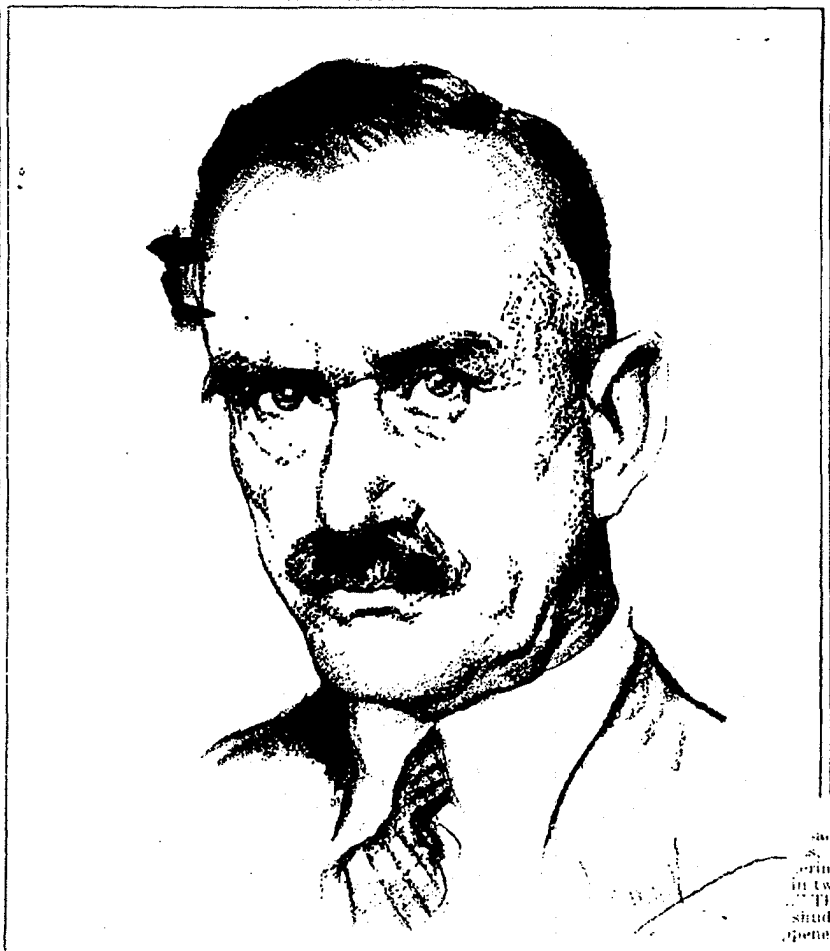
TIME

The Weekly Newsmagazine



Volume XXIII

THOMAS MANN

He went down a bottomless well.

(See Books)

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COVER THE EARTH

Yvonne, Marie, Emily, Annette. A trained nurse tagged them thus, first come first named.

That first day, after feeding the chickens and older children, Papa Dionne telephoned the nearest newspaper, a weekly at Callander. Asked he timidly: "How much would it cost to have a piece put in the paper about five babies being born?" That call brought reporters, photographers, nurses, an amusement promoter, gifts and, most important of all, an incubator, heated by a kerosene stove.

When the incubator, procured and delivered by the Chicago *American* and New York *Evening Journal*,* reached Elzire Dionne's bare bedroom, one of the quintuplets was dying. Two others were blue. Dr. Dafoe gave them two drops of rum each and popped them into the incubator which was too small to hold all five. The two strongest remained in their roomy clothes-basket, warmed with hot water bottles. Every two hours the trained nurse fed the quintuplets two medicine-droppers of milk, corn syrup and water. The feeding took so long that as soon as the nurse finished with No. 5 she had to turn to and start with No. 1.

When the five Dionne girls had safely passed the fifth day, medical history was made. Never before, according to the records, had a full set of quintuplets survived that long. But Dr. Dafoe did not yet consider himself out of the woods. The weakest of the trio in the incubator again turned blue. She received after two more drops of rum. She and her two companions then developed colic and constipation. Milk of magnesia and warm water enemas made them comfortable. They all five turned yellow with jaundice. Dr. Dafoe overcame that, put them in the pink again.

As all five passed into their second week and approached full term condition, their chances for life became surer. All cried lustily, a good sign. Whispered the mother of the phenomenon, as her swollen legs subsided: ". . . *Suis contente*. . . . If they die, they will go to Heaven, and next year perhaps, we will have another." In the next room waited lactating neighbors to give drachms of their superabundant milk to the quintuplets.

Outdoors, other neighbors scrawled a bi-lingual sign: "*Pas de visiteurs*, no visitors," and armed themselves with clubs to keep reporters, photographers and other strangers from disturbing the Dionnes. Dr. Dafoe sent the older five Dionne children, two of whom had developed colds, to live with friends. And Papa Ovila Dionne, who forgot to shave, wandered about, weeping: "Five of them. . . . I'm the sort of man they should keep in jail. . . . No bigger than my thumb . . . five more! . . . I am not strong." Unsympathetic were his rustic French-Canadian friends, who chaffed him roundly, not neglecting to remind him that Ovila means "little ram."

By long distance from Chicago one Ivan D. Spears, promoter, arranged a rendezvous with Papa Dionne about exhibiting the quintuplets at the Century of Progress. Promoter Spears flew to Orillia, Ont. Papa Dionne motored there with Father Routhier in the Parishhouse Ford. The


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