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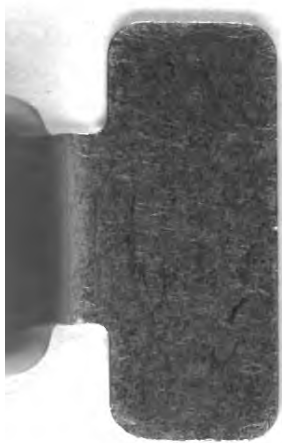
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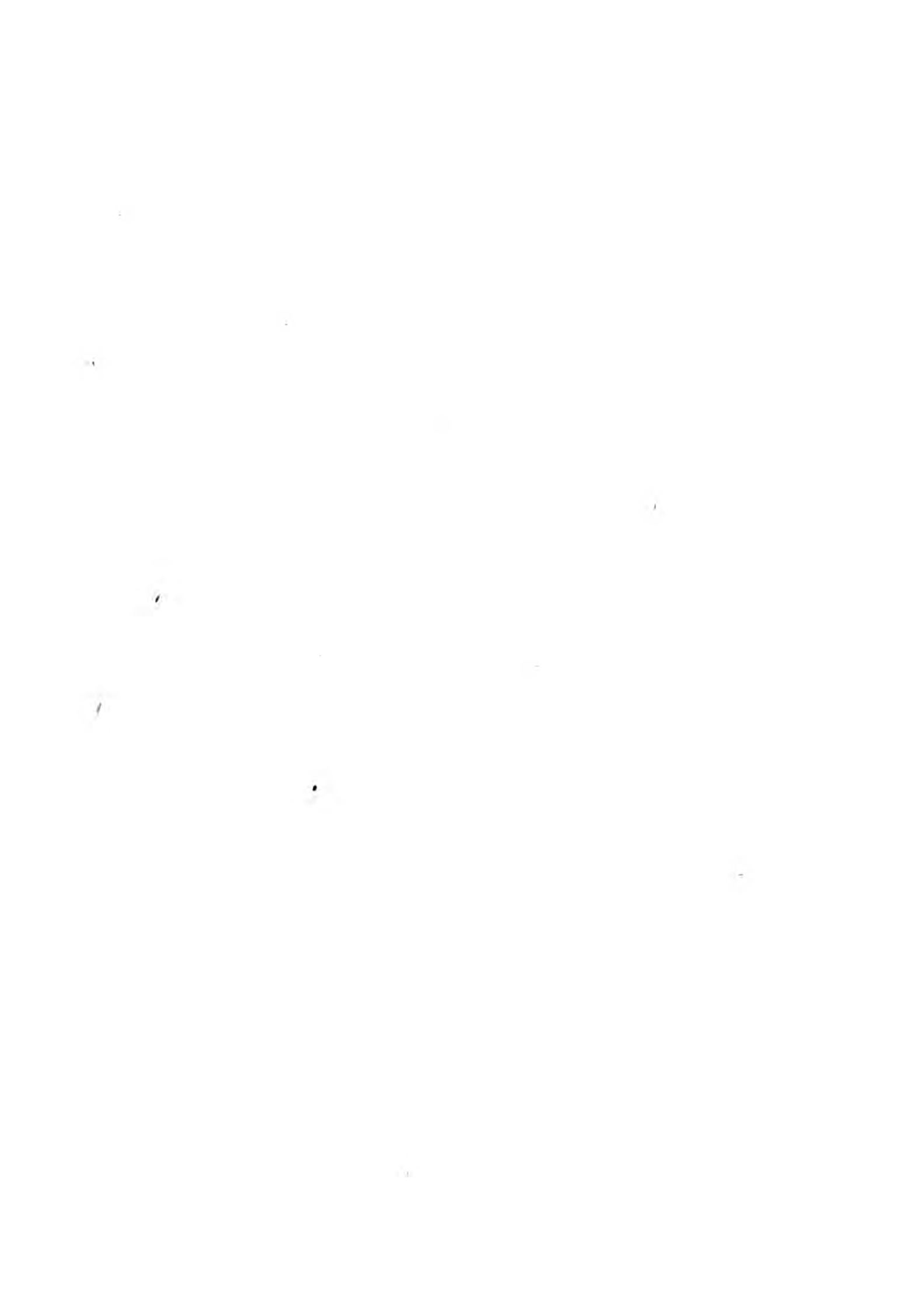
THE MORALITY
OF
BIRTH CONTROL
ETTIE A ROUT



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THE MORALITY OF
BIRTH CONTROL



THE MORALITY OF BIRTH CONTROL

By ETTIE A. ROUT, Author of
"Safe Marriage," "Sex and Exercise,"
"Two Years in Paris" : : : : :

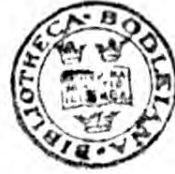
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AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

IN the following pages I have endeavoured not so much to state my own opinions—which are relatively unimportant—as to disentangle and weigh the general opinions of other people, and to state the facts as to the social influence and hygienic effects of the exercise of birth control and of its suppression. There is no period in human history when birth control measures have not been widely exercised, and there is abundant indication that prehistoric men and women habitually employed checks of various kinds. Only the uninformed will accept the claims of modern birth controllers to have “discovered” something humanity was well aware of thousands and thousands of years ago ; only the fraudu-

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lent will pretend that a practice which has survived so long is useless and dangerous ; only the unintelligent will suppose that the knowledge of birth control now in the world can be taken out of it. The informed, the honest, the unprejudiced, the intelligent, sensible members of the public will agree that something which has always been with us, and is here to-day more than ever, had better be accepted as a part of individual and social life, developed scientifically, and applied to the advantage of the individual and of society. There never can be anything compulsory about contraception : those who do not like it need not apply it. Nor should there be anything compulsory about fertility : those who do not wish for it should not be compelled to undergo it. The propagation of the species is in no danger of cessation : the maternal instincts of womankind in general are really sufficient to prevent this : but these instincts have never been expressed

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solely by means of uncontrolled fecundity, nor will evolved humanity ever admit that unconscious haphazard is more moral than conscious direction in the most important task of society : the maintenance and development of—ITSELF.

ETTIE A. ROUT.

LONDON,

January, 1925.

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REPRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

REPRODUCTION

THE reproductive life of woman is approximately from twelve or fourteen to forty-five years of age in European countries—that is, rather more than thirty years. Man's reproductive life begins even before fifteen and ends with death. It would be quite possible for a man to procreate a hundred or more children in a year, given as many women ; but (excepting in the case of multiple births) woman can bear a child only once a year. A normally healthy fertile woman married at fifteen might bear from twenty-five to thirty children in as many years. All classes of the community—religious, political, and industrial—recognize that the maximum fertility cannot be permitted ; that, in fact, births must be

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controlled. Hence in Christian countries, all shades of religious opinion are agreed in favour of legal monogamy. The man is taught that he must be the husband of one wife only at a time, and the Law endorses the Church teaching by making bigamy illegal. Over the fertility of woman, both Church and State also exercise other controls. She is not permitted to marry without parental consent below a certain age ; she is forbidden to consent to unlawful intercourse unless she is over a certain age ; and she is not now permitted to have more than one legal husband at a time. If a fertile man happens by accident to marry a woman who is sterile, both Church and State forbid him to procreate children by other women ; and if a fertile woman happens by accident to marry a man who is sterile, she is forbidden by Church and State to secure impregnation by some other man. The Church and the Law also tacitly approve, through their representatives, of the social custom whereby marriage before full maturity is discouraged ;

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and nowadays a very large number of marriages are postponed till the parties are twenty-five or thirty years of age, or older still. During this period of postponement of say ten years on the average, intercourse is forbidden, and thus procreation prevented. Among Roman Catholics birth control is also exercised by means of the celibacy of many thousands of men and women—priests and nuns—who are voluntarily infertile through abstinence during the whole of their lives. After marriage, the Roman Catholic Church approves of the limitation of relationship to the so-called 'safe period'—which is not really safe: only somewhat less unsafe than other periods.

The result of the exercise of these forms of birth control—postponement of marriage, enforcement of legal monogamy, celibacy of the clergy, and limitation of intercourse among married persons to the so-called 'safe period'—is, of course, a very considerable amount of family limitation, even where the numbers of the sexes are about equal. In modern

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England, where there are some two millions of 'surplus women,' most of them of potential fertility, the birth control exerted by forbidding all sexual life to these women constitutes one of the greatest and gravest measures of prevention. Altogether it can rightly be claimed that the general effect of the birth-control measures thus approved by Church and State is to reduce reproduction to a fraction of what it would otherwise be.

Without, therefore, questioning for the moment the morality or desirability of these birth control methods sanctioned in all Christian countries for nearly two thousand years, it may be pointed out that the problem of the control of population has certainly been partially solved by them. They may not be sufficient at the present time—obviously they are insufficient, to some minds—but so far as they go they are effective forms of prevention. In this sense it is, therefore, inaccurate to say that the Church and the State have done nothing to promote birth control. On the contrary, ecclesiastics

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and statesmen have done a very great deal of practical work in devising and furnishing checks to population. Without their aid, the Christian nations of Europe during the last century would have been even more hopelessly swamped with floods of unwanted babies. The question is not—Do the Church and State approve of controlling human fecundity? They obviously do. The question is—How much further will the Church and the State go in the matter of Birth Control? If they approve of still further checking increases of population — What methods are they prepared to recommend?

First let it be emphasized that these methods must provide for the welfare and satisfaction of sex-love. Humanity does not want and will not accept any mode of life, or the operation of any personal measures, which fail to provide efficiently for love-relationship as the highest human happiness. For the individual, happiness is a permanent continuous need: reproduction a temporary and intermittent obligation. The evolution

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and even the very existence of the race is dependent on the facilities and privileges provided for lovers. Legal monogamic indissoluble marriage, it is claimed, makes provision for the union of lovers, for the protection of woman, and for the procreation and rearing of children. Why then cannot that be accepted as a piece of perfect social machinery?

Because that machinery is not 'perfect,' and frequently fails to provide for love's needs and fails to produce desirable offspring. Conditions are such now that more and more men and women are being deprived of love-life, temporarily or permanently, whereas the claims of sex-love should be paramount. Such deprivations are unnatural and inhuman, and cannot be continuously applied. They break down in operation: men and women satisfy their natural instincts in ways they have been taught are ethically wrong; thus their characters are damaged and their minds made unhappy. Society suffers by having few fit citizens and a rela-

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tively great number of unfit ones, and the individual suffers by having few really happy love-relationships. Yet it is a fact, known to all normal healthy men and women, that the more mutually-desired love-relationship there is between suitably mated men and women, the happier and healthier they all become. There are persons who talk as though Sex-love was something innately bad : the less there is of it the better. No. The more there is of it, under right conditions, the better. The secretions of a man's body are necessary to the health and development of a woman's body ; and her secretions are necessary to the man. Hence these secretions are manufactured now-a-days as medical preparations ; and they are administered as remedies for " old-maidism " and " crusty-bachelorism." Of course there are men and women who are wholly impotent or wholly virtuous, or partly one and partly the other, and such can and do live sexless lives. There are others who seem able to sublimate their passions, as it is termed in the jargon of the

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day. All of us are able to exercise a reasonable measure of self-discipline. But that does not alter the fact that humanity is bi-sexual : that man needs woman and woman needs man in bodily sexual union for the sake of health and happiness. As the satisfying of such needs leads to over-production of offspring unless birth control is exercised, this control is now and always has been practised in some form or other.

In our day the problem has come to have a very special application. Birth Control, after all, is merely part of Life Control, and it has been rendered of very urgent importance to all civilized nations by the development of Death Control,—the improvement of public health and the lowering of the mortality rates. One after another the great death-dealing diseases are being conquered. We discover their origin, mode of propagation, means of distribution, and from that the mode of prevention is evolved naturally. Plague, small-pox, cholera, typhus, etc., etc., all fall away before the advance of our public

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health officers. Syphilis we know how to prevent, though we are yet far from having done so. In regard to cancer we are beginning to understand the conditions that make its growth possible—and probable. Tuberculosis is being conquered by sunshine, along with other diseases of darkness. So great has been the conquest of death that the average individual life of civilized humanity has been extended by several years. Every person coming into the world now claims a place in the sun for a longer time than his father, a much longer time than his grandfather. Our children and grandchildren will undoubtedly spend a still longer period on earth. Therefore each individual needs more room and more food than formerly : in the future, will need still more.

The earth is not by any means all occupied yet, and admittedly we have only touched the fringe of its possible productivity. At the moment humanity is no more likely to run out of food than to run out of water. New sources of food are continually being

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discovered, and new means of increasing productivity. Nevertheless the earth cannot be expanded, and humanity continually is expanding: therefore it is mathematically impossible to prevent the earth becoming overcrowded sometime or other. If birth control will be right and natural for our grandchildren, it is right and natural for us, and was right and natural for our grandparents.

It is all very well theoretically to allege that mouths never come without bread to fill them, but actually even now we all know that many persons in crowded cities do become disabled and die because they are without a sufficient amount of the necessities of life—food, clothing, shelter, sunshine, fresh air, and so forth. No doubt if these necessities of life were more evenly and fairly distributed, there would be less loss of life, less disablement of health. But the social reorganization to ensure such diminution of death and disablement would only postpone the time when humanity would need to be

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regulated in accordance with the reasonably occupied space and reasonably exploited productivity of the earth.

Evolved humanity would find it very uncomfortable to live in an ant-hill and work in a bee-hive. As they have been prevented from dying sooner, they would rather not be born till later.

The only alternative to the voluntary control of fertility to prevent overcrowding is—to lower the standard of life and let the overcrowding go from bad to worse, as has been done in parts of India and China. Do we really want to live like the Hindus and the Chinese? This means that instead of preventing the birth of too many new citizens, we kill off more quickly those who are here—to make room for new ones; and reduce the level of comfortable subsistence almost to vanishing point. Why should it be considered more moral to deprive a human being of a portion of the possible term of life than to postpone the arrival of another human being till there is a vacant place in the sun?

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Why should it be regarded as meritorious to increase the quantity and lower the quality of human beings, and, generally, to depreciate the standard of living ?

