

GENERAL SCIENCE

Abolition of Maternity Price of Woman's Equality

Well-Known Princetonian Looks at The World Through Biological Glasses; Says Democracy Biologically Necessary

WOMAN can achieve full equality with men, full freedom such as the male sex enjoys. But only if she pays for it with her function of motherhood.

So declared Dr. Edwin Grant Conklin, emeritus professor of biology at Princeton University, in the Westbrook Lectures which he delivered at the Wagner Free Institute of Science.

Dreams that babies can be produced "ectopically", that is, by laboratory methods outside the mother's body, Dr. Conklin characterized as "vain imaginings." So too, with the super-socialistic notion that a few women, selected as "race mothers" to produce all the children while all the rest are free for their careers. If there are to be children, if the race is to continue, it will have to be the age-old biological method, he declared.

Dr. Conklin is not haunted by the "Malthusian ghost," bugbear of many sociologists. "Science has created a human population problem by increasing the means of living and decreasing the death rate," he admitted. "However, overpopulation is limited to certain places or peoples, and it soon corrects itself. There is now more danger of underpopulation in Western Europe and North America than of overpopulation."

Progress in human affairs is still possible, but it must come mainly through improved control over man's environment, Dr. Conklin told his audience.

Slow

"Improvements of heredity must necessarily be very slow," Dr. Conklin said. "In its present state the world cannot wait for such improvement, whereas great progress can be made by the better use of the inherited capacities we have, by cultivation of better education, better habits, better morals.

"Many social evils, such as slavery, witchcraft, torture of heretics, dueling, etc., have disappeared under the influence of enlightened public opinion.

May we not hope that national, racial, and class antagonisms and wars may be overcome in the same way?"

Democracy need not be abandoned for any discernible biological or social reason, critics and doubters to the contrary notwithstanding, declared Dr. Conklin.

Liberty, equality, and fraternity, the triple slogan of Democracy's battles a century and a half ago, he put to the biological touchstone.

Liberty, he said, has been the goal of human struggle since the dawn of history, and much progress has been made toward its better attainment. Yet there is no absolute freedom; "fanatical extremes of liberty and anarchy find no successful counterpart in biology where life and progress consist in balance and compromise."

A Stumbling Block

Equality as a rigid dogma has been a stumbling block of unrealistic supporters of democracy. Dr. Conklin pointed to the obvious natural inequalities that exist among men, and declared that their very existence renders democracy a necessity, so that individual merit may seek its own level unhampered by rigid family and class distinctions. "Hereditary aristocracy is founded upon an obsolete idea of heredity," he declared. "It confuses the human law of entail with the natural law of Mendel."

Fraternity, the third great revolutionary democratic watchword, has deep roots in biological truth, the speaker indicated. "All men are cousins if not brothers. All trace back to common ancestors. The most diverse races of men have more fundamental resemblances than differences."

Democracy, Dr. Conklin insisted in conclusion, contributes more than any other system to general peace and progress, "and there is no sufficient biological or social reason for thinking that it must be abandoned."

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OLDEST HITCH-HIKERS?

ARCHAEOLOGY

Metal Statues of Man Called World's Oldest

THE oldest metal statuettes of men and women ever discovered have been unearthed in ruins of a temple in Syria, dating from 3300 B. C.

Quaint, stiff little figures with solemn faces and arms folded or bent sharply upward, these copper statuettes are believed to represent gods of war and goddesses of fertility. They were discovered by the Syrian expedition of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, at Tell Jedeideh. The male figures wear silver helmets almost hiding their eyes, and the women have silver curls or an elaborate headdress.

Several months of careful cleaning have been required to remove the corrosion wrought by 50 centuries, revealing the striking sculptural style.

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PUBLIC HEALTH

Relief Rolls Show Economic Importance of Syphilis

THE SERIOUSNESS of syphilis from a dollars-and-cents standpoint has been proved in Fulton County, Georgia.

A study of syphilitic and non-syphilitic persons on the relief rolls of that county has been made with federal funds, and Dr. J. G. McDaniel, of At-