

that part of our population which is least worthy of existence and to protect society from the results of its own irresponsible breeding.

We all admit that our social engine has stalled, and a succession of political, economic and sociological drivers have been pulling and pushing every movable gadget in a futile effort to make it start. May not a biological bystander suggest the possibility that some one has watered the gasoline?

It would be expedient to conclude this survey with an innocuous prophecy of the evolutionary future of man's wisdom teeth, little toes, head hair and other degenerating appurtenances. It would be inspiring to produce evidence that man's body is evolving into a perfect organism and that his mentality is growing apace like the national debt. Unfortunately, I am unaware of any marked improvement of man's evolu-

tionary status since the end of the glacial period. On the other hand, distinctively regressive or degenerative trends, general to the contemporaneous human species, are possibly confined to a few features of the organism—perhaps notably the dentition. What we must avoid is a progressive deterioration of mankind as a result of the reckless and copious breeding of protected inferiors. We have not the knowledge to breed supermen, but we can limit the reproduction of criminals and mental defectives. Let us cease to delude ourselves with the belief that education, religion or other measures of social amelioration can transform base metal into gold. Public enemies must be destroyed—not reformed. We need a biological new deal which will segregate and sterilize the anti-social and the mentally unfit. Intelligent artificial selection should replace natural selection.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

BIRD SANCTUARIES IN NEW YORK CITY

THE Park Department of New York City has under consideration a plan presented by the National Association of Audubon Societies for preserving the remaining natural wild-life areas in the city by making them bird sanctuaries. The association, according to *The New York Times*, proposes to establish sanctuaries in five of the larger parks, and the department has agreed to consult the society in preparing plans for these parks and to follow its suggestions if possible. The new sanctuaries will be in addition to those already in operation in Central Park. Dr. Robert P. Allen is in charge of the plans of the association.

According to Mr. Allen, some wild fowl and song birds still nest in the city, but their numbers are decreasing every year as the parks and vacant areas are cleared and improved. It is proposed to fence off and keep unspoiled those areas still in a natural state. In addition he would plant various shrubs for ground cover and to provide food.

In Van Cortlandt Park it is hoped to have set aside the twenty-acre tract north of the boating lake, which has been a natural sanctuary for generations, although considerably reduced from its former size. It was here that last spring the rare glossy ibis was observed, and Virginia rail still nest there regularly. In addition to shrubs, wild rice and other marsh plants would be planted in this area.

In Queens it is proposed to fence and improve the existing protected area in Alley Pond Park, which includes a pond and about forty acres of upland, and to set aside the swamp area in Kissena Park as a second reservation for herons, ducks and other marsh birds.

In the New Springville Park sanctuary on Staten Island Mr. Allen suggests that a salt-water pond be created by damming up the marsh area. This would increase the size of the preserve to 100 acres and would provide the only nesting place in the city for salt-water birds. This tract also needs fencing and further planting.

In Brooklyn it is proposed that the pond on the Dyker Beach Park golf course be preserved as a sanctuary. Even under present conditions it is inhabited by rails, least bitterns, Florida gallinules and other water birds.

The Central Park sanctuaries established last year have proved to be a great success. A record number of birds was observed in Central Park this season. One hundred and thirty-two species were counted, compared with only one hundred and twenty-seven last year. The only birds that now nest regularly in the park are English sparrows, starlings, flickers, purple grackles, song sparrows and occasionally screech owls. It is proposed, if possible, to lay out nature trails, with every tree and shrub properly labelled. Mr. Allen considers that the Fifty-ninth Street lake is well adapted to water fowl and suggests the planting of more water plants in the park as an inducement for them to use it.

FIFTH ANNUAL FIELD CONFERENCE OF PENNSYLVANIA GEOLOGISTS

THE fifth annual meeting of the Field Conference of Pennsylvania Geologists was held at Philadelphia from May 31 through June 3. Headquarters were established at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, from which place all field trips started.