Really this plan is quite unworkable in any mentally enlightened and morally educated community. The People will not consent to having their standard of life lowered in order that there may be more of them. They believe now that the raising of the standard of life is a worthy object—an object worth striving for by high-minded idealists ; and they are convinced that lessening the number of persons in overcrowded areas, and regulating the increase of population, is the way to ensure a higher and higher mode of life : that, in fact, moral evolution cannot proceed whilst humanity is being submerged by an ever-increasing flood of new arrivals. These principles are seen in operation in allotment fields. We may divide the ten-acre field, e.g., into a hundred allotments, giving each person one-tenth of an acre. Later we may sub-divide such tenths, and give each person

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one-hundredth of an acre, and by intensive cultivation each person may be satisfied. But we cannot go on indefinitely with the process till perhaps there is only standing-room for the allotment-holders—or not even that. The unrestricted increase in the number of allotment-holders reduces the whole scheme to absurdity. In the same way the unlimited increase of human beings reduces the social system to absurdity—even to crime, for the members of Society begin to devour each other. The alternative to cannibalism is then seen to be suicide. The savage man adopts the former alternative; the partially civilized man adopts the latter; morally advanced humanity stops the evil before it begins—by the exercise of social foresight in the control of fertility.

How then comes it that any intelligent civilized persons in this twentieth century are hostile to any reliable and kindly way of exercising humane control over the reproduction of the nation?

The first reason would seem to be that we

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are still timid and shy in our consideration of the great and wonderful processes by which this reproduction is ensured in the Scheme of Nature. Botany we study with the greatest zest and intelligence. The fertilization of plants and the seed-pods of flowers we view with wonder and admiration ; but we feel uncomfortable in telling or being told about our own seed-pods and petals, our own stamens and pistils. Still, it is something that we can now consider the lilies of the field from this point of view.

The second reason is that large sections of the nation allow their minds to be misled by Ancient Rules rather than Modern Ideals. Some things were not considered necessary or good by our great-grandfathers : therefore they are neither necessary nor good for us. Thus we exclude the element of growth from ethics and religion. Perhaps in this we are somewhat afraid of freedom—or afraid of the use that may be made of it. No people should be free till they are fit to be free, we say glibly, forgetting that the proper

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use of freedom can only be learned by—the free.

Third, it is much easier to lean on authority rather than rely upon ourselves. Thus so many women feel they would rather BELONG to somebody—to their husbands, to their church, to their social group. The notion of standing alone and facing the problems of their own life leaves them breathless and frightened at times ; they would rather just do faithfully what everybody or somebody says they ought to do.

Fourth, some opposition to birth control seems to have no other ground than a desire to pose as super-modest. Such folks are even nicer-minded than their Creator—they would have provided some other and better way of reproducing the species !

Fifth, the root-cause, however, of much public and private objection to birth control is sheer downright ignorance of the facts of other people's lives. We simply do not know in many cases how urgent and how dreadful is the need of controlling undesir-

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able fertility. Only very occasionally do such facts come to light. How many readers of this book have ever seen such an appalling report as this—published by the *Western Mail* (Cardiff), October 7th, 1924:—

“ UNWANTED CHILDREN.

“ HEREFORD DOCTOR AND BIRTH CONTROL.

“ A feeling of indignation has been aroused in Hereford by the disclosures made by Dr. Vincent Shaw, a Hereford practitioner, last week. He related some appalling facts concerning a maternity case.

“ In a further letter on the subject in which Dr. Shaw replies to criticisms, he says :

“ ‘ One of the chief causes of the social problem of to-day is the reckless and unrestrained procreation on the part of the poorer classes. I most sincerely believe that real progress in the country will be heavily handicapped socially, economically, and morally, while this flood of irresponsibly-begotten, unwanted and ante-natally damned children continues without check—many of whom, denied the elementary decencies of life from the very beginning, are fore-doomed to immorality and crime. I hold it to be much

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more immoral to bring mis-begotten, unwanted and uncared-for children into the world than to prevent their conception. And so I raise my voice in protest against the reckless over-production of children, with a frank acceptance of the only alternative. I wish to ask the opponents of birth control one serious question. What other practical remedy have they for the present most desperate state of affairs? ' ' "

Lastly, there is æsthetic prejudice. This is partly due—unconsciously—to hygienic laziness, and partly due to medical inexperience. Properly selected and really suitable contraceptive measures add to rather than detract from the æsthetic pleasures of romantic love ; but skilled advice is necessary to enable lovers to reject what is individually unsuitable, and accept what is individually suitable. Personal conceit frequently prevents advice being sought or taken ; lack of skill and technical knowledge, at present, unfortunately disqualifies many doctors in this supremely important aspect of preventive medicine.



RACE IMPROVEMENT

CHAPTER II

RACE IMPROVEMENT

SOME advocates of birth control claim that it will improve the race. They contend that the spacing-out of the children, and their production only after due thought and preparation, and the accumulation of sufficient means to give each child suitable advantages in life, will necessarily ensure a higher standard of physique and mentality for the children. Too frequent pregnancies mean delicate children, and syphilitic and defective children are costly to the State in every way. The race would be improved, they say, by discouraging the propagation of such stocks. They also believe that early marriage will lessen extra-marital intercourse and prevent much venereal disease, and that young people will marry early when they know how to control fertility.

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It is no doubt true that the spacing of the children gives each child a better chance, and lessens the strain on the parents. But that does not ensure progress: it simply prevents retrogression. Even the prevention of the birth of syphilitic and otherwise defective children is not race improvement—of course it is nothing of the kind. It is merely the preventing the nation deteriorating. That is a very good thing to do, but it is not *improving the race*. Race improvement is something quite different.

Supposing we are stock-breeders, we know that we cannot improve a flock of sheep or a herd of cattle by letting all the individuals reproduce at their own sweet will—every individual pair of them having offspring, and the relationship being strictly 'monogamic.' Whether each individual has a small number or a large number of offspring makes comparatively little difference. We know that the way to improve the flock or herd is to breed only from the best sires, and to eliminate the unfit as breeding material.

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Changes in environment may improve or deteriorate the individuals of one generation, but such changes are not inheritable.

It may be that in the long course of ages so-called 'acquired characteristics' may become transmissible; but there is not much, if any, proof of this having occurred. Variations occur, as we know, and some of these variations render some individuals better adapted than others to their environment; such individuals tend to survive and outbreed those whose variations are less well adapted to the environment.

But if we really wish to *improve the race*, we must allow women to select the fathers of their children. That is what natural selection — sexual selection — means. Supposing a healthy intelligent woman were economically free: perfectly sure of the necessaries and comforts and amenities of life for herself and for her children—supposing, that is, she were sure of her reward as the most important 'producer' in the nation — would she not then be free to improve the

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quality of her product? Would she not then select the finest possible man to act as father for the finest possible children she wanted to produce? Would not that tend to improve the race much more efficiently than limiting her choice to the particular man who happens to be able to "provide" for her—even out of the profits of a socially dangerous or undesirable industry? Supposing the next generation of mankind could be bred from types of men like Nansen or Edison, would that generation be quite so unkind and stupid as if they were bred from warmongers or village idiots who happened to have acquired or been endowed with more than their share of pelf?

In other words, race improvement is a POSITIVE, not a negative, process; and it must proceed by the reproduction of the fit, not by the destruction of the unfit.

Nevertheless, of course, it is a fact that unchecked sexual disease and uncontrolled fertility among the unfit will eliminate a nation in the course of time, or lead to its

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dropping behind in the Evolution of the Race.

The seriousness of the problem of the reproduction of feeble-minded and unfit is too well known and too frankly admitted now-a-days to need labouring here. The damage done by the sexual diseases is well stated in the following extract from *Hygeia* (a Journal of Individual and Community Health, published by the American Medical Association), September, 1924—article by Colonel C. C. Pierce, Senior Surgeon of the United States Public Health Department in Chicago :

“ On account of the difference in the genital structure of men and women, the general rule is that men have more pain with gonorrhœa than do women. No man can have gonorrhœa and not know it, but a woman can. However, it is a much more serious disease for women, because gonorrhœa practically always invades the internal generative organs. The uterus, tubes and ovaries become infected, if not right away certainly at the first pregnancy, which is frequently the last.

“ More childless and one-child marriages

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are caused by gonorrhœa than by any other single cause. The invasion of the internal genital organs of a woman by the gonococcus may result in the tubes leading from the uterus to the ovaries becoming inflamed and stopped up and filled with pus. This sometimes results so quickly after the marriage of an uninfected girl and a man with gonorrhœa that the operation which must be done to save her life is called the 'honeymoon appendicitis' operation.

"In many cases the inflammation of the internal pelvic organs of the woman with gonorrhœa assumes a chronic form without an immediate operation becoming necessary. Women so affected become semi-invalids and most of them ultimately have to have some operation performed. Surgeons agree that about one-half of all the operations on women for 'pelvic trouble' are really operations caused by gonorrhœa.

"If a wife with gonorrhœa escapes an immediate operation, as most of them do of course, and gives birth to a living healthy child, as she should, for gonorrhœa does not affect the unborn babe, there is grave danger

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of the infant getting its eyes infected from its mother while passing through the birth canal. This frequently occurs and blindness is the result unless immediate treatment is given the eyes. Many States now have laws requiring the immediate treatment of the baby's eyes after birth. Loss of sight from gonorrhœa acquired at birth is responsible for one-third of all the cases of blindness in asylums and one-half the blindness dating from birth”

“ The saddest part is yet to be told—how babies before they are born are infected with syphilis because their father and mother have the disease. What usually happens is that the father married before he was cured and infected his wife who, in turn, infected the baby before it was born. If the syphilis in the mother is a fresh infection, the child will fortunately die very early during pregnancy, thus causing an abortion or miscarriage. Women who frequently have abortions or miscarriages are usually syphilitic. If the infection of the mother is not so recent she may carry the child to term and have it born with evidence of syphilis. If the

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infection is of longer standing, the child may be born with no evidence of syphilis, but develops the disease later on.

“Evidence shows that syphilis is the greatest single cause of death of babies during pregnancy and within the first few days of life.”

We are now on the highroad to the extirpation of syphilis and gonorrhœa by preventive medicine, but these diseases at present still constitute a vile form of Birth Control, still constitute one of the strongest and most urgent reasons for exercising contraceptive measures by wives whose husbands are diseased or who are themselves diseased. When sexual disease has been extirpated, women will be much more fertile than they are now, and will be without fear of producing ‘damaged goods’; thus the sole reason for voluntary family limitation will in some cases have been removed. Assuming a country to be over-populated, therefore, the extirpation of sexual disease will increase rather than diminish the necessity for the voluntary control of motherhood. But one can hardly imagine

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any sane person opposing the prevention of disease for this reason !

For the sake of emphasis, and to avoid misunderstanding, the eugenic argument may here be summarized thus :

Constructively eugenics is the birth of the fit : dysgenics is the birth of the unfit. The sterilization of the unfit may be negative eugenics, but it does not improve the race—merely prevents its deteriorating. Under our civilization, the common law would probably prevent sterilization being imposed on any persons without their own consent, and that consent would seldom be available where most required. Hence eugenics is useful only so far as it operates constructively rather than destructively—that is, by sexual selection and the birth of the fit ; or, in other words, by the exercise of the fastidiously selective passionate love of a free womanhood and the conscious choice of willing maternity. That is what chastity really means. Chastity is the same thing as virtue, and virtue is the same thing as virility.

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Under modern monogamic marriage, legality has been substituted for morality ; and the result quite often is legal unchastity—hence race stagnation or race deterioration. Private property in women and children is the real object of legal monogamic marriage. Advances made have been mainly in the direction of enchaining men as severely as women are enchained by legal matrimony ; that is to say, limiting the man's reproductive capacity to the fertilization of his legal wife, just as the legal wife's reproductive capacity has been limited to fertilization by her legal husband. This has been rendered necessary by the development of the system of private ownership in land, houses, food, etc. Where there is community ownership of the necessities of life, strict monogamy does not prevail ; that is, sexual intercourse is not limited to the legal husband with his legal wife.

The economic basis of legal monogamy is the dependence of women and children on individual men : the economic basis of race

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improvement is the independence of women and children—that is, their maintenance by society. Until women are economically independent, free to exercise sexual selection in accordance with their own sense of natural chastity, the race cannot and will not evolve. The objection raised to granting women such freedom of choice is that inevitably several women may choose the same father for their children—e.g., as many women chose King Solomon; and the responsibility for the maintenance of children would clearly become a social rather than an individual matter.

