

# Quintuplets, Late in Learning How to Talk, Advanced Rapidly Once They Got Started



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When the photo at the left was taken—way back in December, 1935—the quintuplets couldn't talk and didn't seem to want to try. The picture shows Yvonne and Marie, isolated in a play-pen for study by the



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psychologists. . . . They can talk now, though—and in the other photo Emilie looks up reverently at a picture of the Christ Child and says her evening prayers.



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A far cry from the five helpless youngsters who had to grunt and gesture to make their wants known—the Dionne quintuplets with Dr. Roy Dafeo, as they look today. From the left the sisters are Emilie, Yvonne, Marie, Annette and Cecile.

## Soft Contralto Voices Now Use 185 Words, Psychologists Told

By BRUCE CATTON

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TORONTO, Ont., Nov. 2.—The Dionne quintuplets learned to talk slowly, but they came on with a grand rush when they did get started.

"Right now they are acquiring new words faster than ordinary children of their age acquire them. And having learned to talk, they are using their newly developed powers as much as the traffic will bear."

"They have a total joint vocabulary of 185 words and the nursery at Callander echoes to their soft-voiced conversation from sunup to sundown."

"Incidentally, they have very low contralto voices."

All of this is revealed in a paper on the quintuplets' language development, written by W. E. Blatz, M. I. Fletcher and M. Mason of St. George's School for Child Study of the University of Toronto. The study was one of several made of the quintuplets by Dr. Blatz and his coworkers.

Psychologists have shown that single children learn to talk before twins do. The child who grows up in company with another child of his own age can communicate with his playmate through grunts and gestures. The child who grows up without such a companion, however, has to learn to talk to make his wants known.

If this is true of twins, how much more would it be true of quintuplets! Each of these girls has four playmates, instead of just one at the same stage. From the time they first crawled around the nursery together, the quintuplets had a code of gestures, squeals and jabberings by which they could understand each other. They should worry about language!

THERE is another, similar factor. Dr. Blatz has found at the nursery school that children whose parents do everything for them are slower in learning to talk than children who are not so pampered.

There again you have the case of a child who doesn't need to learn to talk, because his wants are anticipated before he needs to call attention to them. And there you have another parallel—the quintuplets, who have always had trained nurses in constant attendance, looking out for them and hurrying to meet their needs as no mother, however, devoted, could hope to.

Those things considered, it is no wonder that the quintuplets were slow in learning to talk.

Having started, however, they are making up for lost time. At present they are acquiring new words faster than the normal child acquires them. The psychologists who have been studying them during the last two years will testify that the girls will talk your arm off, if you give them a chance.

One of the biggest difficulties the nursery authorities have had in maintaining meal-time discipline has been due to the fact that the quintuplets like to carry on earnest and

could pick it up. Yvonne, on the other hand, has 24 words in her vocabulary that no other quint possess. Annette has 17, Marie 16, Emilie 15 and Cecile 10.

THE study of the girls' progress into spoken language has been extremely interesting to these learned psychologists. For instance: psychologists have pretty definitely tabulated the order in which English-speaking children learn to pronounce the vowel sounds. But the order in which the quintuplets mastered these sounds was entirely different. The quintuplets are learning French, rather than English, and the vowel sounds are different in French. But the quintuplets developed their control over consonants in the same order that English-speaking children do. Consonants are much the same in all languages—which indicates, possibly, that a child develops consonants in the order of their difficulty, not in the order of their use.

Another, along the same line: like all children, the quintuplets were mouthing single syllables, most of them meaningless to anybody but a quintuplet, long before they were putting them together into words. And their increase in the mastery of syllables began about 10 months before they stepped up their increase in the use of words.

This, to Dr. Blatz, suggests that the mere joining together of syllables is not the mechanism by which words are formed. Meanings must be added. The child can talk before he has anything to say.

The quintuplets are going to be bilingual. From now on, the conversation at meal each day is to be in English, as fast as the quintuplets can acquire any.

Which, judging by the speed with which they are picking up their French, won't be long now.

## RADIO IS TO AID IN PUPILS' EXERCISE

Conditioning exercises, set to music and directed by radio, will be inaugurated this week for pupils of Grades 5 and 6, Emil Roth, director of Physical education, announced today.

The second program, to be broadcast at 2:15 p. m. today, is to be heard over WFPM. Exercises, after the 15-minute broadcast period, are to be continued under instruction of the regular teachers in the gymnasiums.

## DR. W. B. STEWART ON CLUB'S PROGRAM

Dr. Willis B. Stewart is to read a paper, "Premises of Medicine," before the Century Club at 8 p. m. today, Judson L. Stark, president, said today.

