

## POPULATION OF EARTH NEARING TWO BILLIONS

More Than Half of Total Lives in Asia; 162,000,000 in North America.

BY WATSON DAVIS

Managing Editor, Science Service  
In less than three centuries, the population of the earth nearly has quadrupled. Up to 1900 the rate of increase was accelerating, but since the turn of the century the rate of increase slackened, although, of course, there are millions more on earth now than in 1900.

The best estimate of the earth's population is 1,820,000,000 as of 1929. Dr. Walter F. Willcox, Cornell's professor of economics and statistics, arrives at this figure after an extensive study of earth's population, past and present, reported in an extensive research into international migrations just published under his editorship by the National Bureau of Economic Research.

Asia, with the teeming hordes of China, is the most populated continent, with 954,000,000, or more than half of the earth's inhabitants. Incidentally, even for the present time, it is most difficult to fix a reliable figure for China's population, due to the lack of census data and the tumult of the Orient.

Europe has 478,000,000 persons on 3,800,000 square miles and is the most densely populated continent. Asia's population lives on a continent of 16,700,000 square miles.

North America, with a population of 162,000,000, outranks Africa's 140,000,000, although it is slightly smaller in area. South America has 77,000,000 and Australia and Polynesia together are credited with 9,000,000.

About the population of the earth before the seventeenth century saw the dawn of the modern scientific period, there is little information. Dr. Willcox's estimates begin with one for 1650. The difficulty of the task is shown by attempts made in the seventeenth century by five writers. They ranged from 320,000,000 to 1,000,000,000. The figure arrived at by Dr. Willcox is 465,000,000.

Human beings increased to 660,000,000 in number in 1750; 836,000,000 in 1800; 1,098,000,000 in 1850, and 1,551,000,000 in 1900.

In the last third century, the increase in world population has been about equal to twice the total population of the United States.

The magnificent Cambodian ruins of Angkor Wat were lost for centuries in the jungle, and were discovered by a French traveler in the nineteenth century.

### AN ANGEL COMES TO HOLLYWOOD



## MANY DEFECTS ARE STAMPED ON U. S. AUTOS

Cars of Today Too Heavy, Too Rough-Riding, Too Low, Says Engineer.

By Science Service

DETROIT, Jan. 22.—Scathing criticism was hurled against the modern automobile before the American Society of Automotive Engineers, meeting here, by Herbert Chase, consulting engineer of New York.

Automobiles now are too rough riding, too low-down, too heavy, too dangerous and numerous other "too's," in the opinion of Chase. Many needed improvements, he says, can be made almost immediately, without time-consuming research.

Chase lamented the fact that this is not done because engineers "are bound by conventions and inhibitions which require them to make the least possible change that will enable their company to get through another season with a satisfactory sales record."

The "low down" accusation combines with the charge that cowlings are too high. Cowlings of present design were said to be dangerous because they do not enable the operator to see enough of the road immediately in front of the car, and tiring because he has to strain his neck to see.

### Claims Not Upheld

Chase believes that very low cars do not achieve the safety claimed for their low centers of gravity. Too low a center tends to increase skidding and reduce the pressure of the outer tires against the road when rounding a curve, which results in instability, he said. This instability was called a far worse hazard than the high center of gravity.

The militant engineer recommended three-point chassis suspension as the solution to the rough-riding problem. He said that the finest riding car he ever drove so was constructed.

The bulk of the present-day car and its inefficient utilization were bemoaned.

"Scarcely 40 per cent of the area a car occupies is devoted to useful load-carrying space," Chase declared. "The remainder, or about 60 per cent, including bonnet, cowl, fenders and running boards, a useless space between the spring horns and often as much or more space back of the rear seat, is a total loss.

Remedies Are Offered

From the remaining criticisms and suggestions of the New York engineer, the following summaries may be made:

To help get true streamlining,

eliminate fenders, stow engine below decks or in rear, recess wheels, and fair headlights into body.

Use improved two-stroke engine to get more power for given weight and high economy at light loads.

Simply driving with automatic choke and heat controls and one special gearshift.

Substitute heat and noise-making synthetic materials for steel and glass in the body.

For the short-legged driver, adjustable driving seats that rise when moved forward.

Seat backs that move up and down with the passenger instead of polishing his back. (Will not be needed in the improved three-point suspension car.)

Narrower pillars and larger rear windows for better vision.

Sloped windshield and window glasses to reduce reflection.

Do not put a radio in the car, because it distracts the driver.

The next total eclipse of the sun will occur, Feb. 14, 1934, and will be visible from Borneo and remote islands in the Pacific.

## 197-YEAR-OLD ELM VICTIM OF PROGRESS

Tree Felled Because It Endangered Trolley Power Line.

By United Press  
KANSAS CITY, Mo., Jan. 27.—A mighty elm tree was felled here recently, which was a real pioneer of the west.

A count of the rings made by the cambium layers revealed that it was

197 years old before it was felled. It was cut down because linemen said it endangered the trolley car power lines.

Forestry experts say that a count

of cambium layers, which make the rings in the trunk of a tree, is not always an accurate method of computing its age, but if its age was computed reasonably correctly it was a healthy youth of 40 at the time of the Revolutionary war.

It survived most of its fellow elms because it was included in city park property.

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### FUND CUT TO HAMPER MINE RESCUE WORK

House Bill Proposes Drastic Slant in Appropriation.

By Science Service

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27.—The nation's "mine rescue squads" and the preventive and research work that protects 1,700,000 men and \$14,000,000 of capital in the country's mining industry are threatened with the congressional economy ax.

If recommended federal appropriation cuts urged by the house committee are made, the United States Bureau of Mines of the Department of Commerce will have \$127,000 less in funds to support the mine rescue cars, train miners in rescue and safety, operate an experimental mine, and perform research on equipment and method to aid the states in preventing mine disasters.

At present, \$741,000 is provided for this work. This is only one two hundredth of one per cent of the nation's investment in the mining industry. The budget pared the recommended funds for 1933-34 to \$664,000 and now the house bill proposes only \$614,000.

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