

It is perhaps true, and another way of putting the same truth is that modern men have utterly lost the joy of life. They have to put up with the miserable substitute for the joys of life. And even these they seem less and less able to enjoy. Unless we can make ordinary men interested in ordinary life, we are under the vulgar despotism of those who cannot interest them but can at least amuse them. Unless we can make daybreak and daily bread and the creative secrets of labor interesting in themselves, there will fall on all our civilization a fatigue, which is the one disease from which civilizations do not recover. So died the great Pagan civilization—of bread and circuses and forgetfulness of the household gods.

So, whatever you do, do not jeer at the Book of Genesis. It would be better for you, it would be better for all of us if we were so absolutely bound by the Book of Genesis that the whole week was a series of symbolic services,

reminding us of the stages of creation. It would be better if every Monday, instead of being Black Monday, were always Bright Monday to commemorate the creation of the light. It would be better if Tuesday, at present a word of somewhat colorless connotation, represented a great feast of fountains and rivers and rolling streams, because it was the day of the division of the waters. It would be better if every Wednesday were an occasion for hanging the house with green boughs or blossoms, because these things were brought forth on the third day of creation; or that Thursday were sacred to the sun and moon; and Friday sacred to the fish and fowl; and so on. Then you might begin to have some notion of the importance of a week and what a high imaginative civilization might really do with a week. If it had the creative power to produce such a pageant of creation, it would not bother about cinemas.

## II. HOW LONG CAN MAN LIVE?

By PROFESSOR DR. WALTER WEISBACH

Translated from *Pester Lloyd*, Budapest German-language Daily

**I**T FILLS us with pride that the average life span of our whole population increases at almost breakneck speed from year to year. Whereas in 1800 the average life span amounted to only twenty-seven years, it has risen to-day to fifty-six. In other words, it has more than doubled in a little over a hundred years. This success is largely due to strenuous attacks on epidemics and infant mortality.

A few figures on the vital statistics

outside Europe show what a dangerous rôle these two forces play in lowering the average expectancy of life, especially where urban industrial influences have not intervened. Among the Arabian Wahabees, for instance, 75 to 80 per cent of the children do not survive their first year because of the great number of contagious diseases, especially small pox. According to H. St. John Philby's descriptions of Arabia, old men are great rarities there. Elbert's expedition to Sunda

revealed that only 2.2 per cent of the people of Lombok live to be more than fifty. In Bima on Sumbawa 51 per cent of the people die before they reach the age of seventeen, 23 per cent before they are thirty, 16 per cent before they are fifty, and the remaining 10 per cent before they are sixty. Plehn's researches in Kamerun show that the average life span does not come to more than 40 years there and that infant mortality is particularly severe. Out of 45 children born of 19 different mothers, two died at birth, eight died within two to eight days, one within ten days, six more within fourteen days, and two within a month. Three children died within one or two months, two more within a year, one died at the age of twelve, and six before they had reached twenty. Out of these 45 children born to 19 different mothers, only 14 reached maturity.

## II

Mansfeld's researches in the jungle and the work of Nordenskiöld among Indians and Whites reveal similar tendencies. The latter reckoned the proportion of children in the total deaths of southern Bolivia during 1906 at 69 per cent, and in 1907 at 58.9 per cent. The disastrous effect of epidemics makes itself felt especially in British India, and Ronaldshay's book, *A Bird's Eye View of India*, states that since 1896 ten and a half million people have died of the bubonic plague and that in the year 1918 about seven million died of influenza. In Bengal alone 350,000 to 400,000 people die of malaria each year.

The limited food supplies on many of the South Sea islands and the hard work that women and mothers have

to do in other parts of the world have given the false impression that it is advantageous to the progeny to keep the total population as low as possible. Elbert found that on one island in the South Seas 64.1 per cent of the families had only one child, 29.2 per cent of the families had between two and three children, and 5.7 per cent of the families had between four and five children. Yet in spite of the relatively small number of children and the resulting possibility of giving them better care, we find a very short life span in these places.

Compared with such figures, an average life of 56 years represents a tremendous advance. But we must not forget that even if the individual lives a long time a whole nation cannot live to an old age if it is not able to support numerous offspring. In other words, the longer life of the individual means nothing if he ages as rapidly as ever and becomes incapable of work long before his natural life has ended.

Hufeland has stated that as a rule the life of any individual is eight times as long as the period required for complete growth. Since the average man reaches maturity between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, this would mean that man ought to live between 144 and 200 years. But even if the fact that men take a long time to reach maturity inclines us to estimate human life at five times this period, we should be justified in expecting a life of between 90 to 125 years.