Nevertheless biologically, of course, it is a fact that no animals can be improved by letting each individual pair reproduce in permanent monogamic relationship. The only way to improve the animals—flocks of sheep or herds of cattle or races of men—is to reproduce from the finest sires and from those only. As soon as society is organized in such a way as to enable this to be done in an honourable and dignified relationship, women will avail themselves of their natural

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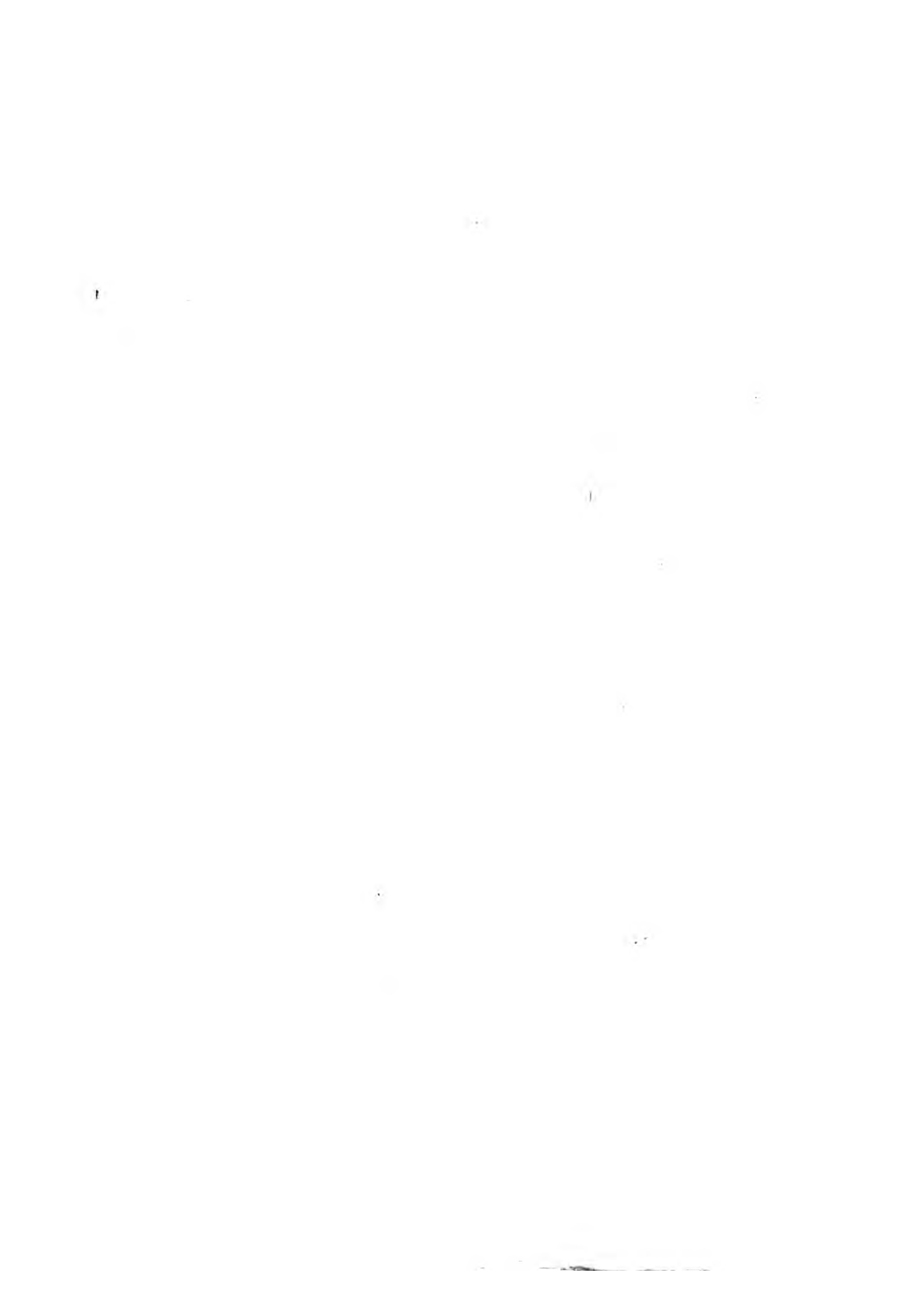
desire to secure the best possible paternity for the offspring they must naturally give so much care and trouble to produce. Then the race will begin again to evolve.

It is not a fact that Mankind has lost the capacity for improvement. That capacity is at present locked up in the bodies of Woman-kind. The means for its release is the natural constructive chastity of enlightened, free and independent womanhood. Towards that goal the first step is the education of young unmarried women as to the physical basis of marriage and the meaning of marriage for the existence and evolution of the race ; and the second step is the education of young wives as to the control of their own fertility, so that there may be no unwilling maternity. Then, and not till then, the evolution of man will be resumed. The individual happiness of romantic lovers will not be interfered with. During child-bearing woman is naturally true to the father of her child ; apart from child-bearing, her romantic relationships are nearly always strictly monogamic.

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Briefly it may be said that evolution has proceeded on two general lines: the evolution of the brute family and the evolution of the human group. Brute evolution has given us all the egoistic characteristics—jealousy, envy, hatred, malice, uncharitableness, greed, selfishness, and other anti-social qualities. Human evolution has given us all the altruistic characteristics—generosity, love, sympathy, self-sacrifice, faith, hope and charity—that is, all the social qualities. The Family—father, mother and cubs—has been evolved by the brute. Society, the group, the nation, the brotherhood of man, has been evolved by Humanity.

All this is admittedly quite outside the bounds of practical politics: it is not even admitted as sound ethics: but by scientists; whose conceptions of the basic principles of biology are clear and correct, it will be accepted as axiomatic.



TOTAL ABSTINENCE



CHAPTER III

TOTAL ABSTINENCE

TOTAL abstinence from sexual intercourse may be said to be the only absolutely certain one hundred per cent. reliable fool-proof form of birth control. It is the method which the old and weak usually recommend to the young and vigorous. It involves for normally healthy adults the maximum of interference with Nature and the minimum of personal satisfaction. With the possible exception of the deliberate cultivation of the sexual diseases for moralistic purposes, abstinence is probably responsible for more misery and ill-health than any other form of birth control. It has no more and no less value in the cultivation of sound ethics than starvation has in the cultivation of sound digestion. Gluttony may seem more

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offensive but continuous starvation is really more destructive. Total sexual abstinence is "race suicide" in its most dangerous manifestation.

In 1920, an enquiry was held by the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, Incorporated, of New York City, among a very large number of qualified practitioners, one of the questions asked related to abstinence. The following truthful reply was given by Dr. H. W. Frink :—

" Absolute abstinence from all and every form of sex gratification, maintained for a long period, would be a thoroughly unnatural condition, which, *if* it could be achieved, would certainly and invariably be productive of serious harmful results. Absolute continence *from intercourse* should never be invariably and unqualifiedly insisted upon. A large proportion of women, particularly young women, can achieve such continence without great effort, and without ill effects. But in the case of *some* young women, in that of many mature women (especially those who have been ' roused '), and in that of

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a very large proportion of men both young and mature, the effort to achieve such continence, or the achieving of it, would be much more likely to work harm than temperate and intelligently undertaken indulgence. In short, indulgence, under certain circumstances may not only be harmless, but may likewise be beneficial and very necessary.

“ I have no doubt of the truth of these statements. I have little uncertainty as to the desirability of having the truth about these matters generally known by the public. On the other hand, a campaign of truth-telling would certainly meet with great and violent opposition, and should, if undertaken at all, be carried on in the most skilful and careful manner possible.”

Experience shows, however, that even when the truth-telling has been done in the most careful and honourable way, execration and persecution pursue the truth-teller. It is the truth that is objected to—not the mode of telling it, though any slip of tongue or pen is seized upon immediately as the excuse for inflicting a penalty already decided upon by the upholders of the sex-tabu.

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Partial abstinence is often recommended as a form of birth control. As one sexual act in the year may be sufficient to ensure an annual baby—that is, to ensure reproduction to the extreme limit—it is absurd to call such a method “birth control.” It is no control at all so far as births are concerned, or a very inefficient and unreliable method of control. Its disadvantages are not always quite so great as those of total abstinence ; but the destruction of nervous and physical health and of marital happiness resulting from semi-starvation and continuous suppression of natural instinct, is nevertheless very deplorable. How can any line of general conduct be termed ‘moral’ when it is destructive to health and happiness ? Our impulses are our guides. When we are doing what is naturally right, we are healthy and happy ; when we are doing what is naturally wrong, we are unhealthy and unhappy. Pain is a sign of error ; misery a sign of deeper wrong ; happiness, joy, exaltation, the index of personal and social righteousness.

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There is abundant medical proof that in a very large number of cases people who allege they are practising abstinence themselves, and who try to incite others to do so, are really practising masturbation secretly. On the average, probably there is very much the same amount of seminal fluid secreted, e.g., per thousand men per annum; and that secretion must either be absorbed or expelled. It *may* be absorbed in the so-called 'sublimation,' though this is extremely doubtful; it certainly is expelled in three ways—nocturnal emission, masturbation, and sexual intercourse. The last has always proved the most attractive to the overwhelming majority of mankind. Excepting in the case of men of low virility, or wholly impotent men, the denial of normal sexual intercourse drives them back to involuntary emission or self-provoked expenditure. These are both forms of "race suicide,"—that is, they are infertile.



ABORTION

CHAPTER IV

ABORTION

ARTIFICIAL miscarriage or foeticide is the method of family limitation most commonly practised by poor and ignorant women all over the world—the one forced upon them by poverty and ignorance. It is common in England, more common in the United States, and still more common in some Continental countries. In all countries there is a vast trade in the sale of alleged abortifacient medicines, the taking of which seldom accomplishes the desired purpose, and often injures the health of mother and child. When medicine fails, mechanical means are resorted to. Poor women bring on a miscarriage themselves by using various implements, or they go to midwives and others privately known to be carrying on the

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trade in abortions. Some doctors' practises are believed to consist almost wholly of illegal operations performed for social or economic reasons ; and many doctors occasionally render this professional service as a part of their general practice for the same reasons. If they refused, their patients would leave them for other doctors more willing to oblige.

Medical practice under certain conditions permits the procuring of an artificial miscarriage, but the authoritative advice given to medical practitioners is that two doctors at least should be agreed upon the matter, and that the purpose should be, not to save the woman from social or economic disaster or the child from stigma, but merely to save the woman's life or prevent irreparable damage to her health, or because it is considered impossible for the child to be born sound and at full term. As the public often want more than this, there is naturally conflict at such times between doctors and patients. The doctors feel that they are concerned

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solely with medical dangers: the patients are frequently concerned with social, economic and hygienic dangers—some personal, some national. If they are rich, they have no difficulty in securing doctors who will help them in every need: if they are poor, even though the need is genuine, the public believe that the medical profession will not always prove trustworthy, brave, kind. Is this belief justified? As an example, the fact may be cited that, when a questionnaire on the subject was sent to a number of American doctors, about fifty per cent. of the replies were in opposition to the sterilization of a mother, regardless of how many Cæsarean sections she had already undergone. Is this wise or kind? One medical excuse was that the children the mother already had might die, and if she had been sterilized she would then have to remain childless for the rest of her life. If the woman prefers this chance to the certainty of a Cæsarean section, what right has a surgeon to take away the liberty of the subject? What right has the

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community to insist upon compulsory maternity by surgical operation? Yet fifty per cent. of American doctors consulted on the subject consider it is their duty to dictate to the woman what she shall do with the reproductive functions of her own body. Doctors who refuse to give women-patients information regarding suitable methods of contraception are endeavouring to exercise the same meddlesome and impertinent interference with the liberty of the subject. The net result is an increase of abortion.

Consider this case from the point of view of society. A very poor mother wrote to me recently saying that her daughter who was a consumptive was married to a man who was an epileptic, and after some years of safety through contraceptive measures she had unfortunately become pregnant. She had been to her doctor for help—which was refused. Both the mother and the daughter as well as the husband were most anxious not to load upon the nation an undesirable child, more especially as the first and only

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child they had was a hopeless epileptic. To rich and well-informed parents, such a problem offers no unsurmountable difficulty, but to the poor and ignorant it is insoluble, without the kindly and enlightened help of the hospital or welfare medical officers. If that help is refused, what then? Almost certainly, the poor woman will herself endeavour to procure abortion. Speaking generally, nothing is more dangerous to the woman and objectionable to society than self-inflicted abortions. This evil is still much greater than most people imagine. It is true that, considering the number of abortions believed, on good grounds, to be procured every year, a comparatively small number of women's deaths are recorded as due to 'abortion.' But these death-records prove nothing. The mortality traceable to abortion is indicated in quite other ways. For example, if a graph were made of the maternal mortality rates per thousand live births, it would be found that the line was lowest in Holland where contraceptive information is

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most freely available, and highest in the United States and various Roman Catholic countries where contraceptive information is not freely available. The rates are:—Holland, 2.4; England, 4.3; Australia, 5.0; New Zealand, 5.1; Scotland, 6.2; United States, 6.8; Chile, 7.5; and so on. This maternal mortality is, of course, a method of exercising birth control. Dead women bear no children.

But while public opinion with us is everywhere moving in favour of contraceptive methods rather than abortion as a means of exercising suitable family limitation, and most birth control societies are definitely opposed to abortion, it must be recorded that on the Continent of Europe as well as in North and South America there is a considerable body of opinion in favour of extending the present legal limitation and even of abolishing the legal restrictions. Thus, e.g., Professor Johann Ferch, of Vienna, recently wrote:—

“ Our second activity (after the establish-

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ment of clinics for teaching contraceptive methods) extends to the abolition of the Abortion Law. We purpose that poor and sick women in the first three months of pregnancy shall have the right, for social and health reasons, to interrupt the pregnancy, especially when, for certain women, contraceptives have not worked. Our legislative plan was defeated in Parliament at the end of December (1923). It was opposed by the clericals who are all rich, mostly narrow-minded country people, and by all the nationalist militarists. But we hope, *because the majority of the population are on our side*, that there is a better prospect before us."

In Russia, Czecho-Slovakia, and other European countries and in some parts of Latin America, the procuring of artificial miscarriage within three months of conception by properly qualified medical practitioners has been publicly approved. Some Continental hospitals maintain a special medical officer for this professional service. In many places public opinion is that such service is necessary and desirable in certain cases, and

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that there is no ethical difference between preventing and terminating an undesirable pregnancy. In the July, 1924, issue of the *Journal of Sexology*, published in New York, there is the following statement by a doctor :

“ It is, as is generally known, true that there is at present no infallible method of preventing conception. Every method yet known to medical science is open to some objections. But, notwithstanding this, it must be admitted that we are already in possession of harmless methods which give at least ninety-five per cent. of security.

“ Owing to the possibility of the failure of contraceptive measures, our laws ought to be so modified that it would not be illegal for a duly licensed and properly qualified physician to terminate an undesired pregnancy at any time during the first three months of gestation. The dangers of abortion are generally greatly exaggerated for moralistic purposes. If it is performed legally, openly, surgically, without huffer-mugger, it is a safe and simple operation. When the practice of prevenception becomes a socially approved custom and preventive devices

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become cheaper in consequence, abortions will but rarely have to be resorted to."

(S. A. TANNENBAUM, M.D.)

As to the prevalence of abortion at present there are, of course, no reliable and accurate statistics, and the following extract from Marshall's *Physiology of Reproduction* (1922 edition), page 650-1, probably goes as near to the truth as it is possible to get it:—

"With women the frequency of abortion to birth at full term is said to be one in five to one in ten. According to the records of Frantz for the Maternity Hospital at Halle, the percentage of cases in which abortion occurred was 15.4. Williams expresses the opinion that in ordinary private practice every fifth or sixth pregnancy usually ends in abortion, and that the percentage would be considerably increased if one reckoned the early cases in which there is a profuse loss of blood following a retardation of the menstrual period, the actual fact of abortion being often obscured."

