

dwindling pagan tribes of the Malay Peninsula would disappear. The observations which Mr. Noone now records, however, suggest that in the group under notice recuperative forces are at work, which enable them at least to hold their own against the effects of Malayan contacts and the adoption by some of their number of the tenets of the Mahommedan faith. In the course of an economic and demographic survey in 1936, Mr. Noone found that in fourteen groups with a population estimated at 1,600 the number of children born to the average lowland S noï married woman is 4.15, the model family also being four, but with a tendency to increase. The size of the family which occurs so many times as to contribute potentially more to a future generation than any other is five. With this figure as a characteristic, there is ground for hope for the future.

Fertility, reckoned on the basis of the number of children who grow to maturity and become effective in adding offspring to the group, is assessed on the average survival figure of 3.003, the largest number of deaths before maturity taking place under the age of six years. The sex ratio is 100 females to 107.38 males born; and this is practically unchanged at maturity at 100 and 107.54 respectively. These figures, taken in conjunction with other data recorded by Mr. Noone, point to the conclusion that while groups in which contacts have been recent appear to enter upon a stage during which the population suffers a disturbance of its reproduction rate, other groups have passed through this stage and have adjusted themselves well enough to be at least as viable as their more primitive and remoter hill cousins.

Disease and Race

A CASE which is of considerable interest in its bearing upon the racial incidence and distribution of disease is reported from Egypt by S. Azmy Pasha and A. F. Zanaty of Cairo (*Lancet*, 237, December 30, 1939). The patient in question, a man, thirty-five years of age, who had lived in Cairo for twelve years, but previously to that in the country, was admitted to hospital with anæmia in August 1938 and after discharge was re-admitted in a relapse in 1939. After a fortnight's treatment without improvement, a bone marrow puncture not only excluded an aleukæmic leucosis as well as a plastic anæmia, but also showed megaloblasts typical of Addisonian anæmia. Addisonian anæmia, the authors point out, has a distinct racial incidence. It is generally regarded as a disease of Nordic races and as less common among southern races. In America also a higher incidence has been recorded among immigrants from northern Europe (Anglo-Saxon) than among those of Latin extraction. It is also regarded as further supporting this view of racial susceptibility that the Finns, out of all races, are more liable to develop the disease when infested with *Diphyllobothrium fatum*—a parasite which produces a blood-picture indistinguishable from that of genuine Addisonian anæmia. The disease rarely occurs in Asiatics and is unknown in the tropics. In Egyptians it is extremely rare. The authors, after

examining hundreds of anæmias, have found only this case now recorded, while another authority has encountered two cases only since 1935.

Demography of Madagascar

IN his inaugural thesis (Thèse de Paris, No. 657; 1939) Dr. Félix Randriamanana states that a study of the population of Madagascar since the beginning of the century shows an annual rise, which was very pronounced during the first twelve years but underwent a decline during each of the subsequent twelve years. In 1936 the population was 3,777,951 as compared with 2,244,876 in 1900. In 1904 and 1908 various devastating epidemics, especially smallpox, measles, malaria and influenza, had a considerable effect upon the population. The annual birth-rate has increased from 64,847 in 1906 to 88,351 in 1936; but the increase is probably more apparent than real owing to the notification of births being carried out more completely than previously.

During 1933–36 the death-rate was 20.7 per 1,000, as compared with 28.5 in Réunion (1933–35), 24 in Egypt (1930–34), 22 in Cochín-China (1931–35) and 15.7 in France (1931–35). During the first year of life the mortality in 1934–36 was 177 per 1,000 births as compared with 83 in France (1930–34) and 206 in Japan (1934). The maternal mortality in childbirth showed a rate of 100 per 1,000 births, this high rate being due to disease and the poor constitution of the mothers. The most prevalent epidemic diseases in Madagascar are plague and malaria at the beginning of summer (December), followed in April by influenza, measles, whooping cough and dysenteries. In June and July pulmonary diseases, especially pneumonia, predominate, followed by influenza, while in September and October more or less severe outbreaks of alimentary diseases are prevalent.

Animal Organisers

Current Science is to be congratulated on presenting to Indian readers a comprehensive résumé of research on organisers ("Organisers in Animal Development", Supp. *Curr. Sci.*, August 1939, Bangalore). There are eight articles contributed by the distinguished investigators, O. Mangold, E. Rotmann, J. Holtfreter, P. Weiss, W. Luther, C. H. Waddington, S. Hörstadius and C. M. Child. Four of the articles are in German, the remainder in English. There are numerous illustrations. The subjects discussed range from the general work of organisers during development and the special factors influencing their activities, to collateral fields of research such as the study of regeneration of lost parts and physiological gradients. A certain amount of repetition and overlapping is inevitable in a series such as this, and it would have been helpful if a summary of the articles could have been provided.

The story of the experimental work undertaken by Spemann and his collaborators at Freiburg im Breisgau on blastoporic organisation centres in the amphibian egg is well known in Great Britain. The old 'epigenesis' versus 'preformation' controversy