

QUIET.

A Magazine devoted to the Prevention of Avoidable Noise.

We welcome with profound pleasure the first number of *Quiet*, a quarterly magazine, published by the Anti-Noise League, 66, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1, of which Lord Horder, K.C.V.O., is Chairman.

The Frontispiece is an excellent portrait of the Minister of Health, accompanied by a signed message from him. Sir Kingsley Wood writes in part:

"I am interested to learn of the proposal of the Anti-Noise League to publish a quarterly magazine, for it is important that the attention of the public should be directed to the need for the abatement of unnecessary and harmful noise and that they should be encouraged to take an interest in measures designed to this end.

My own interest is two-fold: first, I am, of course, concerned with anything directly or indirectly affecting the public health; second, I receive a number of requests for my intervention in cases where hardship is being caused by undue noise. There is a very wide field of valuable work open to the League in educating public opinion more effectively to a sense of the responsibility resting on all sections of the community to study the health and convenience of others. The publication of this magazine will, I hope, do much towards the growth of an enlightened public opinion on this question."

Lord Horder, in a breezy Foreword, tells us that "the interest taken by the public in the cause of the League has been disproportionately greater than the growth of its membership roll. Many people say 'what splendid work you are doing!' but few think of joining. So we must do something to 'get it across' that we exist, that we are public benefactors, and that we deserve support. . . . The journal will remind noise offenders that they cannot 'get away with it' unnoticed, nor, what is more important, without being publicly banned. Its motto is 'Quiet' and to achieve that end the League exists and works."

Sir James Purves-Stewart, K.C.M.G. contributes a valuable article on "Some Medical Aspects of Noise."

"It is not as if we were solitary individuals, living so far apart as to be inaudible to each other. The increasingly crowded conditions of modern life, especially in cities and on main roads, multiply the opportunities for harmful noises, even in the daytime, e.g., those produced by road drills, noisy gear-changing of motor cars, clattering cans, iron-tired wheels on stone-paved streets, and so on.

"We must also remind ourselves of the fact that nearly every noise which is disturbing or unpleasant is made by some one else. Therefore whilst we endeavour, by persuasion, by education, or even by legislative compulsion, to limit the production of needless noise by our fellow-citizens, we must bear in mind that we ourselves belong to the same category of "some one else" and that we have not merely a right to complain, but a personal duty to refrain from disturbances of the daytime peace and the nocturnal rest of our fellow-men."

The Journal in its soft grey cover with deep blue lettering is excellent value at the price of 6d. to non-members of the League, and an added inducement to subscribe to the League is that all subscribers will receive this charming publication free.

SPANISH PROVERB.

Quando amigo pide no ay mañana.
When a friend asks—there is no delay.
No putting off till another day.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH.

The Home Secretary has appointed a committee to inquire into the methods pursued by adoption societies or other agencies engaged in arranging for the adoption of children and to report whether any, and if so what, measures should be taken in the public interest to supervise or control their activities. The members of the committee are:—

Miss Florence Horsburgh, M.P. (chairman), Mr. B. E. Astbury (assistant secretary, Charity Organisation Society), Mr. J. H. Harris (Metropolitan Police magistrate), Mr. J. J. Mallon, LL.D., J.P. (warden of Toynbee Hall), Mr. Brian Manning F.C.A., J.P. (of Messrs. Cole Bond & Co.), Mrs. Montagu Norman, and Mr. Geoffrey W. Russell (of Messrs. Parker, Garrett & Co.).

The secretary of the committee is Mr. J. A. R. Pimlott, to whom all communications should be addressed at the Home Office, Whitehall, S.W.1.

THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL'S DECENNIAL SUPPLEMENT. ENGLAND AND WALES, 1931.

An examination of the rates of mortality at individual ages shows emphatically the great improvement in the vitality of the people which has taken place at all but the most advanced ages. The improvement is specially marked at the youngest ages. The probability that an infant will die within a year of birth has decreased between 1931 and 1911 by as much as 40 per cent. Out of every 1,000 boys born the number who died before attaining the age of one year was in 1911 about 120, in 1921 about 90, but in 1931 about 72 only. Out of 1,000 girls born the numbers of deaths in the first year of age were 98 in 1911, 69 in 1921 and 54 in 1931. During childhood and adolescence also the improvement in mortality experience though not so pronounced has still been substantial, while from ages 20 to 60 the 1931 mortality rates are much less than those for 1911, the difference being greatest round about age 40 where it is well over 30 per cent.

In contrast with this remarkable improvement in the mortality experience during the greater span of life it is found that at the advanced ages the 1931 rates of mortality are rather heavier than those for 1921 or 1911. One cause of this phenomenon is probably the survival to old age in the present generation of many of the weaker members of the community who under the conditions prevailing in the past would have succumbed before old age was in sight.

Rates of mortality are given for females according to marital condition—single, married, and widowed. The mortality of widows is found to be heavier than that of either single or married women. At all ages from 25 to 60 the rates of mortality for married women are lighter than those for spinsters, but at the higher ages there is little difference between the two classes.

Between 1921 and 1931 there has been a substantial improvement in the mortality experience of all three classes of women, but the most remarkable feature disclosed by this section of the investigation is the increase at the younger adult ages in the vitality of married women, as compared with single women. In recent years there has been a marked reduction in the number of births. It follows that though the maternal mortality rate, which is the ratio of the deaths assigned to childbirth to the number of births, has slightly increased, the actual number of deaths associated with childbirth has decreased. Apart therefore from variations in the numbers of deaths due to other causes, the reduction in the birth-rate has diminished the rate of mortality among married women at the child-bearing ages.

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