

## EUGENICS

# Good Home Conditions Demand of Eugenics Plan

**E**MPHASIZING good home environment in childhood's early years, a new approach to practical eugenics is being studied by a group of scientists and science-minded laymen forming the American Eugenics Society.

A new "conservative program of eugenics" is summarized in the statement:

"The children of the United States must be born of parents who will provide the essentials necessary for the development of character, physique and intelligence."

This new development emphasizes that, apart from the small fraction of the population who are known to be carriers of hereditary defect, home conditions appear to provide as good a basis for biological selection as is possible in the present state of knowledge.

It is an attempt to divorce eugenics from its connection with particular races, so-called class superiorities and mere sterilization of physical and social defectives.

A return to the dowry system for brides and automatic increases in salary

upon marriage and birth of children to employes in both government and industry was urged by Dr. Will Durant, author of "The Story of Civilization," in a paper before the meeting.

The purpose would be to encourage marriage and parenthood among the middle classes. He also urged the doubling of income tax exemption allowed parents for each dependent child.

"Democracy will probably disappear," he warned, "if popular intelligence fails to keep pace with popular power. We are not sure that ability is transmitted, but the history of animal breeding makes it probable. If it is, the infertility of the able is a heavy drag on the efforts of our schools to raise the mental level of our people."

Segregation or sterilization of all persons sufficiently feeble-minded to require public care was advocated by Dr. Durant, who also urged birth control information distributed by physicians and social workers as a means of lowering birth rate among those less fit for parenthood.

*Science News Letter, May 16, 1936*

## PSYCHIATRY

# Effect of Sigmund Freud's Studies on Medicine Surveyed

**T**HE world-wide celebration, Wednesday, May 6, of the eightieth birthday of Sigmund Freud, whose startling concept of the unconscious mind shook the world thirty years ago, has inspired an American evaluation of his work.

An editorial in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (May 9) undertakes an early assignment of the famous European psychiatrist and psycho-analyst to his place in medical history.

Modern psychiatry is in a phase of fermentation and turbulent change, the medical journal asserts. In spite of the tremendous influence of Freud on contemporary thought, the editor finds it difficult to appreciate fully the nature and extent of Freud's influence on his

own field of modern psychiatry and on medicine in general.

"Human beings seem instinctively to resent the acknowledgment forced upon them by Freud that even their own personalities are removed from the sovereign influence of their conscious selves, and that they are not even complete masters of their own acts," the editorial declares.

The discovery of the unconscious led to a striving to bring the unconscious under the domination of consciousness. This is the essence of the technique of psycho-analysis, Freud's method of treatment.

The *Journal of the American Medical Association* does not regard it as peculiar that Freud and his followers are still

## ● RADIO

May 19, 2:15 p. m., E.S.T.  
AMERICA GROWS OLDER—Dr. Warren S. Thompson, Director of the Scripps Foundation for Research in Population Problems, Miami University.

May 26, 2:15 p. m., E.S.T.  
HOT WEATHER THINKING—Dr. John P. H. Murphy of St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

In the Science Service series of radio discussions led by Watson Davis, Director, over the Columbia Broadcasting System.

somewhat isolated from the rest of medicine. "The fight for the scientific study of the human body by dissection lasted for centuries," the *Journal* points out, "and the unbiased objective study of the human personality must prevail over greater emotional obstacles."

A few statements regarding Freud made in the *Journal* show the high regard in which his work is held:

"Freud's influence on medicine is no doubt still in its infancy."

"No other man has contributed a greater stimulus toward study and understanding of psychologic phenomena."

"The position of Freud as a great leader is secure."

"As we associate Vesalius with anatomy, Harvey with physiology, Virchow with pathology and Pasteur with bacteriology, we shall come to consider Sigmund Freud as the founder of a new trend of thought in psychiatry—an investigator with a 'profound insight into the workings of primitive mentality.'"

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