During the last twenty-five years, my experience as a law court reporter, as a

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journalist, a welfare worker, and a married woman, has given me quite exceptional opportunities of ascertaining how widespread abortion is. On the Continent and in the United States, it is extraordinarily common ; in Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain, it is widely practised. Nothing can stop this evil except the spread of birth control knowledge much more widely than at present, the application of the knowledge under trained medical direction, and the improvement or elimination of present insecure methods. No doubt poor ignorant women practise self-inflicted abortion more frequently than rich educated women do ; but well-to-do women still rely very very largely on artificially procured miscarriages. I am very sure myself that in all countries and among all classes of women, abortion largely accounts for family limitation. That is the very reason why we should advocate and improve contraceptive methods.

In syphilitic mothers, of course, miscarriage usually occurs naturally fairly early

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in pregnancy, though sometimes children are stillborn at due time. During recent years the practice has grown up of treating the syphilitic child in the womb thus preventing abortion; and it is sometimes claimed that infants so born are apparently "healthy." That remains to be proved when such children reach maturity—if they ever do so. Nature's decision is clearly that the withered bud must drop from the rosebush, the damaged fruit fall from the apple tree; and the imperfect baby, blood-poisoned and crooked—perhaps sightless and deaf—must go back to Mother Earth, its elements to be again resolved into more perfect form. This decision we ourselves will quietly accept when we really worship life instead of making a fetish of it.

Speaking generally, social evolution proceeds thus: among savage or partly civilised nations, infanticide is rife; a little higher up in the evolution of the race, foeticide tends to replace infanticide; higher up still, there are scarcely any infanticides, and foeticide tends to decline. Foeticide can be

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made to decline much more rapidly—indeed almost to disappear—as soon as there is something better as a “check” to replace it. It is admittedly an evil, but an evil is never abolished by putting nothing equally effective in its place: something bad is prevented by being replaced with something good. As soon as we are ready and willing to make provision for the application of contraceptive measures under efficient medical direction we can put an end to the evil of self-inflicted abortion. If anybody doubts that simultaneously with the spread of a knowledge of contraception there has been a decline in quack-abortions in England, a careful reading of a series of articles published some twenty-five years ago by *The Lancet* (Vol. II, 1898 and Vol. I, 1899) on *Quacks and Abortion*, should disillusionize the reader as to the greatly over-rated morals of the Victorian Age. Whether there has been much improvement in regard to self-inflicted abortions among poor, ignorant or desperate women may frankly be doubted. The drop

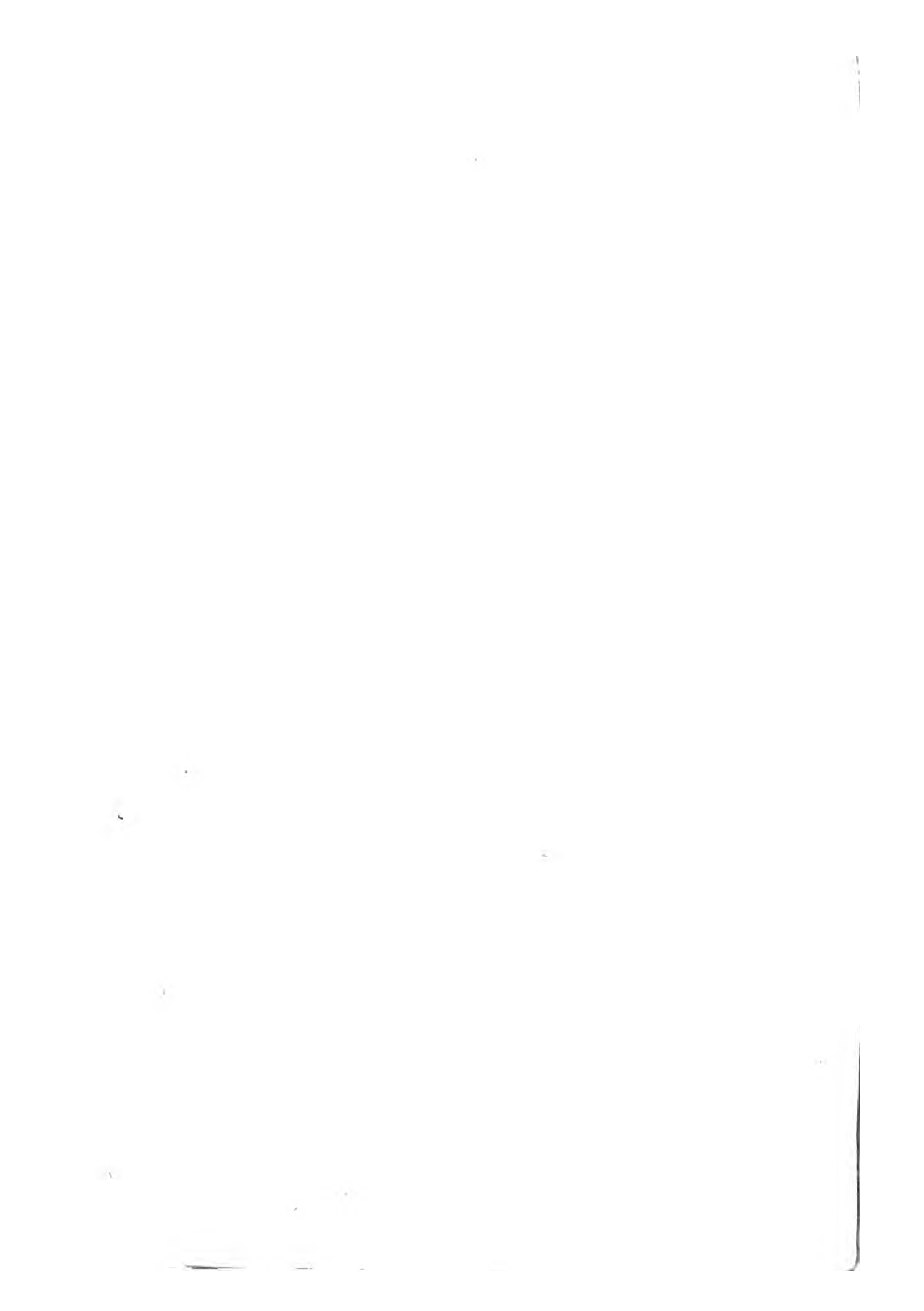
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in the birth-rate for 1924—with the exception of the war years, the lowest yet known—is too sudden to be accounted for wholly by the spread of contraceptive knowledge. The wives of men continuously unemployed would seem to be approaching the mental and physical desperation which overtook the women of Austria in 1919–20. Doctors and midwives working in poor districts know how incessant and strenuous is the mother's demand for birth control knowledge after each successive child-birth, and how deep is her resolve of "Never again!" Every public hospital every year could tell of numerous mutilated mothers seeking help like dumb wounded bleeding animals, in dread of death through the self-inflicted abortions they were driven to impose on themselves—driven by a society which took away from them the key of knowledge, driven by fear of needless suffering, driven by the torturing thought of family disablement, semi-starvation, and all the ills of an overcrowded and poverty-stricken home. Oh, no, abortions have not

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been "abolished." All that has happened is that the birth control societies have lessened their number, by persuading more and more women to substitute contraception. Otherwise the suppression of advertisements and the legal harassment of qualified medical practitioners has driven the evil of quackery still further underground, has increased the cost of medically performed operations, and has compelled more and more women to rely on their own efforts. The whole question of artificial miscarriage should be placed where it naturally belongs—in the hands of women and doctors. Priests and politicians are traditionally and constitutionally unfit to handle this difficult and delicate subject. It is not possible to make any laws relating to the person which women generally will obey unless they wish to do so. The great majority of married women regard the abortion laws as a fence—something to jump over in times of necessity: and necessity knows no law.

UNCHASTITY



CHAPTER V

THE PROMOTION OF UNCHASTITY

UNCHASTITY is sexual intercourse between those who do not love one another. Apart altogether from the ethical standpoint, it is a fatal blunder, especially for women. The only justification for sexual intercourse is mutual love and desire. Men get physical satisfaction from relationship with practically every woman, although, of course from the mental point of view, their pleasure is enhanced by inclination, attraction, and mutual love, says Gutceit; whereas women experience sexual pleasure only when having intercourse with a man who is beloved by them. Hence whenever woman is free, and economically independent, she gives herself only in love; that is, she is naturally chaste. This fastidious loving selection is the foundation of

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morality. The notion that women in general are restrained from promiscuous sexual intercourse by fear of impregnation is false and absurd. Promiscuous intercourse is not natural to women at all. Women prostitute themselves because of poverty, moral imbecility, and so forth. But normal healthy economically-independent women have no temptation to give themselves excepting in love, and it requires very little effort indeed for a girl to be virtuous in the presence of a temptation which makes no appeal to romance or affection.

Thus the argument that a knowledge of the means of birth control would open up the floodgates of promiscuity to ordinary healthy women is a monstrous fallacy. Even if "amateurs" or "prostitutes" would make free use of contraceptive devices, surely that would be a good thing, not a bad thing, for society. Why should anybody want prostitutes to be fertile? The danger is not that immoral women will make use of contraceptives: the danger is that they wont do

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anything of the sort. It is the actual fertility of the unfit we have to fear—not their possible infertility.

And in so far as the fear of impregnation restrains a woman, and the removal of that fear abolishes that restraint, we are not dealing with morality at all. Morality must be based on the promotion of virtue, not on the fear of disaster. Women do right because it is right, not because of the fear of consequences. In the mind of every normal healthy woman there is implanted this one great controlling thought: that to give herself to a man she does not love is innately evil. Society is thus quite right when it regards sexual crimes against women—rape and so forth—as the most wicked and repulsive of deeds, and classes female honour as far above rubies.

How then comes it that women are prostitutes?

The prostitute is an artificial, not a natural, product. In savage life, women do not prostitute themselves. Oh, but the conditions

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are different, it may be urged. They are different. Among primitive races it is usually impossible for a woman to be deprived of food and shelter, and to have to sell herself to obtain these. Unless she is sold by parents or relatives,—and then, too, sometimes,—she naturally gives herself to the man she loves. Her love may not always be of the same high romantic quality as ours, but essentially and fundamentally it is the same ; and wherever she is free to exercise choice, she rejects the man she does not love and accepts the man she does love. In other words, she refuses to prostitute herself.

Under civilization, a woman who is abjectly poor, without money, out of employment, lacking in food and shelter and clothing, must obtain work for wages—or sell herself. Where work and wages are not available, the choice is death or unchastity. Some women prefer death—and so they drown or poison or shoot themselves. All women are not free to leave this life suddenly : they may have others to provide for : so women

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force themselves to be immoral. Yet they may be naturally good women. It is society, not they, who must be blamed.

Sometimes I think there are no bad women. There are just sick and poor and abnormal women: women whom society should not reproduce; and then there are the women lucky enough to be born normal and healthy. If, therefore, we would only re-build society so that no woman could possibly be left stranded without the necessaries of life, women would not be driven by poverty to prostitute themselves. The morons and imbeciles should not be produced at all, and certainly should not be permitted to reproduce. Thus Birth Control instead of fostering immorality would help to drain the swamp of prostitution. But so long as we go on manufacturing prostitutes, and insist upon retaining hygienic and social and economic conditions which inevitably force women into prostitution, the problem of immorality is insoluble. The prostitute will remain with us—a menace and a reproach,

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and a direct result of our failure to exercise birth control in the right directions.

Again, the withholding of birth control information from married women leads to a very large amount of marital infidelity. Not knowing any reliable form of contraception, the wife refuses marital intercourse ; sometimes both husband and wife agree to forego intercourse entirely, out of their regard for one another, and the husband's desire to protect his wife against pregnancies she is not in a fit state to endure. Ultimately, however, the husband finds his health suffering, and he consorts with some public or private woman supposed to be able to look after herself. Apart from the possible danger to the man's health and the possible degradation of his sex-partner, there is the lowering of the husband's ideals, the invasion of the sanctity of the marriage, and consequent mental distress and mortification. The husband is in a tragically difficult position : if he remains abstinent, he loses his health ; if he satisfies his normal sexual needs by

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extra-marital intercourse, he loses his happiness; and if he impregnates his wife her health may be ruined, and the repetition of the impregnations may bankrupt his household finances. But bring into the marriage, by proper means, the control of fertility, and the ill-health, unhappiness and infidelity disappear. It may be argued that the avoidance of repeated pregnancies is the central fact that releases this tide of evil, and that the woman should endure her lot—even if that lot involves an annual impregnation. Medical science teaches us quite definitely that some women are genuinely unfit for child-birth at all and others unfit for frequent child-births. If society were in danger of dying out without leaving successors behind, then it might be the duty of as many women as possible to have as many children as possible, for the time being at any rate. But society is faced with no such danger. On the contrary it is faced with the difficulty of providing for surplus millions. The case, therefore, of the in-

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dividual family can be left with perfect social safety to the mother and her doctor to decide. It is also, of course, quite true that some women refuse maternity through sheer laziness or cowardice. Society does not suffer from such refusal, but rather suffers greatly from the compulsory reproduction of such women. The overwhelming majority of women desire children of their own; they always have done so and they always will: the reproductive instinct is their very oldest and very strongest instinct.

Whenever a woman, normally healthy in mentality and physique, foregoes having her own children, it may safely be assumed she has some noble, not ignoble, purpose in mind—some effort which to her seems temporarily or permanently a higher duty than child-bearing. Roman Catholic nuns, for example, count husbands and babies well lost in their single-hearted devotion to the Mother Church; nurses and teachers often have similar feelings, and for this reason become foster-daughters or foster-mothers

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to the sick and the young ; social welfare workers believe they are doing more for society by cleaning up various evils than by rearing families of their own ; women-artists, women-writers, women-preachers, and others have the same convictions. And so it is with the modern faithful loving homewoman. She feels it a higher duty to reserve sufficient health and strength and time to look after her husband efficiently, and to bring up a small number of children well, than to have so many babies that she cannot rear and educate any of them properly, and often is obliged to neglect the proper companionship of her husband. The protection of her own health is not her motive : woman belongs to the self-sacrificing sex, and her desire to be well and look well has its root in her consequent ability to give more to society rather than to take more. The refusal of birth control information quenches these aspirations, degrades the character and mentality of the woman, and lessens her capacity for social service.