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## LIST SPEAKERS FOR CHRISTMAS SEAL CAMPAIGN

Henry O. Goett Is Chairman Of Volunteer Aids' Committee.

Russell R. Richardson, speakers bureau director for the Marion County Tuberculosis Association's annual Christmas seal drive, today announced the bureau's list for the 1937 campaign.

Henry O. Goett is to serve as chairman. Those who already have volunteered to speak are:

R. L. Bailey, Mrs. William E. Balch, Mrs. Fred G. Balch, Mrs. J. C. Bassus, Frank Blackwith, Mrs. Cleo Blackburn, Gideon Blain, E. G. Boswell, Judge Wilfred Bradshaw, Mrs. Ida Broo, John A. Bruhn, H. O. Chamberlin, Rabbi Elias Charry, Mrs. Lucile Cole, Mrs. Roland Cotton, Wilson Dailey, Russell J. Dean, Nelson Deranian, George M. Dickson Jr., Berkeley Duck Jr., Christian Emhardt, the Rev. J. B. Ferguson.

Kenneth P. Fry, Henry O. Goett, John Goodnight, O. B. Hanger, Davis Harrison, M. Hillias Jr., Mrs. Dale Hodges, Alvin C. Johnson, J. Clyde Hoffman, John T. Hotell, John D. Hughes, Mrs. Mae Marcum Jacobs, George Jeffrey, Jack Kammins, O. P. Kensing, Layman Kingsbury, Robert Kirby, Donald Lafuze, Charles H. Leap, Mrs. Louise R. Markun, Philip Lutz Jr., Cassat Marx, Joe McNamara.

Edwin McClure, Anthony Montani, Ferdinand Montani, Dr. Charles J. McIntyre, Mrs. James L. Murray, Michael F. Morrissey, Mrs. Max Norris, William T. Pearcey, Curtis Plopper, Mrs. Mary E. Rammer, the Rev. S. S. Reed, William B. Reilly, John K. Rickles, Wilbur Royce, Thomas Scanlon, John Shackelford, Fred Shick, Grier M. Shotwell, Niven Stall, Judson Stark, Dr. James H. Stygal, Mrs. Florence Thomas, Mrs. John A. Towns, Joel Taylor, Edward W. Troy, the Rev. D. C. Venable, Dr. Homer L. Wales, Evan Walker, Urban K. Wilde Jr., Elmon M. Williams, Wesley Wilson, Edward H. Wischmeyer.

Mrs. Louis Wolf, Wayne Armstrong, Herman B. Gray, E. Dean Miller, Laurens Henderson, Mrs. Sultan Cohen, Mrs. Robert McGill, Mrs. Louis Segar, Mrs. Marvin Lu-

gar, Mrs. Clayton Ridge, Mrs. William A. Brennan, Mrs. A. C. Rasmussen, Edward W. Harris, Dr. A. E. Hubbard, Reginald Sullivan, Mrs. Charles Weiss, Mrs. George Bowen, Mrs. Kenneth Baker, Mrs. Bruce Maxwell, Dr. Morris C. Thomas and Henry Lausenkamp Jr.

## BEAUTY OPERATORS HEAR OF EQUIPMENT

Delegates attending the Indiana Association of Beauticians Convention in the Hotel Antlers today heard discussions from various state operators on new types of equipment.

Lieut. Gov. Henry F. Schricker welcomed the delegates yesterday. Mme. Condos of Chicago, spoke on "Shop Ethics and Organization." Ceremonies at yesterday's luncheon were directed by Mrs. Isabel Igram of Connersville, and Mrs. Ann Holowitz of Indianapolis.

Beauty experts are giving treatments to a "Cinderella girl," showing how she can be transformed into an attractive woman.

O. E. S. DINNER SET Broad Ripple Chapter 315, Order of Eastern Star, is to have a dinner at 6 p. m. tomorrow in the Broad Ripple Masonic Temple with Mrs. Margaret Fisher, Worthy Grand Matron, as guest of honor.

