

VIRGINIA

HEALTH BULLETIN

The seal of the Virginia Department of Health is a circular emblem. It features a central figure of a person standing on a rocky outcrop, holding a staff with a snake coiled around it. The words "VIRGINIA" and "DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH" are inscribed around the perimeter of the seal. At the bottom, the Latin motto "SEMPER PARATUS" is visible.

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The New Virginia Law To Preserve Racial Integrity

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Senate Bill 219, To preserve racial integrity, passed the House March 8, 1924, and is now a law of the State.

This bill aims at correcting a condition which only the more thoughtful people of Virginia know the existence of.

It is estimated that there are in the State from 10,000 to 20,000, possibly more, near white people, who are known to possess an intermixture of colored blood, in some cases to a slight extent it is true, but still enough to prevent them from being white.

In the past it has been possible for these people to declare themselves as white, or even to have the Court so declare them. Then they have demanded the admittance of their children into the white schools, and in not a few cases have intermarried with white people.

In many counties they exist as distinct colonies holding themselves aloof from negroes, but not being admitted by the white people as of their race.

In any large gathering or school of colored people, especially in the cities, many will be observed who are scarcely distinguishable as colored.

These persons, however, are not white in reality, nor by the new definition of this law, that a white person is one with no trace of the blood of another race, except that a person with one-sixteenth of the American Indian, if there is no other race mixture, may be classed as white.

Their children are likely to revert to the distinctly negro type even when all apparent evidence of mixture has disappeared.

The Virginia Bureau of Vital Statistics has been called upon within one month for evidence by two lawyers employed to assist people of this type to force their children into the white public schools, and by another employed by the school trustees of a district to prevent this action.

Entered as second class matter July 28, 1908, at the Postoffice at Richmond, Va., under the Act of July 16, 1894.

In each case evidence was found to show that either the people themselves or their connections were reported to our office to be of mixed blood.

Our Bureau has kept a watchful eye upon the situation, and has guarded the welfare of the State as far as possible with inadequate law and power. The condition has gone on, however, and is rapidly increasing in importance.

Unless radical measures are used to prevent it, Virginia and other parts of the Nation must surely in time go the way of all other countries in which people of two or more races have lived in close contact. With the exception of the Hebrew race, complete intermixture or amalgamation has been the inevitable result.

To succeed, the intermarriage of the white race with mixed stock must be made impossible. But that is not sufficient, public sentiment must be so aroused that intermixture out of wedlock will cease.

The public must be led to look with scorn and contempt upon the man who will degrade himself and do harm to society by such abhorrent deeds.

The Bureau of Vital Statistics, Clerks who issue marriage licenses, and the school authorities are the barriers placed by this law between the danger and the safety of the Commonwealth.

The task of the Bureau of Vital Statistics is a great one, with not a cent of appropriation to accomplish it with.

There is a plan, however, by which it may be financed if the public will lend its aid.

Thousands have applied for the registration of births that occurred before June 14, 1912, the date when the old law went into effect.

The new law further provides for the registration of all persons who desire it, and who will make application for such registration of color and birth, remitting at the same time the fee of twenty-five cents for each applicant. Do not send stamps. These births will be permanently recorded and preserved for all time, and will be of great value for many purposes, such as to prove American citizenship when applying for passports to go abroad, and for establishing and preserving the family tree for future generations.

We will even admit for registration persons living in Virginia but born elsewhere. Also Virginians now living elsewhere. A family may complete its family tree by recording deceased ancestors or relatives. Each person will thus obtain full value received for the small fee. Married women should give both their full maiden name and name of husband.

If ten or twenty thousand or more will register within the next few weeks, we will be able to provide printed forms, filing cases, desks, typewriters, postage, and clerk hire, to begin a vigorous State-wide educational propaganda. After 90 days those who do not register at once may do it through our local registrars at the same cost. Write at once for sufficient registration cards and instructions, enclosing for reply a stamped addressed envelope large enough to hold 3 by 5 inch cards. A card announcing the registration will be returned as soon as possible. Lodges, patriotic orders, womens' organizations, and schools can act in bodies.

For the purpose of establishing the true color of individuals for the future, physicians and others who report births and marriages, will as far as possible use color terms accurately.

A Mulatto is the offspring of a white person and a negro.

A Quadroon is the offspring of a mulatto and a white person.

