with the aid of this wonderful new anesthetic.

Science News Letter, March 7, 1936

SURGERY

Caesar Was Not Born by Caesarean Operation

JULIUS Caesar, contrary to widespread belief, was not born by means of a Caesarean operation. Neither did he have anything to do with enactment of the old Roman law that forbade burial of a woman who died in pregnancy before the body of the unborn child had been removed by surgery.

The old myth about Caesar and his birth is exploded by Dr. John Harold Couch of Toronto General Hospital and Herbert Newell Couch, assistant professor of Greek at Brown University, Providence, R. I.

A reason for the persistent linking of Caesar's name with the operation is given by the Couches. (*Canadian Medical Association Journal*, Feb.) The reason is quite the reverse of the traditional belief. Instead of the operation being named for Caesar, Julius Caesar's family probably got their name from it. The Couches explained it as follows:

"It is altogether probable that some distant ancestor of his was born by means of a Caesarean operation, performed on a dead mother, and the cognomen of Caesar, which is derived from the verb *caedo*, to cut, was attached to the newborn child for that reason. Another Roman family, bearing the name Caeso, may have derived their cognomen from the same cause. Such a method of assigning names would be entirely in harmony with the early Roman traditions. In fact, Pliny is the authority for this assumption, for in his *Natural History* he remarks that certain people were born by an incision of the mother and that 'the first of the Caesars' was said to have been born in this manner."

No one knows just who the first of the Caesars was, but he was not the Julius of historic fame. More than a hundred years before this dictator was born there is a record of a Sextus Julius Caesar in Sicily.

Further evidence of the inaccuracy of the old tradition about Julius Caesar's birth is cited by the Couches.

"Not until long after the days of Julius Caesar was the Caesarean operation successfully performed on living women, and it is a matter of historical record that Julius Caesar's mother, Julia, lived for many years after his birth."

Science News Letter, March 7, 1936

MEDICINE

Finds Itch Not Limited To the Poorer Classes

DO NICE people have the itch? Indeed they do, finds Dr. John H. Stokes of Philadelphia, who reports on 53 cases of scabies found among "the better feathered, the silver spooned and the intellectual and professional elect" in his practice.

"Scabies may with equal force invade a pedigreed school, Camp Wawa Wawa or the baronial castle on the hill," the Philadelphia physician writes in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* (Feb. 29) under the title, "Scabies Among the Well-to-do: Some Principles Illustrated by the Elite."

The late war, current human migrations South in winter and North in summer and the fluidity of present-day populations all contribute toward making the itch an ever-present consideration without social boundaries.

Most of this physician's itching tycoons and subdebs had been to one or more doctors without relief. These doctors, believing that nice people do not have scabies, had not found the little itch-mite that burrows down into the skin and causes all the nocturnal scratchings.

Science News Letter, March 7, 1936

Pocket-size sundials are carried in China as timepieces.

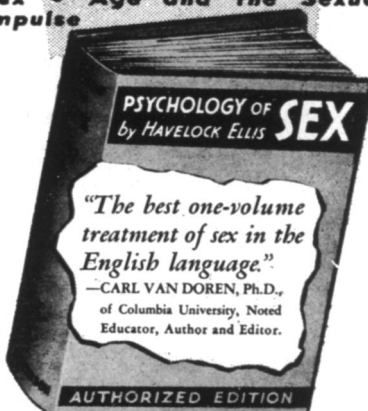
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