

## POVERTY SPELLS HEALTH, DEATHS ECHO PROSPERITY

WASHINGTON, D. C., Nov. 4.—Luth and Caesar, the two dogs, in the course of the dialogue which Robert Burns reported, brought out the comparative advantages of the rich and the poor and, to the philosophic mind the poor seemed to have the better of it, from the standpoint of health and happiness. It takes something of a philosopher to agree that poverty is a desirable state. Nathaniel Hawthorne said that poverty was one of the major crimes.

### Death Seeks Riches

Yet the official records of the United States government reveal that the death rate rises as prosperity rises, and falls in hard times. To some people death seems a happy estate and one to be looked forward to with eagerness, but this can scarcely be regarded as the normal attitude. So we have two currents crossing. Most people shrink from death and most people detest poverty, yet death hastens after riches and delays its visit to penury. The ancient prayer: Give me neither poverty nor riches, seems to strike a selfish mean.

In the year 1929 the United States enjoyed the greatest measure of prosperity it ever had known in its entire history, but the price was a high death rate. The various calculations

show some variation but striking an average, it is found that the national income was in the neighborhood of \$95,000,000,000, the greatest income in money which any nation ever enjoyed. It was remarkably well distributed. The wages of workmen were high, those of skilled labor being especially so. Entrepreneurs and capitalists were thriving and those living on unearned increment were receiving fat dividend checks with satisfying regularity. In that year the death rate according to the mortality statistics of the bureau of the census, was almost 1200 per 100,000 of population.

### Poverty Drops Death Rate

Everyone will remember that it was late in 1929 that the great depression began with the crash of the stock market. To be sure, the actual causes of the depression were in existence prior to that but, as few were aware of the fact, it made no difference. Income dropped by the billions and the death rate to 1133. This may seem the more remarkable because of the large number of suicides. It will be recalled how ruined stock market speculators were jumping from windows so fast in New York that it was said in some of the loftiest structures they were standing in line! In 1929 there had been 16,250 suicides, giving

a rate of 14 per 100,000, and in 1930 there were 18,551, giving a rate of 15.3 per 100,000.

Even with the suicides of the bankrupts and the disappointed, the general health of the nation was so much better that the death rate for all causes of death, declined markedly.

The national income still was going down the next year, 1931, and the suicides kept climbing. In 1931, there were 20,088 suicides or 16.8 per 100,000. These were chiefly, it is understood, among those who had lost fortunes, and who dared not face the health-giving delights of poverty. There seems to be a good deal in the idea that it is better to have never had at all than to have had and lost. Yet while the suicide rate was mounting so rapidly, the general death rate declined to 1107 per 100,000 of population.

### 1932 Toughest Year

The year 1932 was, for some, the bitterest year of the depression. National and individual income had continued to decline. That year the full weight of the tragedy was being felt by people in all walks. It was not only a case of formerly rich individuals who were suddenly forced to face hardship. Artisans who had not known a day's unemployment for years were unable to find work. Office workers, store clerks, all manner of people in the earning classes discovered they no longer could earn. Dire poverty overcame many. The suicide rate in 1932 mounted to 20,927, or 17.4 per 100,000. Most of the brokers had been closed out in the earlier years. Bank-

ers began to figure largely now. But the general death rate dropped down to only 1089 per 100,000.

In 1933, President Roosevelt took office and the people or many of them seemed to cheer up. It was inevitable that the downward trend in many lines would have to continue from sheer momentum but there seemed to be a glimmer of hope in the New Deal and indeed, before the year was out there was considerable re-employment at better wages and under better working conditions.

### Better Times Jump Deaths

In 1931 the number of deaths from hunger and thirst had been 33; in 1932 they had dropped to 27 but in 1933, with the New Deal coming round the corner, they rose to 39. That showed that conditions were still bad but the fact that suicides declined to 19,993 is an indication that there was a more hopeful spirit abroad in the land, that despair was fading. In this low year—and was before the great relief expenditures had begun to be made—the death rate from all causes dropped to only 1067 per 100,000, the lowest it had ever been. More than 100 fewer deaths per 100,000 than in the prosperous good old days of 1929. National income was down to only about \$40,000,000,000 a year—less than half of what it had been in 1929.

Now begins the new chapter. With the stimulation which business was given by the national industrial recovery administration, the agricultural adjustment administration, and the other New Deal agencies which were

distributing money right and left, putting millions on relief and improving business in general, the national income started its climb back. It gained more in 1934 than it had lost in 1933. Billions were added to the income of the people.

