

FIND 2,500,000 BLIND IN WORLD

International Campaign for Prevention Begun After Survey.

New York.—There are close to 2,500,000 blind persons in the world, and active efforts toward prevention of blindness are under way in twenty-eight countries, it is disclosed in the report of a two-year study by the International League of Red Cross societies, made public here by Lewis Carris, managing director of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. Mr. Carris brought back the findings from a conference at The Hague at which representatives of the twenty-eight countries formed the International Association for the Prevention of Blindness.

Among the recommendations of the report are: That the trachoma research of the late Dr. Hideo Noguchi of the Rockefeller Foundation be carried further; that a world-wide agreement be reached on a standard definition of "blindness"; that more attention be given to special guidance for children with defective vision; and that greater efforts be made to cut down the eye hazards of industry which in America and some other countries now constitute one of the most serious causes of blindness.

Urge Standard Definition.
Conflicting definitions of "blindness" by different countries are noted in the report, and a number of variations are cited. In the United States, the accepted definition of blindness is "inability to see well enough to read even with the aid of glasses"; or for illiterates, "inability to distinguish forms and objects with sufficient distinctness." In the attempt to fight blindness, the report says, "a practical definition for use by those engaged in work for the blind is necessary, as distinct from a purely ophthalmological definition with its fine measurements of visual acuity. Very certainly the formulation of a standard definition would enable all forces dealing with this catastrophe to approach its solution in a more systematic and comprehensive way, and would insure more easily comparable statistics."

The best working definitions for blindness are attributed to Great Britain. In providing for the education of blind children, the statutory description given is "too blind to be able to read the ordinary school books used by children," and in the blind persons' act, a blind person is defined as "one who is so blind as to be unable to perform any work for which eyesight is essential."

Difficulties arising from these definitions, however, are noted in the report which points out that many children have seriously defective eyesight, but not sufficient loss of vision to come within the law pertaining to "the blind." "The problem of the partially sighted, such as the very near-sighted, is a difficult one," the report states, suggesting special provision for the education and vocational training of children with defective vision.

136 Blind Per 100,000.
The total reported blind population of all the countries from which reliable information could be obtained is 1,193,734. "The total population represented being 876,004,976," the report says, "the ratio of blind in the aggregate is 136.3 per 100,000 population."

The countries specified have about half the population of the world, and on that basis it might be estimated that the total of blind persons in the world is about 2,300,000. Probably, however, this is an underestimate as those regions not covered by a census are in large part inhabited by races among whom blindness is likely to be more prevalent than where civilization is further advanced.

So far as the amount of blindness in the United States is concerned, the report states, "varying estimates are found. The number is considerably higher than 52,617, as given in the 1920 census report." Concerning this figure, Mr. Carris said that it would be more accurate probably to accept the estimate of 100,000 as the blind population of the United States.

Piano for Icy North
Regina, Sask.—Duncan Finlayson, federal fire ranger in the Chemung country of northern Saskatchewan, recently came down to Saskatoon and bought a piano. He is having the heavy instrument freighted into the northern hinterland.

Slave Ring Exposed as Boy Is Ransomed

Marrakech, Morocco.—The servant problem is so acute in Morocco that boys and girls are kidnaped and sold as slaves to do housework. This is the testimony of a merchant here, Hafid ben Boujma, who has ransomed his son after four years' captivity in southern Morocco. Two camels and a sum of money were paid as ransom. Following the testimony of the merchant, the police arrested Boujma ben Bouazza, alleged to be the leader of the slave ring.

Odd Powers Attributed to Gems in Ages Past

While in modern times the value of jewels depends on their use as ornaments and their employment in certain optical and other instruments, the ancients attached a far different significance to them. In their minds gems were endowed with gifts of spiritual and material power and were credited with the ability to cure diseases, avert trouble and drive away the demons, which harassed the imaginations of people of early and medieval times. This conception gave rise to the wearing of amulets, the presiding genius of one's fate being easily carried about in the form of a precious stone.

These ideas, now so ridiculous to us, had their origin in the philosophy of India and are related to the belief in the transmigration of the soul. It was believed that the soul which, at death, had not reached a state of absolute purity, had to undergo various transmigrations until it became purified, and that consequently it entered into plants, animals and even mineral bodies in the process. Therefore, gems were considered living beings. Being of incomparable physical purity, they were regarded as the highest expression of natural perfection, and hence supposed to possess talismanic and other powerful properties.—Exchange.

