

SCIENCE

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BIRTH SELECTION *versus* BIRTH CONTROL

By Professor HENRY FAIRFIELD OSBORN

HONORARY VICE PRESIDENT, THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF EUGENICS

THIS International Congress is singularly opportune. It is not merely an academic problem we are met to discuss, or a problem of the future. It is not a theory but a condition which confronts us. It is a problem of the immediate present, and, like all sociological problems, the more fascinating because of its very complications. Man does not rise to his best endeavor in face of small problems; it is in the genius of modern humanity to meet and attempt to solve the most difficult. Eugenics is not a human invention by Francis Galton or any of his predecessors or successors. It is a long-known and universal natural law, namely, the survival of the fittest and the elimination of the unfittest.

It has always required a cataclysm to force a

¹ Address at the opening session of the Third International Congress of Eugenics, New York, August 22, 1932. Passages from this address were printed in the August *Forum* and are used here with the permission of the editor.

natural law upon the attention of man. Cataclysmic plagues of malaria, of typhus, of yellow fever, of tuberculosis, of cancer, forced upon human genius the imminent crisis of discovery, of palliation, of prevention, of cure. So in this world cataclysm of overpopulation, of over-multiplication of the unfit and unintelligent, of the reign of terror of the criminal, of the tragedy of unemployment, eugenics ceases to be the cult of the few pioneers like Galton and Leonard Darwin; it is forced upon our attention. Once more man is humbled because he is suffering from prolonged ignorance or actual defiance of and transgression of the most central and fundamental of all natural laws.

Prisons, reformatories, asylums, great public financial offerings, great national and local appropriations, great tides of human kindness and generosity, are merely palliatives and temporary expedients. They may for a time gloss over the cataclysm; they can not

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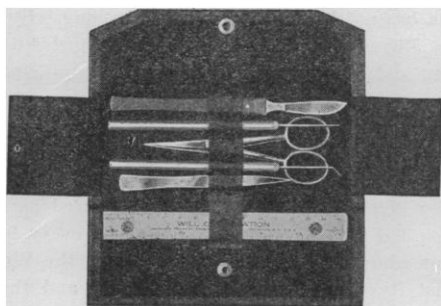
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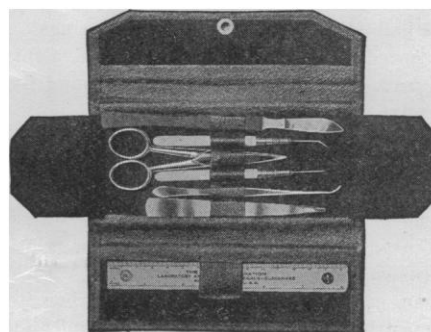
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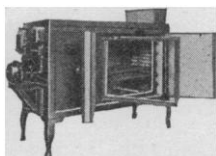
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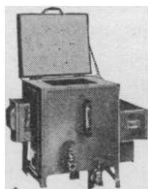
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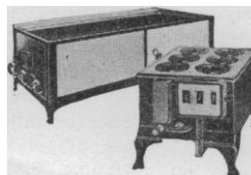
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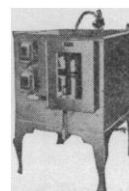
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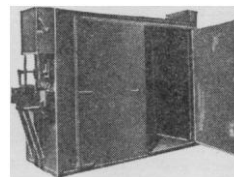
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