

**THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL
RESOURCES
IN THE UNITED STATES**

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BY

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these the number of passengers who were killed was 381, and the number injured 11,556. In Wisconsin alone in the year ending October, 1907, the accidents were 13,572; more than 53 per cent of which were among employees in the industries. It is estimated that, of the 29,000,000 people who are working in the United States, each year 500,000 are killed or crippled, a larger number than were killed and injured on both sides during the Japanese-Russian War.

It is certain that by proper precautionary measures, including proper machinery and its proper operation, the accidents may be reduced to one tenth their present number.

Aggregate
of sickness
and death.

The total deaths in the United States in one year are 1,500,000. It is probable that for every death there are at least two additional who are sick, making 3,000,000. This means, for those who are ill, misery and loss of time. It seems somewhat heartless to transfer the unnecessary losses by death and sickness to dollars, but ingenious estimates have been made as to the economic losses which result from illness each year in the United States. They vary from \$1,500,000,000 to \$3,000,000,000 per annum, at least one third and possibly one half of which is preventable.

Eugenics.

A further proposal in reference to the conservation of man is furnished by Eugenics. Breeding has been long practiced with reference to producing high grade stock. Until recently man has given very little attention to the matter as far as his own race is concerned. It is still true, even in civilized countries, that defectives of various classes are allowed to propagate the race. It is certain that as a first very moderate step toward the development of the stamina of the human race, defectives should be precluded from continuing the race by some proper method. In Indiana by somewhat exceptional methods this is already accomplished so far as certain classes of defectives are concerned. By other methods, the segregation of all defectives of each sex in asylums, hospitals, and institutes, the same result may be reached. In some states this is partially done, but nowhere completely. Whatever the

is partially done, but nowhere completely. Whatever the method chosen, it should be thoroughgoing. Human de-

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fectives should no longer be allowed to propagate the race. We should reach at least as high a plane with reference to human beings as with the defective animals.

Remedial medicine and hygiene are public functions. The study and spread of the knowledge of hygiene is the duty of the United States government, of the states, of municipal authorities, and of all the educational institutions under these organizations, from the highest to the lowest, from the university to the rural school. The development of athletics and children's playgrounds will help the work. Medical men must continue their researches to find a remedy for the diseases which as yet they have been unable to find a way to control. One by one, as their causes become known, the more stubborn diseases will be conquered. Only, recently cerebrospinal meningitis has been overcome. Cancer, as yet wholly refractory, will finally yield.

Control of
disease
public
function.

The normal condition of a man should be that of health; continual health means continuous efficiency. Health and efficiency are fundamental to happiness; if a man is continuously healthy and efficient, probably he will be continuously happy.

Health and
happiness.

How deeply rooted is the expectation of ill health is shown by our very salutation. As we greet one another we say, "How do you do?" and similar expressions we find in other languages. We who speak English as our mother tongue should substitute for "How do you do?" "Joy to you." This may seem a trivial matter, but there is at least one sect that holds it to be of fundamental importance. Personally, I do not go to the length of those of that sect; but there is no question that a normal happy attitude of mind in man is a most stimulating and conducive factor toward his bodily health.

"Joy to
you."

It is safe to say that in the future we may expect that one half of the people will live to be seventy years of age; indeed Fisher says that the general practice of remedial medical knowledge now in existence will prolong the average length of human life for the people of the United States to sixty years.

Future
length of
human life.

What will be the future normal length of human life? No

one may tell; it has doubled in three centuries; it is not impossible that it may be doubled again and thus become ninety years.

We should live a life in which disease is practically eliminated, in which the normal condition is that of health and efficiency. When the time comes to go, a human being should die as a dead twig is snapped from a tree by the wind, and not with a lingering illness.

POPULATION AND CONSERVATION

The lengthening of human life is ultimately connected with that of the conservation of the natural resources. If with a given birth rate the length of life is doubled, this will double the number of people to be fed. It is doubtless true that as longevity increases the birth rate will decrease; and it may be that the decrease in birth rate will about compensate for the increased longevity, and thus the increase in numbers continue at about the same rate as in the past.

Rapid
increase in
population.

With the exception of a comparatively small part of Asia and a minute fraction of Europe, the earth, to within a few hundred years, has been sparsely peopled. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, 500 years ago, the population of Europe was estimated at 50,000,000. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the population of Europe was about 175,000,000 and that of North America about 5,308,000. The population of these continents at the beginning of the twentieth century are for Europe 380,000,000 and for America 100,000,000.

Future
population.

On the basis of past increase in population, Gannett has made an estimate of the future population of the United States. He reached the conclusion that in the year 2000 in this country there will be 250,000,000 people, and in the year 2100, 500,000,000. These numbers doubtless have a factor of error; they may be somewhat too small; they may be somewhat too large; but this is of little consequence. If the larger number is not reached by the year 2100, it will be reached by the end of some subsequent century. Therefore, it is safe