Historic Buildings in Finnish Town of Turku

Turku was Finland's first capital. Christianity was first taught there, and the first Christian converts were baptized in the River Aura. The oldest cathedral and the oldest castle in Finland are to be found in Turku, and nearly all the historic homes of the Finnish nobility are in or near the city.

With the exception of the cathedral and the castle, modern Turku has been built since the disastrous fire of 1827, when the old town was almost entirely destroyed in a blaze that burned for five days. Both the castle and the cathedral are grim structures with little exterior ornament. The cathedral has a long, narrow vaulted interior and most of the immense treasure which was once kept there has disappeared.

Part of the castle is now a museum, and is furnished with pieces of old Finnish furniture. Visitors can still see the dungeon, six fathoms deep and black as pitch, where prisoners were kept. In the great central hall is a high gallery from which a cruel ruler once had unruly subjects hurled to the floor below. One cell in the castle is still known as the malefactor's resting place.—National Geographic Society Bulletin.

No Need to Reckon Years

The numbering of years is a man-made artificiality, having little to do with the soul or the mind or the heart. An old anecdote of Napoleon tells of his conversation with a Hungarian officer who said he had fought in the army of Maria Theresa.

"You must be old," said Napoleon.

"Yes," said the officer, "I am sixty or seventy."

"Why, colonel," said the emperor, "you have certainly lived long enough to know how to count the years a little more closely."

"General," was the man's reply, "I reckon my money, my shirts, and my horses; but as for my years, I know that nobody will want to steal them, and that I shall never lose one of them."—Boston Herald.

Broad Hint

A business man who has just become engaged to be married is a good hearted fellow and popular with his staff; his only drawback from their point of view being that he has no idea of time, dictating letters just as everybody is packing up to go home. As a wedding present they bought him a clock.

It was a fine clock, but it had one defect. It had no hands. In thanking them for the gift, he called attention to this fact.

"Oh," said the man who was making the presentation, "you never look at the time, so we got the jeweler to remove them. They were gold, and he took \$5 off the price."

If!

The small boy, aged six, was making a tiny wreath.

"What is it for?" inquired his mother.

"You know you said you heard a mouse in the pantry?"

"Yes."

"And you know you said you thought of buying a trap?"

"Yes."

"Well, if you buy a trap, and if you catch the mouse, and if they drown the mouse after it is caught, and if the mouse is buried, and if we give it a nice funeral, we shall need a wreath, shan't we?"

"For the Use of the House"

Three-year-old Billy's mother, being particular that he should not annoy the neighbors, would not permit him to go into their house unless on special invitation. So Billy was especially delighted when he was permitted to spend the whole morning with the ten-year-old boy next door, who was very fascinating to him in a thoroughly "grown-up" way. When he got ready to go home, he summoned all his manners. "Thank you for the house," he said, gratefully.

FIND OLD WALLS OF ROMAN TIMES

Rich Discovery Made by German Archeologists.

Berlin.—The foundation of a wall, consisting almost wholly of sculptured stones of the imperial Roman period, is the astonishing spoil of the spades of German archeologists working in the neighborhood of the town of Alzey in the Rhine country. Seeking for traces of a medieval church, they came upon the remains of a much older building, about sixteen yards square, which dates back to the days when the legions still occupied the parts of Germany that bordered upon Gaul.

The construction of the foundation was of a most unusual type of masonry. The stones consisted largely of sculptured fragments of ancient pagan shrines and temples, including among others, nine altars, twenty-five pieces of pillars, four stones with inscriptions, six broken statues and reliefs, and six blocks with images of gods on all four sides. The structure suggests that it was the work of builders who not only disbelieved in the old gods but were actually hostile to them and wished to show their contempt for them; therefore possibly of early Christian date.

An examination of the sculptures and inscriptions shows that here, as elsewhere in southern Germany, the pre-Christian populace of mixed Germans, Romans and Gauls identified local gods with deities of the Roman pantheon. Apollo was linked with Grannus, a Celtic divinity, and the Roman Vulcan with the Celtic Cerunus.

Jupiter is shown with a nine-spoked wheel, and the wheel is not a Roman emblem, but a German, being a figure of the sun.

Monument to Motherhood to Be Raised by Vets

Kansas City, Kan.—A monument to the motherhood of America is to be erected on the grounds of the V. F. W. National home at Eton Rapids, Mich. founded four years ago by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, for the care and welfare of the widows and orphans of deceased veterans.