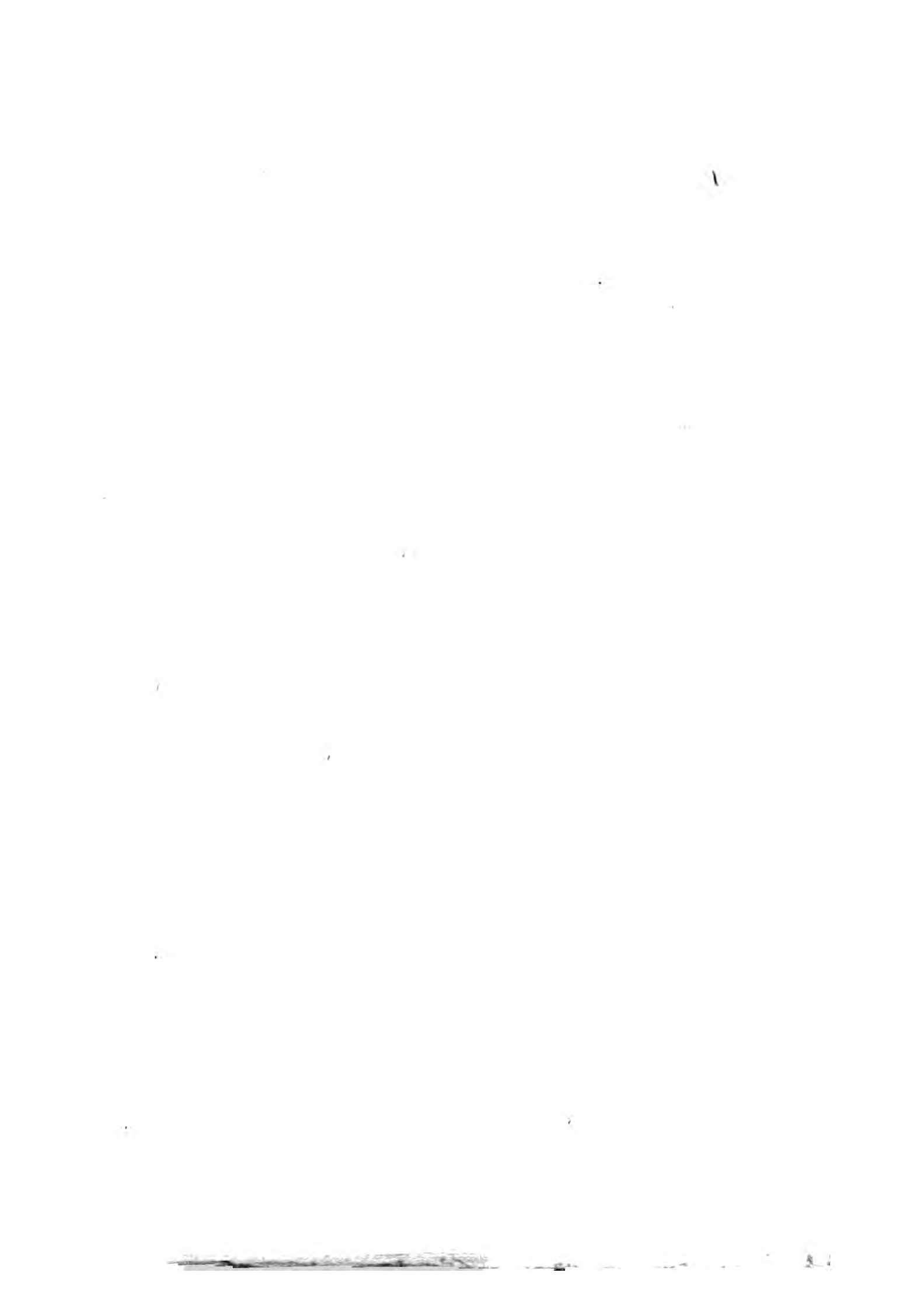
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The case of the unmarried woman who sacrifices all hope of children for the sake of maintaining invalid or aged parents, or bringing up orphaned younger sisters and brothers, and then finally seeks the long-deferred happiness of marrying the lover for whom she has waited fifteen or twenty years—such a case is as frequent as it is heart-breaking. By practising total abstinence, rigid birth control has been ensured—without health or happiness to the lovers. The exercise of contraception in married life would plainly be better for the individual, and no less well for society. Indeed what has probably happened is that the woman remained a total abstainer—and the man did not. Thus when the death of the aged parents, or the maturing of the younger sisters and brothers, released the woman from family duties, the bloom had vanished from her man's love for her, and even his physical well being might have been damaged by sexual disease picked up in the dangerous contacts to which he was more or less forced by the nature of his needs.

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These are but a few instances of the way in which the suppression of a knowledge of contraception actually tends to the promotion of unchastity.

WAR



CHAPTER VI

WAR

WAR needs and war results in relation to population constitute a vicious circle. When the population of a country declines or remains stationary, that nation is warned that it is not producing enough soldiers to defend its borders. When the population increases, and its expanding numbers seek fresh territory, it is accused of promoting war. French mothers at the present time are blamed for not having enough children ; and German mothers are blamed for having too many. As to the exercising of birth control by the mothers, whether they do or whether they don't, they are sure to be scolded for it !

The argument that the cause of war has frequently been the desire for expansion

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of a huge, greedy and recklessly breeding nation, will be referred to in detail later (Chapter XII). Here we may consider War as a very old-established and very evil form of reducing population—as a substitute for birth control. Obviously if the potential fathers are killed off by war they cannot subsequently procreate new citizens. It is a most regrettable fact that a very large proportion of the soldiers slaughtered in the Great War failed to leave any successors behind them. Others left only a few children, or a single child, or sometimes a baby was born orphaned before its birth. Of all forms of reducing population, war is the most cruel and the most expensive. It is popular mainly because very few persons know what it really is, nor how much it costs. In the decade from 1914 to 1924 many adult women's eyes have been opened to the inner meaning of war. That is one reason why more women are applying contraceptive methods than ever before: they have firmly resolved not to produce cannon fodder. They would

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rather have no sons than sons to be mangled and massacred in the prime of life.

Among civilised nations infanticide is everywhere condemned. We do not make war on babies, and we loath baby-killing—done singly. Killing off the babies wholesale by slum-life is another matter. Landlords who make money by owning slum-tenements where infantile mortality rates are criminally high are quite often made pillars of the Church, and sometimes they have knight-hoods conferred on them as well. This is not because we are naturally stupid and cruel: naturally, we are intelligent and kind-hearted. But we suffer from delusions. One of our delusions is that Property is more important than Life. We were told long, long ago that we could not serve God and Mammon. We think we can, and we are busily proving our failure. The babies pay the price. In Great Britain nearly a hundred thousand babies die every year under twelve months of age, and in addition there are some thirty or forty thousand still-births

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recorded (how many unrecorded we do not know). Some countries are even more successful in out-Heroding Herod.

And yet War is really much worse than baby-killing. As soon as we sit still and think the problem out quietly we shall realize this. In what way have statesmen benefited a baby by nurturing him through childhood, educating him, giving him a training for earning a livelihood, building up his physique, filling his early manhood with hopes and plans,—and then killing him in an international quarrel?

A society which is wilfully slaying soldiers by the million, and negligently destroying coal miners, lead-painters, and other artizans, and then objecting to birth control as "murder," is surely straining at the gnat and swallowing the camel.

War also imposes temporary birth control on many homes. Soldiers who are On Active Service Abroad cannot simultaneously play the part of fathers, with wife and children gathered round their own fireside, a fireside

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perhaps half-a-world away from their military quarters, a fireside from which they may be absent several years. During the whole of this absence, infertility is imposed on loving and faithful wives. When the returned soldier comes home, he may be unfit for parenthood. Malaria, trench fever, typhus, sexual disease, physical, mental or other injury to health or physique may disable the husband from procreation, or may lessen his sexual vitality, reduce his earning capacity, and hence inflict permanent loss on his home.

On unmarried women, war imposes infertility by the destruction of their future husbands. Where women are already in surplus, as in England, the loss of many hundreds of thousands of potential husbands is a very serious matter; and this loss constitutes one of the most deplorable forms of birth control—a form of birth control devastating alike to the health and happiness of many many thousands of young women naturally destined to be loving wives and mothers, and fatal for the race-culture of

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a nation which has picked out its finest males for slaughter and rejected its weak and weedy as unfit for fighting but just right to breed from! That is Eugenics according to the Gospel of Mars.

In his book on *War and Waste*, Professor David Starr Jordan summarizes this matter thus :

“ But greater than the waste of the ‘ earnings of poor men’s lives ’ is the waste of life itself. It is a fundamental fact of biology that the laws in heredity which apply to man are those which govern the lower animals as well. ‘ Like the seed is the harvest ’—this is the fundamental law. The men you breed from determine the future. Heredity runs level. No race of men nor animals has improved save through selection of the best for parentage. None has fallen save through the choice of inferior stock for parentage. Whatever influence may cause the destruction of the strong, the brave, the courageous, the enterprising, will ensure a generation which shall show these qualities in lower degree. Rome fell because the

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old Roman stock was for the most part banished or exterminated. There was no other cause. The Romans were gone and that was the end of it; while the sons of slaves, camp-followers, scullions, and pedlars filled the Eternal City. The Republic fell when 'Vir gave place to Homo,' real men in Rome to mere beings. The Empire fell when the barbarians filled the unoccupied city, unoccupied so far as the men of the old Roman type were concerned.

"The latest historian of the '*Downfall of the Ancient World*,' Dr. Otto Seeck, of Munster, tells us how after the wars of Marius and Sulla, 'only cowards remained, and from their brood came forward the new generations.' We ask no other reason for the disappearance of Greece. Greek Art, Greek philosophy, Greek literature, the perfection of form in thought, in action, in speech,—all of these were impossible save to men of Greek blood; and when these had fallen in suicidal war, there was no longer the heredity which could replace them.

"However noble, encouraging, inspiring the history of modern Europe may be, it

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is not the history we would have the right to expect from the development of its original elements. It is not the history that would have been made had these same elements been released from the shadow of reversed selection cast by fratricidal war. The angle of divergence between what might have been and what has been is measured by the parentage of strong, capable, and courageous men slain on the bloody fields of glory.

“All this applies not to one nation alone nor to one group of nations, but in like degree to all nations that have sent forth their young men to the field of slaughter. As it was with Greece and Rome, with France and Spain, Mauretania and Turkestan, so has it been with Germany and England; so with all nations that have sent forth ‘the best they breed’ to foreign service, while retaining cautious, thrifty mediocrity to fill up the ranks at home.”

And then Professor Jordan asks: “What shall we say of England and her place in the history of war?” Her young men, he points out, have gone to all regions of the earth—to fight and to trade. What

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has it all cost? Has this sacrifice of life and force left England with something like exhaustion? The bodies of Englishmen rest in India, Zululand, Burmah, the Transvaal—everywhere on earth: their names are recorded by the score in every parish church, by the thousand in every cathedral, and the churches are numbered by the thousands. The foreign service of England has for a hundred years furnished careers for her sons—she has sent forth her strongest and her best and bred from her second best. In this loss of the fair and the strong, the unreturning brave, may be found the answer to some of England's most desperate problems. Why is it that there are millions of unemployed in England to-day? Why is it that these same unemployed are found unemployable in Canada, in Australia, or wherever they go? Why is it that the tendency in all average physical standards is downward? The answer lies in the reversed selection of long continued wars. Its effects are found in England and everywhere else where

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strength and courage have been rewarded by glory and extinction. England has exchanged her country squires for memorial tablets. More than for all who have fallen in battle, or were wasted in camps, England should mourn the fair women and brave men who should have been the descendants of her strong and manly men. England should grieve most, not over her unreturning brave, but over those who might have been but never were, those who so long as history lasts can never be.

(NOTE.—In advanced civilizations, war is more unnatural and very much more mischievous than in primitive societies where group-marriage or community of women exists. One generation may then be sufficient to repair war-losses. Where the women unite with the surviving chiefs in an effort to replace the fallen warriors, this sexual selection may even result in race improvement. When civilization condemns the soldiers' widows to future celibacy or race-suicide,

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and condemns all "surplus women" to perpetual spinsterhood, and reproduces from its "rejects," in legal monogamy, then, of course, national deterioration is inevitable. When one modern civilized nation is "conquered" by another modern civilized nation, the women of the conquered do not become spoils to the victors as a matter of course. Vengeance is generally wreaked on women not by imposing enemy children on them, but by depriving them of any children at all. Thus war forces men in the name of patriotism to commit suicide, and forces women in the name of morality to commit sterility.)

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CHAPTER VII

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NOTHING could be more erroneous than to suppose that birth control is a modern discovery. A knowledge of it can be traced back to the dawn of civilization, and before. But women are not born knowing all about birth control ; every generation must learn its lessons anew ; and the dissemination of traditional knowledge waxes and wanes. Various methods proclaimed in England and America to-day as new or recent are, in essentials, the same methods as have been in use for many, many thousands of years among primitive, savage, barbarian and civilized women. On the average the civilized women of to-day have probably less practical sex knowledge than many primitive women. Certain it is that every one of the

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modern methods, unchanged in essential principles, has been in use for many thousands of years. The wildest savages know quite well (according to Ploss and Bartels and others) that the penetration of the male sperm into the genital apparatus of the woman is necessary for procreation; and many of them, even on the lowest cultural planes, know how to take precautions. Spread all over the world is the custom of introducing foreign bodies into the vagina, especially such as are absorbent. Every new generation of women believe they have themselves discovered birth control; every new religion believes it has invented sex-morality; and every fresh set of qualified medical practitioners contains its prophets of woe, some of whom have acquired a hysterical and morbid objection to sexual relationship in general, to the study of sex-hygiene, and even to the scientific naming of the sexual organs by members of the general public. If we knew all the facts, we should probably be aware that the human race has been practising birth

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controls of various kinds for the last million years or so.