We find deaths from hunger and thirst dropping to 21 and suicides dropping to 18,829, the lowest they had been since 1929. But more important than anything else, the total death rate had begun to climb again. It had been only 1067 in the worst year. With returning prosperity, it mounted to 1104 per 100,000 of population.

When the bad years were in progress, there were many expressions of satisfaction on the part of public health authorities that in spite of privations, there was no unusual incidence of disease and no serious epidemics. Most eloquent of all, though are these definitive figures on the death rate. They are indisputable. Death follows prosperity and longer life is the companion of hardship.

There are innumerable explanations. A book could be compiled analyzing the various aspects but it is likely the showing would be that the simpler diet, enforced by the depression, had much to do with the better health of the community. With the high living of prosperous days no longer possible, the people were compelled to content themselves with peasant fare or something near it. Although they thrived, according to these statistics, it is possible there are some who would prefer short lives and merry ones.

## INTEREST IN WAR RAPIDLY WANING

TORONTO, Nov. 1.—Can it be that the "war" isn't the interest-compelling news story Toronto news editors have been thinking it is?

Are our newspapers being "spoiled"—as one stenographer assures us they are—by "too much war?"

Everybody's opinion here is valuable—because "everybody" reads a newspaper. But here is what a few citizens think about it:

Stenographer—Why don't you people cut out some of that war news? Or put it all together under one heading, a two-column heading if you must make it that big? Sure I read about it sometimes in the headlines if there is anything new; but it is mostly all the same. And I don't want to turn the pages and find more of it all through the papers. You're not nearly as bad as the evening papers at that.

Housewife—I very seldom read the war news; and I very nearly stopped my evening paper after one particular headline: "Was somebody killed? No!"

Police Commission Chairman—Why don't you fellows in the newspaper business stop running so much bunk about the war? It seems to me every time they are about to get things settled the newspapers stir up more trouble. No, I don't want to read very much about it.

B. A.—There's so much of it in the papers I don't want to read any of it.

Salesman—I guess my newspaper is supposed to feature the thing that interests the most people. If war news is what people want, I guess it's the newspaper's business to give it to them. But I think war news is beginning to follow the road of industry—the supply is exceeding the demand.

Lawyer—The war news is being played up in many cases far out of proportion to its actual worth. I think that the public is often led to believe that certain events in Ethiopia are much more critical than they really are.

### Conflicting Reports

Drug Clerk—If the infernal reports were not so conflicting, one might be able to read them with a little more faith and interest. Stories are blared across the front pages about the Balkans using expanding bullets and poison gas. Cartoons are even drawn illustrating the poor natives dropping to their knees and tearing at their throats. Truly a horrible state of affairs—if you can believe all you read. Then along comes another story in which Haile Selassie himself is reported as denying that the Italians ever used gas or expanding bullets. Some one is a liar?

Waiter—If the reports were not liable to have such serious results, they would be funny. I admit that those first few screaming headlines were pretty thrilling. But after they had screamed at you every day for a couple of weeks, one began to get sick of them. It affects a person just the same as any other screaming.

Teacher—You've heard that little story about the shepherd boy shouting "wolf," haven't you. Every one ran to the rescue and found there wasn't any wolf at all. Then when the real wolf did come along every one laughed and thought it was a good joke. Some newspapers resemble that shepherd boy very much.

Business Man—Some day we're going to have a real war, and the newspapers will have to do their printing on billboards.

### "Canada Tir a Dheanta"

"Canada Tir a Dheanta" is the Irish Gaelic for "Made in Canada" and thereby hangs a tale. Like her agricultural products, Canada's furniture and other manufacturers of wood enjoy a good reputation, and for the future must be identified in two languages so far as the Saorstát Eireann, or Irish Free State, is concerned. As yet, this innovation has not been extended to agricultural produce. The Canadian Trade Commissioner in Dublin advises that, by an order issued under the Merchandise Marks Act, it will be illegal on and after November 30, 1935, to import into the Irish Free State or offer for sale, a wide variety of new furniture and similar articles made wholly or mainly of wood, unless such furniture bears both in the Irish and English languages specific indications, prominently displayed, of the country of manufacture. As regards Canada, the indication of origin "Canada tir a dheanta, Made in Canada" should be stamped or burned into the wooden portion of such goods in a reasonably conspicuous place, where convenient. Otherwise, in the case of upholstery, the words are to be clearly shown on a tag or label securely attached to the article, Canada Tir a Dheanta.

Grandmother—Johnny, I wouldn't slide down those stairs.

Little Boy—Wouldn't! Heck, you couldn't!

When a wife ceases to be jealous of her husband, he starts to be suspicious of her.



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