State commanders throughout the country will recommend one man from their respective states to act on a committee charged with the responsibility of gathering the necessary funds and erecting the memorial.

The movement, sponsored by a resolution adopted by the thirtieth national encampment of the V. F. W. held at St. Paul last August, contemplates the erection of "a utilitarian monument bearing the inscription 'To the Motherhood of America.'"

The contribution of American motherhood, manifesting itself in every human activity, affording stimulus and inspiration to the better causes of civilization, was cited by those supporting the plan as a "vital force in our American heritage."

The project also gives recognition to the "multiple and continuous sacrifices, both in times of war and in times of peace, on the part of the motherhood of America for the most part unhonored and unsung."

Dog Saves Cat's Life but Earns No Gratitude

Malone, N. Y.—Dogs are not commonly known to befriend cats, yet one instance of such anomaly was witnessed here.

The cat had been missing three days. Its mistress hunted vainly for her, notwithstanding felines are supposed to return of their own will. Finally a state trooper, apprised of the lost pet, observed a dog standing on a rock ledge barking vociferously at an island in Salmon river. Search of the island brought forth the cat, a bit haggard at having been marooned three days, but still able to "split" at the dog which had unwittingly saved her life.

Missouri "Houn' Dogs"

Increasing in Value

Springfield, Mo.—The houn' dog is not a thing of the past.

The major portion of coon and fox hounds in the United States are furnished by this section of the country. Each year, prior to the opening of the hunting season, buyers from all over the country come into the Ozarks to purchase hundreds of dogs.

And the value of the "old houn' dog" has increased until a first-class one is now worth \$100.

Army Truck Operates With Wood for Fuel

San Francisco.—Using a sackful of broken tent poles for fuel, an army truck had demonstrated that it could pull a load of more than 98 tons.

Army officers watching the test of the invention of Col. Jean P. Imbert, former French army officer, were astounded by the performance.

The appliance invented by Colonel Imbert was placed in the truck in the place of the gasoline tank. After the container had been filled with wood a torch was applied, and a few minutes later when the truck had been cranked it chugged away with the load.

Colonial Homes Surely Constructed to Endure

Those who are familiar with the construction methods employed by New England coast house builders of the Colonial period are generally impressed by the foundation work. Today, after a century or more, one may find these foundations unshaken. Labor was cheap in earlier times; construction material close at hand. Perhaps such massive bases for the superstructure were needlessly extravagant, yet one must admire the honest work that has stood the tests of time.

At East Winthrop, Maine, there stands a massive Colonial dwelling, 107 years old, that has one of these typical foundations. It is formed of enormous granite slabs which are laid up three feet thick. It is tradition among descendants of the original owners that three yokes of oxen were required to haul some of these great stones to the spot.

Quite frequently one will come across one of these Colonial houses with stone chimney bases 20 feet square while on the ground floor there will be tunnels through the heart of the chimney, forming unique hallways from one part of the main floor to another. Foundations and chimneys were built to withstand the onslaughts of floods, earthquakes and centuries. Fire occasionally razes cleanly one of these Colonial dwellings, yet the hand of man is always necessary to tear apart that honest masonry.

Moose Given Points of Superiority Over Horse

The Swedish moose is a dangerous competitor to the horse, says a Stockholm Associated Press dispatch.

Some years ago a harness moose easily took first place in a horse race, but was refused first prize because the judges decided it was out of the competition.

Moose were used as saddle and draft horses several centuries ago until prohibited by a royal decree, as it was feared a criminal astride a moose could easily outdistance his horse-powered pursuers.

A Swedish country gentleman caught a moose bull as a calf and broke him for mail service. The animal proved more practical than a horse, since gates had to be opened, the moose clearing them all without difficulty.

At one time a military expert proposed a moose cavalry regiment, as setting that a moose squadron would put fright into a whole horse regiment. The scheme was left untried.

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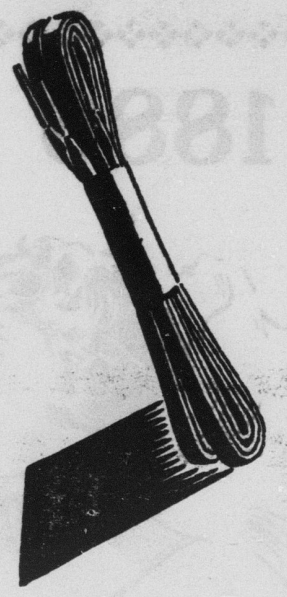
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