As an instance of the way in which quite primitive men and women apply methods of birth control, one may instance the practices of the Australian aborigines and of the natives in the adjacent islands of the Pacific. The following extracts from the records of one of the many scientific expeditions to Australasia prove this. The Cambridge University Press has published the records of "*The Expedition to Torres Straits in 1907*," and in those records Dr. A. C. Haddon describes various native beliefs and customs in regard to the control of fecundity. Thus:—

Vol. VI, page 106: "Prolonged lactation tends to reduce the size of families. A child is generally weaned when it begins to bite with its teeth; weaning is accomplished by the mother anointing her nipples with a decoction of chilies and water. Lactation is, however, often prolonged beyond this time, as children nearly three years old have been observed at their mother's breast."

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Page 107: "Various checks to the increase of the population were frequently employed, and indeed they are so still to a limited extent. Mr. Bruce does not know of any operation performed on men or women to induce sterility, nor is any diet adopted as a check to fertility; but old women may give to young women the young leaves of the *argerarger* (*Collicarpa* sp.), a large tree, of which the fruit is inedible; and *bok*, a large shrub. The young leaves of this tree are well chewed and the juice swallowed, until they feel that their bodies are wholly saturated with the juice. The process takes some time, and when their system is thoroughly impregnated, they are supposed to be proof against fecundity and can go with men indefinitely. Both men and women strongly believe in the efficacy of these leaves; sterile women tell their husbands they use these plants as a preventative and they are believed. . . . Abortion is procured by medicinal and mechanical means. The leaves of the shore convolulus, *wakor* (*Ipomæa pes-capræ*) which grows on the beach, are used for this purpose, and it is also said to be a preventative."

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(NOTE: The suggested medical explanation of this alleged sterility is that in all probability the toxic substances introduced cause abortion at very early stages of pregnancy, or they may even inhibit pregnancy at the very onset.)

Page 108: "Mr. Bruce estimated that four is about the average number of children in a family, but by consulting the genealogies it is found that 2.6 is the average number, excluding marriages in which there are no children, and 3.6 excluding those in which there is only one child."

Page 109: "Formerly four was considered a large family, and any more than that brought ridicule on the parents, to which they were very sensitive."

It is interesting to note that the development of pearl-fishing and other industries in these islands has led to an increase in some places of the average size of families. Children have become a source of profit to their parents, as wage-earners: hence more of them are produced. Possibly similar economic reactions have had greater influence

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in England than has been imagined. Restrictions upon the employment of children of school-age are restrictions upon the family earnings. The growth of juvenile unemployment at the present time is not at all likely to stimulate the production of juveniles, even when more or less supported by the "dole." What it does undoubtedly is stimulate the practice of self-inflicted abortions. Among the English well-to-do classes, where children are not regarded as a means of supplementing the family earnings or as a means of providing for the indigent old age of the parents, but on the contrary are regarded as a financial and social responsibility, the limitation of births appears to be much the same in extent as in the Torres Straits Islands.

The foregoing extracts, and many others which might be cited from ethnological works, are sufficient to show that modern European nations have no monopoly of birth control measures and knowledge. All sorts of preventive checks are quite well known and have

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been practised for many, many thousands of years in various parts of the world. Native women may employ moss or seaweed or soft leaves where we employ cotton-wool. They may use split seaweed "eggs" where we employ occlusive pessaries. Their operative measures to secure temporary or permanent artificial sterility (by malposition of the uterus, removal of ovaries, amputation of part of cervix, castration, slitting of penile urethra, etc., etc.) may be crude and cruel compared with the modern surgery; but the object was the same, and the result was achieved. And yet the race has survived!

In the Bible also there are many positive and negative indications of the existence of the control of fecundity. The many exhortations to "increase and multiply" indicate that the persons to whom they were addressed were in the habit of doing the reverse: that is, one way or other, they were exercising checks on the increase of population.

In regard to the so-called sin of Onanism, there is a good deal of misunderstanding.

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The sin was not the physiological act of Onan, but his refusal to raise up heirs for his deceased brother. Abstinence would have been equally sinful. The following quotations prove this :

(1) Genesis xxxviii :

“ And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name was Tamar. And Er, Judah’s firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord ; and the Lord slew him. And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto this brother’s wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother. And Onan knew that the seed should not be his ; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother’s wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the Lord ; wherefore he slew him also.”

(2) Deuteronomy xxvi :

“ If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger : her husband’s brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband’s brother unto her.

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And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel. And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother. Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand to it, and say, I like not to take her; then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house. And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed."

Under the present Christian codes of sexual morality, the Mosaic law in this respect has been reversed. A child so procreated would be held to be illegitimate and could be disinherited, and if the deceased husband's brother "married"

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his brother's widow that would be illegal in some countries, and bigamous in all countries if he himself had another wife living. Thus he would be penalized socially or legally, or both, for doing the very things which the Lord slew Onan for leaving undone. This view of the matter, however, is of very recent origin. For example, Luther, in his treatise on marital love published in the year 1522, makes the following statement :

“ If a sexually potent woman is married to an impotent man, if she is unable to take any other man openly, yet is unwilling to do anything dishonourable, she should say to her husband, ‘ Dear husband, you cannot fulfil your duty to me, and you have deceived my young body, you have endangered my honour and my happiness, and in the eye of God our marriage is null ; forgive me therefore if I form a secret union with your brother or with your nearest friend ; the fruit of this union will be yours in name, thus your possessions will not fall to strangers, and you will willingly allow me to deceive you, because involuntarily you have deceived me.’ ”

Such an arrangement to-day made secretly and without the husband's consent or knowledge would constitute grounds for divorce ; if made with his knowledge or consent, the law would refuse divorce on the ground of " collusion " ; and Church and Society would unite in condemning an arrangement altogether too sensible and natural to be in accord with modern conventional " morality."

As to the early Biblical commands, in the most frequently quoted text from Genesis xi, 1 :—

" Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth,"—

it should be noted that this relates to a time when, according to the Scriptural record, there were only eight persons on the earth. At the present time it is calculated that the earth's population is over 1,700,000,000, and that the population of the earth has doubled in the last hundred years. The population of England and Wales is calculated to have increased in the nineteenth century by *three hundred per cent.*

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One of the reasons for this was undoubtedly the amazing increase in new sources of food supply, due to the growth of the British Empire. So far as the necessaries of life are concerned, England is a parasitic nation, drawing nourishment from "native" countries primarily—Crown Colonies, Dependencies, and various backward countries in Asia, Africa, and elsewhere; to a less extent from foreign countries in exchange for manufactured goods, and from those self-governing Dominions which ever tend to become independent Europeanized nations—such as Canada and Australia, already on the high-road to new nationhood similar in many ways to that of the United States of America. Thus the task of multiplying and replenishing the earth has been overshadowed even in our time by the more urgent necessity of "keeping the home fires burning."

The modern birth control movement in England may truthfully be said to date from the time of Malthus. In the year 1798, in England, the Rev. Robert Malthus, stimu-



lated, it is said, by an idea of Benjamin Franklin, wrote his *Essay on the Principles of Population*, his principal means of preventing over-population being abstinence from intercourse and the postponement of marriage. In *The Sexual Life of our Time*, Dr. Iwan Bloch says, on pages 695-6 :—

“ Although this celebrated theory, which filled with alarm, not only those already living in Europe, but also all those who wished to produce new life, has to-day been generally recognized as false, since it failed to take into account technical advances in the preparation of the soil and other ways in which it will become possible to increase the means of subsistence ; and he equally ignored the possibility of a better division of property. None the less does his theory remain apposite in respect of many of the social relationships of more recent times ; the doctrine has, in fact, temporary validity for certain periods of civilization, such as our own.”

The Malthusian theory has other serious defects from the scientific standpoint—par-

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ticularly the contention that food increases arithmetically whereas human beings increase in geometric ratio. Of course, plants and animals alike increase by sexual reproduction—hence, in geometric ratio. Actually it can be claimed that “birth control” is applied to wheat, sheep, cattle, etc., etc., by the operation of the principles of selection and control in the agricultural and pastoral industries. Only when the farmers come to *themselves* is the desirability or efficacy of this matter called into question.

During the nineteenth century, the Malthusian contentions were widely discussed, in England particularly by Chalmers, Ricardo, John Stuart Mill, Say, Thornton, and others. A development from Malthusianism, was “Neo-Malthusianism”—that is, an actual diffusion of instruction in the means for the prevention of pregnancy and for the limitation of the number of children. Dr. Bloch records that this was first publicly recommended in England by Francis Place, in the year 1822; but no widespread teaching of

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practical Malthusianism occurred till considerably later, notably after the foundation of the Malthusian League on July 17th, 1877. The principal advocates then were John Stuart Mill, Charles Drysdale, Charles Bradlaugh, and Mrs. Annie Besant. A considerable amount of courage was required at that time to advocate publicly any contraceptive measures. Now-a-days, the work is carried on much more easily, and gradually the public is gaining an understanding of the merits of the controversy and the natural limitations of the measures proposed.

LIFE CONTROL

CHAPTER VIII

LIFE CONTROL

A THOUSAND years ago in England the Feudal System prevailed: in other words, there was slavery of body. A man was not free to transport himself from one field to another; a woman had to yield to the baron the "right of the first night." Fancy any modern employer claiming the "right" to spend the wedding night with the bride of one of his employees! Fancy his having social and legal sanction and approval for this! To us, the very notion is unthinkable. The fact that it is unthinkable shows how far we have advanced on the road to personal freedom of body. So also the right of a man to choose his own wife, the right of a woman to choose her own husband (within economic restrictions), do certainly

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indicate a very big step away from bodily slavery and towards bodily freedom.

Cast the mind back for four or five hundred years. Then the fight was for freedom of thought. The spread of knowledge among the common people was just beginning. The Caxton Press had been set up and books were being printed in England for the very first time. The names of Newton, Galileo, Bruno, Tycho Brahe, float across our memory of Europe from those days, with countless others on whom tortures were inflicted and curses were loaded because—they were adding to human knowledge! With every generation, Science grew stronger and stronger. Gradually, slowly, surely, the power of Magic weakened: the power of Science strengthened: humanity staggered and struggled away from slavery of mind. The battle for freedom of thought was *won!*

To-day the struggle is for freedom of conduct: only in a few intellectually backward countries or brutally new ones, is freedom of thought and the spread of knowledge seriously

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interfered with. Everywhere men and women are claiming their bodies as their own ; claiming to know all about those bodies, and to be in control of them ; claiming the right to do what they will with their own bodies, so long only as they inflict no harm on society. Modern fathers and mothers, with ultra-modern sons and daughters, are naturally full of affectionate anxiety as the first signs of active sexual life in the young people appear. Perhaps it will help such to recall to our minds the words of a Wise Man of the East — Rabindranath Tagore — one of whose characters in *Gora* writes thus to a young daughter about to make an unconventional marriage (that is, a love match) :—

“ As for your future weal and woe I am full of apprehension, but I have no right to hinder you by these fears of mine, because those in this world who have courage to try and solve in their own lives new problems of life are the ones who raise society to greatness ! Those who merely live according to rule do not advance society, they only carry it along. Therefore I will not obstruct your

path by my own anxiety and timidity. Follow what you feel to be right in the face of all obstacles, and may God help you. God never under any conditions binds His creation with fetters. He awakens it through constant changes to ever new life."

This is the angle from which we must view the increasing tendency of young men and young women to "try it out" before settling down to permanent married life. Undoubtedly the unofficial union has a growing popularity, and such unions may or may not end in marriage. Among the working classes such trial-marriages have always been the rule rather than the exception; the system at least has the benefit of proving suitability and establishing fertility. The vogue and rationale of such an institution should be the subject of careful social study—not the object of conventional abuse and panic. The idealistic basis of the trial-marriage is often higher than many of us are prepared to admit.

The cardinal blunder in sex is to assume that our present morality is fixed, unalter-

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able, complete. On the contrary, like every other aspect of science and ethics, sexual morality is flexible, provisional, incomplete, ever advancing and receding, ever changing in form—and yet, the more it changes the more it remains the same. We laugh at our ancestors for thinking the earth was the centre of the Universe, and yet we ourselves perpetrate a similar error when we imagine ourselves in the centre of Time, with no more knowledge to acquire, no more freedoms to win, no more ethics to evolve.

