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Demography or Demology?

Sirs,

In the November 1949 issue of the *Journal* (Vol. IX, p. 121), there appeared an article by Elfryn Jones entitled 'Demography'. At a time when this far-reaching subject is entering more into actuarial studies and research it seems important to point out that the whole field of Population Statistics cannot be encompassed within thirty pages. The article deals with certain significant matters but its title is too general (as is shown by the disclaimer in the text).

The word demography dates, according to the *Shorter Oxford Dictionary*, from 1880. It is a term appropriate to the collection and tabulation of raw population data and to the preparation of illustrative diagrams based thereon. During the last seventy years, however, many workers in this field have aspired higher; they have sought to summarize, to formularize, to interpret, to project. A more suitable word for this kind of activity is not demography but demology. If anyone should doubt this let him ask a radiologist how he is getting on with his radiography or a geologist with his geography and watch his expression.

The title of the article might, therefore, have been 'Certain aspects of demology'. Although it would obviously take time to bring the new term into general use, it is suggested that writers of future papers on the subject to the Students' Society might make a positive contribution towards the science of population study by commencing to employ it.

Yours faithfully,
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