An Octoroon is the offspring of a quadroon and a white person.

Mixtures of either of these crossings with true negroes should be designated as Black, Negro or Colored.

The term "Mixed," "Issue," and perhaps one or two others, will be understood to mean a mixture of white and black races, with the white predominating.

That is the class that should be reported with the greatest care as many of these are on the borderline, and constitute the real danger of race intermixture.

The term "Indian" will no longer be accepted for that class, but must be applied only to those of known pure Indian blood, or those mixed with white. If there is a mixture of negro they must not be classed as Indians but as "Negro" or "Mixed Indian."

Japanese, Chinese and other Mongolian and Malay races must be designated as such, giving the country of their birth or of their ancestors.

When crossed with white, the race mixture should be indicated as Japanese-white. If with black they should be designated as black or negro, but it may be written negro-Japanese.

The Virginia Bureau of Vital Statistics is in possession of the marriage records for the State back to 1853, arranged by counties or cities and years, but they are not indexed further back than 1917.

Also births and deaths, covering the period 1853 to 1896.

If these can be properly indexed they will afford an invaluable source of reference for establishing color in many cases, and for other purposes. If sufficient revenue is derived from the registration fees, it is hoped that this indexing can be done. Address

BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS,

Dept. 1924 Law.

RICHMOND, VA.

AN ACT TO PRESERVE RACIAL INTEGRITY.

1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia, That the State registrar of vital statistics may as soon as practicable after the taking effect of this act, prepare a form whereon the racial composition of any individual, as Caucasian, Negro, Mongolian, American Indian, Asiatic Indian, Malay, or any mixture thereof, or any other non-Caucasic strains, and if there be any mixture, then the racial composition of the parents and other ancestors, in so far as ascertainable, so as to show in what generation such mixture occurred, may be certified by such individual, which form shall be known as a registration certificate. The State registrar may supply to each local registrar a sufficient number of such forms for the purposes of this act; each local registrar may personally or by deputy, as soon as possible after receiving said forms, have made thereon in duplicate a certificate of the racial composition as aforesaid, of each person resident in his district, who so desires, born before June fourteen, nineteen hundred and twelve, which certificate shall be made over the signature of said person, or in the case of children

under fourteen years of age, over the signature of a parent, guardian, or other person standing in *loco parentis*. One of said certificates for each person thus registering in every district shall be forwarded to the State registrar for his files; the other shall be kept on file by the local registrar.

Every local registrar may, as soon as practicable, have such registration certification made by or for each person in his district who so desires, born before June fourteen, nineteen hundred and twelve, for whom he has not on file a registration certificate, or a birth certificate.

2. It shall be a felony for any person wilfully or knowingly to make a registration certificate false as to color or race. The wilful making of a false registration or birth certificate shall be punished by confinement in the penitentiary for one year.

3. For each registration certificate properly made and returned to the State registrar, the local registrar returning the same shall be entitled to a fee of twenty-five cents, to be paid by the registrant. Application for registration and for transcript may be made direct to the State Registrar, who may retain the fee for expenses of his office.

4. No marriage license shall be granted until the clerk or deputy clerk has reasonable assurance that the statements as to color of both man and woman are correct.

If there is reasonable cause to disbelieve that applicants are of pure white race, when that fact is stated, the clerk or deputy clerk shall withhold the granting of the license until satisfactory proof is produced that both applicants are "white persons" as provided for in this act.

The clerk or deputy clerk shall use the same care to assure himself that both applicants are colored, when that fact is claimed.

5. It shall hereafter be unlawful for any white person in this State to marry any save a white person, or a person with no other admixture of blood than white and American Indian. For the purpose of this act, the term "white person" shall apply only to the person who has no trace whatsoever of any blood other than Caucasian; but persons who have one-sixteenth or less of the blood of the American Indian and have no other non-Caucasic blood shall be deemed to be white persons. All laws heretofore passed and now in effect regarding the intermarriage of white and colored persons shall apply to marriages prohibited by this act.

6. For carrying out the purposes of this act and to provide the necessary clerical assistance, postage and other expenses of the State registrar of vital statistics, twenty per cent of the fees received by local registrars under this act shall be paid to the State Bureau of Vital Statistics, which may be expended by the said bureau for the purposes of this act.

7. All acts or parts of acts inconsistent with this act are, to the extent of such inconsistency, hereby repealed.