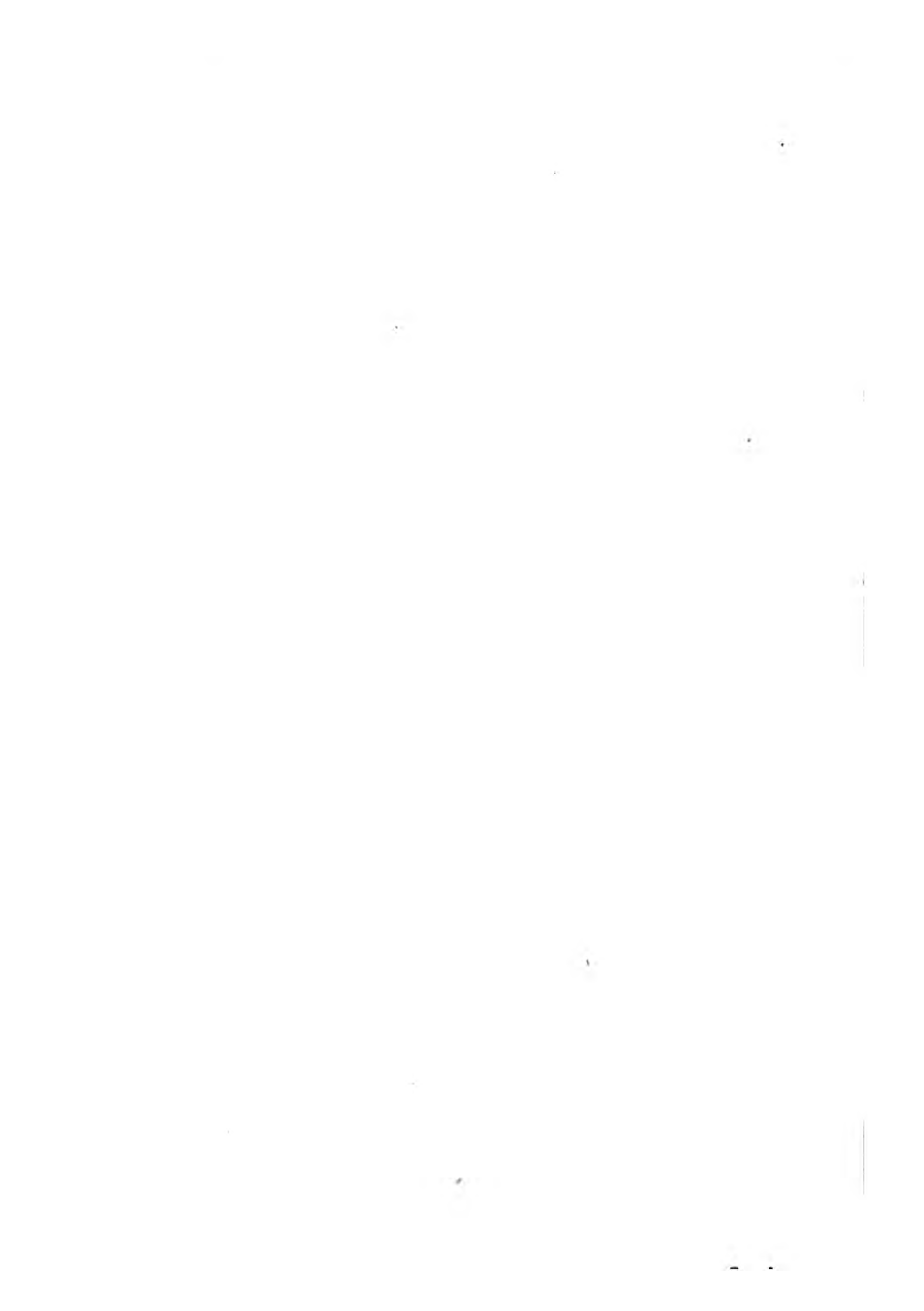
In saying that neither from marriage nor from any other social institution can the element of growth be excluded, why should be assumed that future developments are bound to be unwholesome or undesirable or degrading? Once we knew nothing better than the sex ethics of the cave; later the harem arose; then the home. All the fervid support we give to the home our own ancestors gave to the cave and the harem. Yet obviously the home, too, is growing outwards, becoming less insulated; the house

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is now usually the home of many families—in flats, suites, apartments, etc. Even in this transition stage marriage has become less individualistic, more socialized. And it is not yet perfect! Why have we so little faith?

Codes and customs may be thrown into the melting-pot; but that is not necessarily a process of disintegration—rather one of refinement and re-creation. There may not be a sex “revolution,” but who so unintelligent and unobservant as to deny that reconstruction is upon us, whether we will or no?

DEATH CONTROL



CHAPTER IX

DEATH CONTROL

THE fundamental reason why birth control is right for the individual and for society is that it is a part of the rational ordering of life. No one condemns a doctor because he has extended the life of a patient beyond its length unaided by medical science. We do not say that such interference is unnatural or immoral. Neither should we say that the shortening of a life, for an honourable and worthy object, is unnatural or immoral. In medicine, the doctor's first duty is to prevent disease ; failing that—to cure the sick ; failing that—to alleviate suffering. Whether the means chosen are " natural " or " artificial " is of no consequence ethically, so long as the individual is benefitted and society is not injured.

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But whenever death-rates are lowered, birth-rates must be lowered correspondingly—otherwise equilibrium is not preserved. The lowering of the death-rate and the increasing of a population are not necessarily righteous acts in themselves: they may be either mischievous or beneficial.

In the *Yorkshire Telegraph and Star*, October 16th, 1924, there is a report of a striking address by Dr. F. E. Wynne, Sheffield's Medical Officer of Health, delivered that day before the delegates to the Regional Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship. The Bishop of Sheffield presided. Dr. Wynne said:—

“The death-rate throughout England and Wales was lower than ever, and practically all our dangerous epidemic diseases were well in check at present. Mere reduction in the death-rate, however, was not, in his opinion, a proper ground for complacency. People were not dying now so fast as hitherto, but the question was, were they *living* in any sane sense of the word?—people who were living under insanitary conditions or had

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fallen into the clutches of harpies who charged the rent of a house for a room 'furnished,' some old foul rags, a broken chair or two and the remnants of what might once have been a bedstead?

"Could we really pride ourselves in prolonging such lives and the lives of infants who opened their eyes for the first time upon a vista of utter misery?

"A great deal of sentimental talk has been heard in the past about family-life. Family-life can be sweet and beautiful, but only when composed of sweet and beautiful characters, where there are love, tolerance, and sympathy. On the other hand, it can be a hideous scene of parental tyranny, of hatred, malice, envy and uncharitableness among the children themselves. Such families can never be happy until they are broken up. The right kind of family is just as prevalent among the poor as the well-to-do. Under existing conditions, I am sorry to say, such family-life is impossible for millions of our people. Conceive, if you can, what it means for a father and mother and seven children to occupy a single room, when the elder children are

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either growing or have grown up. I have seen such parents' despondency generating into despair, and the children, owing to lack of all decency, becoming careless, coarse and eventually immoral. Family-life is not a weed that can flourish on such a muck-heap as that."

Another instance of the consideration now being given by Medical Officers of Health to the inter-relationship of birth, life and death,—in health and in disease—was furnished in the Presidential Address delivered before the Society of Medical Officers of Health in London last October by Dr. Robert A. Lyster, of Winchester. Dr. Lyster said :

"Our institutions for the mentally defective are overcrowded and local authorities all over the country are being urged to spend immense sums in building more. Large numbers of unfortunate people will be condemned to lifelong imprisonment in these institutions, and will never know the blessings of a free and ordinary existence, or of ordinary family life. One often hears it said that lifelong imprisonment is a far more serious pun-

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ishment than a sentence of death, and yet there are fanatics, at present in control of the situation, who insist upon these unfortunate people being subjected to this life sentence instead of carrying out the very simple process of sterilization, which would enable a considerable proportion of these people to lead more or less ordinary lives, at little or no cost to the community.

“ Similarly the thorny subject of birth control loses many of its difficulties and its contentiousness if the subject is considered from the point of view of the improvement of the nation. Mental deficiency, another subject of rapidly increasing importance, if we are to consider the ultimate goal of the nation, becomes a comparatively simple matter if we establish an ideal of viewing it solely from the point of view of national improvement.

“ As Medical Officers of Health it is our duty to protect the public from the hindrances due to various forms of fanaticism, which cause people to prophecy all kinds of evil results and warn us about all manner of imaginary dangers which they say will

arise if we venture a step forward.

“Let us take courage. We are fighting against great forces of evil which threaten to damage or destroy the nation, but we know that we should be winning at a much greater rate if we concentrated on progress and disregarded those clutching hands which seek on all sides to hinder our progress.”

As showing again the readiness of some Medical Officers to help poor mothers, I quote the following extracts from the report of Mr. Norman Haire in regard to the Saffron Hill Maternity Centre :—

“I feel it my duty to direct the attention of the Committee to the ill-effects of unregulated reproduction, and to the necessity for educating the poor to limit their families in accordance with the demands of hygiene and economy. At this centre much of our labour and resources are spent on keeping alive those who should never have been born—who will be saved by us from an early death only to grow up to fill the prisons and asylums, the workhouses and infirmaries, to reproduce their kind and to swell the ranks of the unfit and unemployed.”

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Later this Medical Officer stated (*The Medical Times*, July, 1924) :—

“ There is no measure which would do more to decrease maternal and infantile death and disease than the substitution of sound knowledge of contraception for the present ignorance with its attendant evils—unhealthy sex-life and attempts at abortion ; and there is no better way for this knowledge to be given than by the medical men and women at the Welfare Centres which are already doing so much to safeguard the health of our women and infants.”

Compare these statements with the following extract from the charge delivered by the Bishop of Southwark to the clergy of his diocese in the Cathedral on October 21st, 1924 (*vide Times*, October 22nd, 1924) :—

“ The problem of artificial birth control was more perplexing than that of divorce ; for in some ways it was a new problem, and therefore it was impossible to appeal in the same way to the authoritative opinion of the Church. After referring to the resolution passed at the last Lambeth Conference on the

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subject, he said there were special cases, as that resolution recognized, for which no general rule could be laid down. But in normal cases deliberately to avoid both the responsibility and privilege of a family by resort to methods which were designed to make conception an impossibility was contrary both to Nature and to the Christian teaching on marriage. Contraceptives were now used by the unmarried as a means of enabling them to sin with comparative security and secrecy. The plea that self-control for the married was impossible and therefore they were right in using contraceptives could not be confined to them alone. Logically, it justified the unmarried. The use of contraceptives could not be judged only by their immediate result on individuals. Ultimately the results might be evil, not only to the individual, but to the community."

Fortunately more enlightened views are held by other high dignitaries of the Church. For example, in the sermon preached on October 19th, the Bishop of Birmingham said :—

" I find myself forced to agree with those

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observers amongst us who trace the ultimate cause of the late war to the extraordinarily rapid increase of European population during the last century. The great industrial nations instinctively realize that for their safety they must command supplies of food and raw material. They are afraid: and fear drives them to violence. Empty lands there may be still; but there is no great surplus of corn, nor is there reason to think that the supply can be vastly increased. The old checks upon over-population were pestilence, famine, and war. Medical science and social hygiene have eliminated pestilence: international trade has under normal circumstances effectively put an end to famine. War remains. And, as the late conflict went far to show, war will destroy our civilization unless we can make it unnecessary. So the question confronts us and will increasingly perplex future generations: Can the great races of the world be persuaded voluntarily to restrict their population increase? And, if so, what methods must be adopted? As I see the future course of human history, such questions will become of paramount importance. We must not import into their discussion

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heated prejudice. They involve matters of great delicacy as to which accurate research, physical and psychical, is urgently needed before plain teaching can be given. The leaders of Christian opinion and the leaders of Medical Science must work together in cordial co-operation if the great eugenic problems which confront the whole world, and our overcrowded islands especially, are to be solved."

Recently, in an interview, the Bishop of Birmingham summarized modern social ideals thus :—

"It is the duty of the Christian Churches to work for a smaller and better population—that is to say, we want the healthier strain in the community to be preserved, and the degenerate one to be eliminated. That ideal now must also be combined with the Christian principle that if human beings are brought into existence they must be given such opportunities of living wholesome lives as the community can possibly afford."

MARRIAGE

CHAPTER X

MARRIAGE

THE object of marriage is love-relationship, and one result of love-relationship is reproduction. Another is the promotion of mutual health and happiness. The sex glands of man and of woman secrete substances on the interchange of which sexual development as well as physical comfort of body and mind are dependent. In other words, for the vast majority of adult men and women, love-relationship is necessary for the welfare of the mind and body. Hence the folly and iniquity of recommending total abstinence to men and women of high virility. Hence the sanity and righteousness of society providing for the safe and suitable consummation of marriage.

Such marriage having been consummated,

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for husbands or wives to deprive one another of marital intercourse, wilfully or negligently, is a very serious evil, and has always been so regarded by social custom and legal enactment. Conjugal rights are really natural rights, and if they are wilfully withheld by either party to a marriage, without the consent of the other party, then that withholding constitutes valid grounds for the dissolution of the marriage. The legal way of settling such a difference may not be wise or nice, but that is beside the point. The marriage has been practically annulled and its legal dissolution should follow automatically. Age, temporary absence, illness, and a host of other conditions may lead to the suspension or cessation of intercourse ; an open or tacit agreement of both husband and wife as to the permanent cessation of intercourse may occur ; but women in particular ought to understand that in marriage they have no right wilfully to impose total sexual abstinence on their husbands by refusing to have relationship ; and if they do so refuse

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they have no moral or legal ground of complaint if he satisfies his normal sexual needs by extra-marital intercourse. Similarly, if a man, through drunkenness, profligacy, or otherwise, fails to take care of the sexual needs of his wife, he may be cruelly laying waste what does not belong to him—her sexual health and happiness. The basis of the contract made between the husband and the wife is the mutual granting of love-relationship to one another: any variation in this must fairly be by mutual consent: otherwise, clearly there is a breach of contract—a justification for declaring the contract null and void, according to the law of the land.

Similarly, it should be regarded as a breach of contract if either husband or wife secretly sterilized himself or herself. Whatever is done, should be done by mutual consent. If it were a fact, as is sometimes alleged, that contraceptives cause sterility, then it would be wrong for a wife to make use of contraceptives without her husband's know-

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ledge and consent—just as wrong as it would be for him to be artificially sterilized, by surgery, without her knowledge and consent. Marriage must be founded on mutual trust and confidence, as well as on passionate love. Neither partner has the right to deprive the other of intercourse or offspring.

Is it a fact that the use of contraceptives destroys fertility? As this is a medical question, I have asked Dr. Barbara Crawford, M.B.E., M.B., CH.B., to express her opinion on the point, and this is what she writes:—

“ Among the many foolish objections to the use of contraceptives which are brought forward from time to time, the fear that they may predispose to, or even cause sterility is one of the most persistent—such fears are quite groundless if hygienic methods are used. Anything and everything may become harmful if misused. I have known a dirty tooth-brush to cause ulceration of the mouth, and a communal hair-brush to convey ringworm, but this does not condemn the proper use of these articles; in the same way, the careless or incorrect use of contraceptives does

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not condemn these, but rather the ways of the ignorant users. . . . About one in ten of all marriages in this country are infertile, so some cases must be expected where pregnancy will not occur, even if contraceptives have been used for a time and then discontinued. This may be due to lack of development in either husband or wife, or to other causes quite unconnected with the previous use of contraceptives, and all it demonstrates is that that particular couple need not have troubled to use them. No one need fear harm as the result of properly used modern contraceptives, but it is advisable to have individual medical advice as to what to use and how to use them. . . . So many cases are known to me of young married people who could not afford children at first, or who were in lodgings, or going abroad and could not conveniently have a family, who have used contraceptives for the first few years ; and afterwards, when circumstances altered, on discontinuing these, have had a baby within a year ; and mothers, who after the birth of a baby have taken suitable contraceptive precautions for a year or two to prevent pregnancy occurring again too soon,

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and have had more children later when they wished them, that no doubt exists whatever as to the safety and harmlessness of these methods."