Definite observations possessing real validity can be made concerning the growth and perpetuation of the human race, but the peculiarity of each individual depends upon not irrelevant vacillations within the usual limits. One man lives more

rapidly than another, and various signs of progress or retrogression appear sooner or show themselves more obviously in certain individuals than in others. This difference between individuals becomes more and more evident as the life span lengthens. Since a greater number of older people are now alive because of the great advance in the average life span, a great many people want to stave off the more or less unpleasant features of old age as much as possible.

In order to succeed in this we must resort to every method to keep our bodies and mental powers fresh and capable of activity. In pursuance of this aim, we must direct our attention, on the one hand, to the natural and gradual exhaustion of our body and, on the other hand, to the cultivation of conditions that will preserve it as long as possible. Nature prescribes for the conduct of our individual lives in very rough outline. Our task is to prolong to the utmost certain periods, primarily the period of maturity, with a view to postponing the last period as long as possible. Proper understanding of the influence of certain life periods on our physical form can go far toward assuring a rich store of surplus energy to be used during the period when we enjoy our fullest physical powers. Childhood is the period of nourishment, youth the period of movement, maturity and age the period of experience. The happy life begins with the stomach and ends with the head. Childhood, as Stratz has said, is the period of nourishment: 'Food that is not consumed is stored in the form of fat. A round, full figure thus develops. The torso grows larger, the limbs remain short and stout, the joints do not stand out conspicuously.

During youth, in the second decade, the stomach grows thinner, the chest widens, the limbs lengthen—more in boys than in girls—but the childish figure still remains. Not until the third decade do the essential differences between the powerful, muscular, masculine type and the graceful, rounded, feminine form begin to appear. Over-exercise when one is at the height of one's physical powers develops too much muscle, and overeating develops too much fat, which so many people begin to put on during this period. The signs of age—weakening muscles, sagging fat under the skin, and angular joints—need not occur before the seventieth year.'

People to-day often speak of the so-called diseases of wear and tear, which many of us face helplessly at a certain age. High blood pressure is one of these illnesses—a result of the hardening of the arteries. This gradual hardening means that the body is protecting itself against the tendency of the arteries to give way. The stiffening of the walls of the arteries makes it harder for the blood to circulate. The heart needs more power than in earlier years to pump the same amount of blood through the body. In consequence, with advancing age we tend to confine our attention more and more to the heart. Proper care of this one organ could eliminate many of the dangers of old age.

From a purely practical point of view, this means that as we grow older we should avoid eating too much, drinking too much, overstraining our muscles, and, above all, riding a bicycle up hill, running fast, and similar strenuous occupations. But it is also important to continue all physical activity to which we were

accustomed in the prime of life as long as possible. Walking is therefore the best possible exercise for older men, and nobody is ever too old for it. Swimming or riding are also good for those who are used to them. Light

gardening can be indulged in to the greatest advantage, even at an old age. Anyone who wants to remain active as long as possible must always be conscious of the fact that only active organs can remain healthy.

### III. THE PRICE OF HAPPINESS

By PAUL VALÉRY

From the *Saturday Review*, London Conservative Weekly

**H**APPINESS is a word that has been clothed with all sorts of magic qualities. It is one of those suggestive and illusive words that no two persons would define in the same way, since it is entirely a subjective matter. Happiness has always been held out as a bait to humanity by politicians or reformers who wished thereby either to win the support of men or to inculcate them with their own doctrines. In the pursuit of happiness men, but more especially women, have achieved the most unheard-of things. Its appeal is as instantaneous, especially for women, as a piece of meat that one dangles before a bird of prey.

The capacity for happiness depends entirely on physical condition and the measure of vigor and sensibility that a man or woman possesses, which renders him or her impervious to any other outside influence. There is no doctrine of happiness, for happiness is but an accident and nothing more. Nevertheless, we all possess the faculty of making a doctrine out of such accidental phenomena. Happiness in this way becomes a mirage of sensibility.

The transient quality of happiness is, however, very marked, because one of the essential properties of sensi-

bility is that it tends to disturb internal equilibrium at every moment. We appear to possess an ever-present capacity of creating a sense of internal irritation that is so strong that the state of happiness that we feel is often suddenly converted into unrest without there being any apparent reason for it. It is this latent power of producing internal irritation that accounts, for instance, for one's turning over in bed when one is really perfectly comfortable and happy in one position.

Actually, happiness is so ephemeral in character that, even when external conditions and the general state of the mind are at peace and in harmony, it often happens that this sense of happiness is suddenly dissolved, a more intense power and feeling of unrest taking its place spontaneously. Man, in short, always engenders a sufficiency of disruptive forces to dispel the state of calm and peace that he happens to possess at any given time. It is at these moments of rude awakening that he faces the problems of life, and this especially applies to the man possessed of creative instincts. In the latter case the mirage of happiness rarely endures more than a fleeting minute, and it goes almost as quickly as it appears. Happiness is conse-