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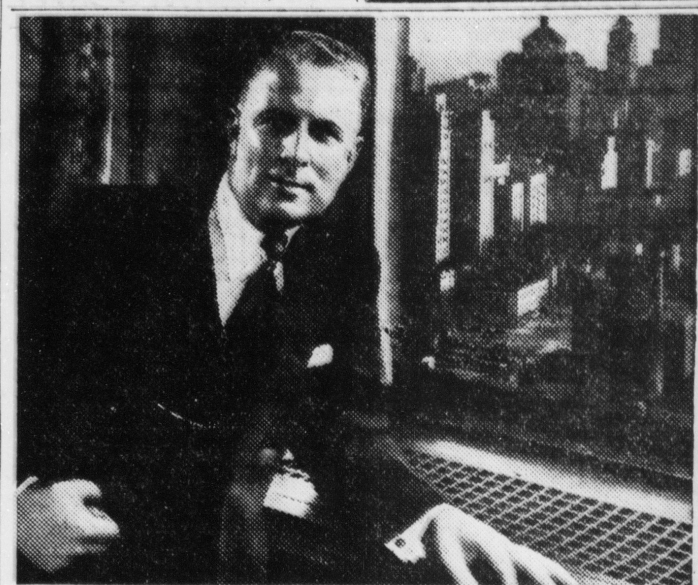
## DR. BOOHER TO SPEAK

Dr. Norman Booher, deputy coroner, is to address members of the Indianapolis Medical Society at 8:15 o'clock tonight on "Sarcoma of the Mediastinum."

Dr. Henry I. Berger, Dr. Russell L. Arbuckle, Dr. Paul Merrill, Dr. M.

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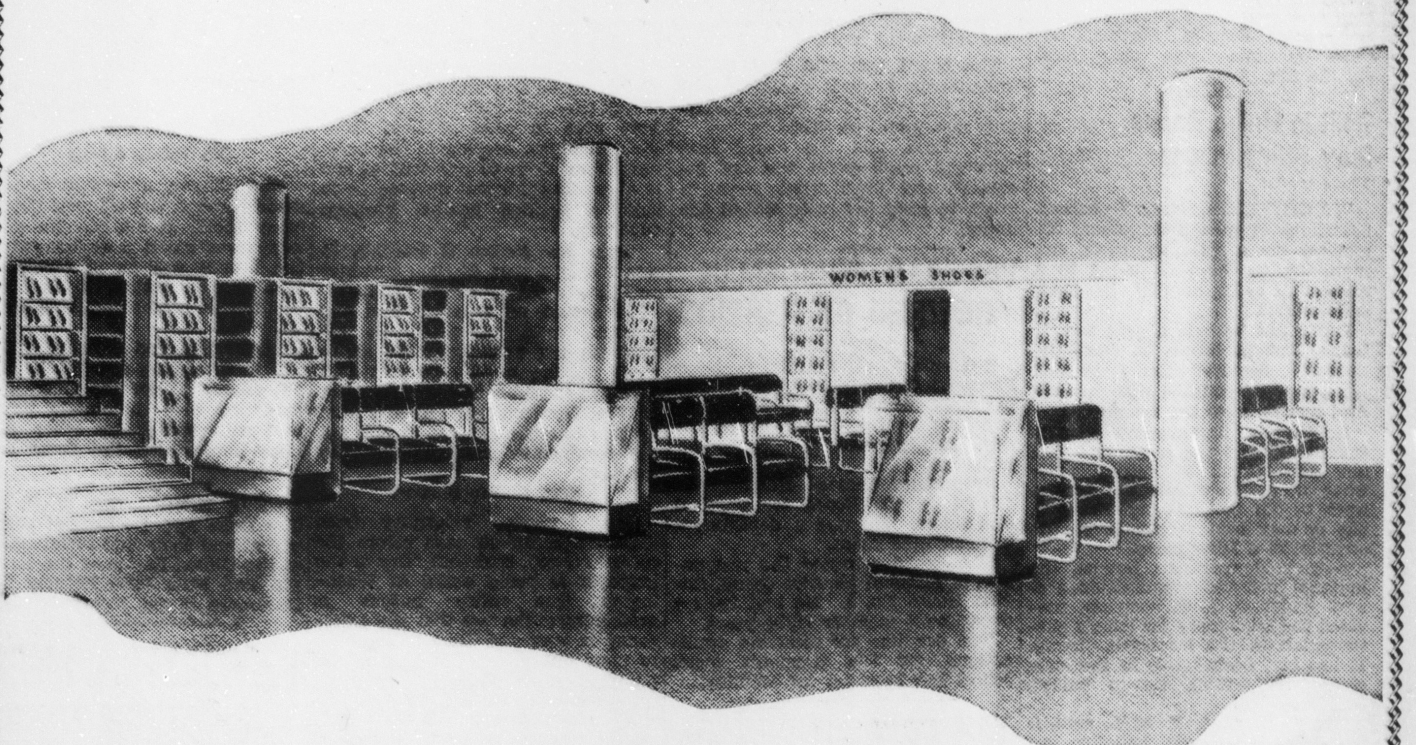
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