If it were really possible, by the use of certain contraceptives, to induce sterility, that would be a most valuable discovery, of great benefit to suffering humanity. In this way, consumptives, epileptics, and others unsuitable for parenthood, might safely marry without danger to themselves and to the community by unhealthy procreation. It would not be necessary to forbid those with hereditary or congenital defects to marry; it would not be necessary to trouble them with surgical operations for artificial sterilization; all that would be necessary would be to advise them to use the contraceptives supposed to promote sterility, and they would be saved from impregnation once and for all. Similarly, wives and mothers who wanted to exercise family limitation after several years of child-bearing could be released from troubling about contraceptive measures. Such

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artificial sterility, if attainable in the way alleged by the critics of birth control, would render the management of married life a very simple problem. No wife would need to pretend to be "frigid," when really she adored her husband just as much as ever but withheld herself from him out of fear of consequences.

But all this, of course, as Dr. Crawford shows, is an absolute myth. One wonders if those who advance such arguments are capable of reasoning at all. With one breath they allege that contraceptives are useless because they are "unreliable"; with the next breath, they say contraceptives are so "reliable" that they cause sterility.

As to the scheme of things involved in permanent life-long monogamy, without divorce, sometimes without the right of a widow or widower to re-marry, and with the obligation of total sexual inactivity outside marriage, one can only say that this is as anti-social an arrangement as it is possible for the perversity of man to devise. It has

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proved so impracticable that one feature after another has been discarded. In highly civilized communities now-a-days the majority of men and women are in favour of simple and easy cancellation of unhappy marriages, and practically all adult men and women are in favour of widows and widowers having the right to re-marry. Similarly, the overwhelming majority of men and women are in favour of a single love-relationship, mutually exclusive so long as the love lasts ; and most intelligent sensible men and women realize that loyalty in love can be and ought to be cultivated. A considerable number of ordinary men—perhaps the majority—try polygamy in early life—and give it up, as more bother than it is worth. A few extraordinary men continue to be polygamous throughout their life.

It can safely be said that this monogamic relationship has in the long course of ages proved usually the most comfortable and happy for the overwhelming majority of men and women, and inasmuch as it now provides

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the best conditions for the child, it is bound to survive. Plurality of wives and plurality of husbands break down in operation, and partly for that reason have been legislated against under modern civilization. Nevertheless, we should remember that polygamy has been almost universally followed by the leading men of every tribe and nation of mankind. It is the tribes standing almost at the bottom of the scale, say Darwin and other writers, who are strictly monogamous. This is the case with the Veddahs of Ceylon. They have a saying, according to Sir John Lubbock, "that death alone can separate husband and wife." An intelligent Kandyan chief, of course a polygamist, "was perfectly scandalized at the utter barbarism of living with only one wife, and never parting until separated by death." "It was," he said, "just like the Wanderoo monkeys."

These polygamous arrangements, however, were largely the result, in all probability, of the use of infanticide and abortion as the means of controlling population, with a high

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death-rate in addition. In modern times, with the substitution of a low death-rate, with the average length of life of men and women very greatly extended, with infanticide almost abolished and abortion largely decreased, monogamic marriage has been entirely changed both for the individual and for society. Society does not now rely upon short-lived fathers and mothers producing a large number of children few of whom survive to maturity. Society relies now upon long-lived fathers and mothers producing a small number of children nearly all of whom survive. Poor and ignorant mothers still endure a large number of pregnancies: well-to-do and educated mothers have only a small number of pregnancies. As the knowledge of contraception spreads among all classes of the community, mothers in general will be relieved of a large amount of useless and unproductive physiological effort. Mothercraft will come to mean the efficient, intelligent, honourable, dignified, and happy prosecution of maternity as a labour of love.

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To suggest that this development can take place in the absence of the ordered control of fertility is fantastic. To suggest that anything essential to this development is a "wicked device" is immoral. There is exactly the same ethical difference between motherhood by choice and motherhood by chance as there is between marriage by mutual consent and marriage by capture.

It is a fundamental fact that women are the mothers of the race. No section of society, not even society in general, has ever succeeded in permanently robbing woman of this natural status and endowment. From the time of conception, Nature has placed the baby in the charge of woman; therefore Society had much better follow this lead and give woman charge of conception. No laws have ever been devised which can prevent women terminating pregnancies they are determined not to complete or aborting the offspring of men whose children they are determined not to bear. The evolutionary purpose of mother-love is clearly to ensure

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that every baby shall be wanted by its mother. Therefore diseased and loveless and undesired impregnations are immoral, and must be prevented in the name of *marital chastity*.

As to marriage without maternity, certainly it lies within the sphere of woman's individual rights, as of man's, to reject marriage or to accept marriage. So also a woman has a perfect right to accept marriage and reject maternity: though honour demands her husband should be informed of this before marriage. The reasons for rejecting maternity may well be deeply altruistic or deeply egoistic. But assuredly it is within a woman's individual rights as a citizen to dispense with love and marriage, or with maternity, at her own discretion. In no other way can women be free and maternity voluntary. If a woman likes to transform herself into a member of the "third sex," the sex of the worker bee, of the neuter ant, and finds therein her greatest and highest pleasure, that is entirely within her rights as an individual. There are

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women in whom sexual feeling is totally atrophied: whether this is due to morbidity or infantilism or some other cause does not matter: they should be free to live their own lives in their own way. There are other women who desire love-relationship but do not desire maternity: they also must be permitted, in any society calling itself free, to express themselves in accordance with their natural impulses. There is not the slightest social danger in this, because the overwhelming majority of women will always accept maternity—it is only the exceptional women who voluntarily reject maternity.

In any evolved society, romance and reproduction may be separated or united at will. There are times when all women and all men long for infertile love-relationship; but there are no times when women desire loveless fertility. Marriages which do not make provision for these ineradicable desires never have been and never will be soul-satisfying. Nations which deny such freedoms to women cannot possibly call themselves “emanci-

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pated." When such nations contain millions of "surplus women" and insist upon monogamic marriage, at the same time preaching maternity as the duty of all women, it is difficult to find any solid ethical standing-ground.

THE SPREAD OF KNOWLEDGE



CHAPTER XI

THE SPREAD OF KNOWLEDGE

IN struggling to come to right and wise decisions on any controversial matter, the general public gains more by open and fearless discussion of the subject concerned than by any other method. Unfortunately most of the discussions on the subject of birth control are conducted in meetings which are either predominantly anti-birth-control or pro-birth-control. It is only very occasionally that an independent Society debates this subject in a free and independent way. One debate which took place in London in July, 1921, may, however, be taken as typical of the advantage that would accrue if our learned societies which are devoted to the promotion and sifting of knowledge would devote some of their time and attention to

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this most important problem. This debate took place at the annual general meeting of the Medico-Legal Society, held at 11, Chandos Street, London, W. 1, on July 7th, 1921.

Dr. Louise McIlroy read a paper on "Birth Control." It was frankly hostile to contraception, but since then Dr. McIlroy has moved forward sufficiently to write the Preface for a birth control book written by a medical colleague. It was the debate which followed which was of permanent interest and importance, and I therefore make a brief digest of these proceedings :—

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DR. MCILROY said that the question of birth control occupied the minds of large numbers in the legal and medical professions and in the Church. The economic and social factors were really the concern of the State rather than of the doctor, but she would like to refer briefly to the Imperial aspect of the matter. A nation was maintained in

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power according to the endurance, strength and fertility of its members : if the members died faster than others were born, the species must disappear. Given high destructive forces, there must be high fertility to secure survival. Voluntary control was of two kinds (1) criminal abortion and (2) contraceptive methods. Criminal abortion was increasing in Great Britain and in America : it was one of the penalties paid for an advancing civilization. It could not be too strongly condemned. . . . The main argument induced in favour was that contraceptive methods reduced disease and immorality and criminal abortion. Malthus had directed attention to the dangers of over-population and recommended late marriage and continence ; the Neo-Malthusians recommended early marriage and birth control. No country had gone so far as Holland, where birth control was State-aided. . . . Surgical sterilization for other than health reasons was absolutely condemned. The Church of Rome utterly forbade artificial birth control ; it sanctioned only physiological

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controls ; the Church of England warned its adherents against contraceptive methods and asked for the prohibition of the open display and sale of contraceptives. The medical profession should take up the question, and if contraceptives were wrong they should be condemned. In her opinion Greece and Rome owed their downfall to the use of contraceptives, and that was where the British Empire was heading if it adopted the same methods. Physiological checks were in a different category. . . . Medically and generally the lecturer condemned all artificial methods of birth control, and considered that the consequences of sexual union should be left to the Great Creator alone.

DR. ARMAND ROUTH considered that many more conceptions were needed to make up for the losses of the war ; marriages had been more numerous, but, unfortunately, marriage had not always meant maternity. Gonorrhœa was the most prolific cause of sterility. Voluntary restriction of conception resulted in

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smaller families, particularly in the upper classes, and this was directly due to the spread of knowledge of the use of contraceptives. In his opinion all such artificial methods were harmful and morally indefensible. Syphilis was the one great cause of still-births and miscarriages, and so forth. Children born of syphilitic parents might be born apparently healthy and develop syphilis a few weeks after birth. But the recent discoveries in regard to Nature's protection of the offspring from infection by a syphilitic mother during gestation, gave hope to the medical profession.

EARL RUSSELL said the old German idea of producing plenty of cannon-fodder did not appeal to him. It was the economic position that weighed on parents ; they could not bring up many children without State-aid, and he could not see what right the medical profession or anybody else had to impose on parents an indefinite number of children, unless the suggestion was coupled with State-aid to families. If it were true that all

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contraceptives were harmful, then it was proper for the medical profession to make that known.

A member of the audience welcomed the statements of the lecturer and Dr. Routh as showing that expert medical opinion endorsed the teaching of the Catholic Church—that these things were utterly wrong, and did not lead to human health or happiness.

DR. CONNOR endorsed the remarks of the previous speaker, and agreed with Dr. Routh as to the pathological consequences of contraceptive methods.

DR. HADEN GUEST said he thought the question of birth control was one of those in which there was no perfect solution: the sexual problem remained, no matter what adaptations they made. Of course, the proper method was the control of the sexual impulse, but what was the method of control suggested? The English way was repression: in Spain, where life seemed to be happier, the method was sex-expression—not sex-repression.

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There, people were taught most elaborately how to make love, and they did not get into that bottled-up condition that was so extraordinary and so repulsive to anybody who had been in touch with more civilized ways. In Berlin, sexual desire was treated as a spinal impulse, and the actions on the stage portraying it were morally repulsive: in France it was quite different. Possibly, the best way was to take this impulse and train it and refine it. At any rate, nothing could be done with the sex-impulse by hammering it on the head. He had no doubt that some methods of contraception were harmful, but there were other methods which produced no harmful effects whatever.

MR. BERNARD SHAW said he himself was in favour of birth control, *prima facie*, because he was in favour of all control for its own sake. He did not like to see any human being the slave of nature. Every human activity ought to be under control. It was a step forward when something which had previously

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been uncontrollable was brought under control. . . . It was all very well to say that a couple should not use contraceptives lest they should suffer nervously ; but poor people preferred the chance of nervous disturbance to the certainty of intensified poverty. . . . He advised Dr. McIlroy and the profession generally not to put forward claims to interference with people's affairs which no Roman Catholic confessor would venture to claim. It was the mark of a thoroughly unscientific doctor to accept and even claim all sorts of responsibilities he was not qualified to discharge. The really scientific doctor knew that he could not become the judgment and conscience of the human race.

SIR RICHARD ATKIN, LORD JUSTICE OF APPEAL (*President*) said he had no special experience at all in regard to birth control methods, but he realized it was a matter of the very gravest importance in social and family life. Married people, of course, had a duty to the State, and the stability of the State

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depended on the way in which children were born and bred ; for he saw no other practical way of bringing up children except in a properly ordered and governed home. He thought it was not so much the total avoidance of contraceptives as their proper use. The total prohibition was impossible. The knowledge was now in the world, and it was no use trying to get rid of it. The right course was for the medical profession and for the religious denominations to circulate knowledge which would enable contraceptives to be properly used and not improperly abused. He thought it might even be the duty of the Churches to make a pronouncement as to this, and certainly it was the duty of the medical profession to make known the least harmful contraceptives. The more statistics and knowledge they all had in this way, the better for the community.

(END OF DIGEST)

Since 1921, the subject of Birth Control has been independently debated in England, mainly on the wise and responsible lines indi-

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cated by the Lord Justice of Appeal in the foregoing quotation. The suggestion that it is the duty of the Churches to make a pronouncement has been taken up repeatedly at religious conferences; medical journals have devoted many pages to the discussion of the subject; Birth Control Conferences have been and are being organized in England and America; and Birth Control Clinics have been established in both countries, under proper medical control.

But the one reform which is fundamentally necessary has not yet taken place, namely, the inclusion of the subject in the ordinary medical course of education. What doctors need is authoritative professional instruction and the correlation of knowledge. What the public need is individual instruction and professional service from informed and trained medical practitioners. Medical practitioners who are morally hostile to this branch of preventive medicine are not bound to engage in it. Nor are members of the public obliged to apply contraception in their own family life

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if they do not wish to do so. Birth control is not compulsory for anybody. But everybody should not be deprived of this useful and interesting knowledge because somebody else disapproves of its application to themselves; and nobody should be allowed to impose ignorance on other people.

Undoubtedly at the present time a great deal of misleading information is being disseminated — particularly in England, — by quacks and others. But the only way to stop quackery and to prevent the public being misled, is to establish properly qualified medical service, and to give the public really reliable information.

It is only to be expected that, particularly at present, different schools of medicine will make different presentations of knowledge. But if we were to wait for all doctors to agree on any subject, we should have no medical teaching on any subject at all. What is wanted is the correlation of the knowledge we already have, and the organization of further researches and investigations. One notable

effort in this direction was the publication in July, 1923, of a special number on contraception by *The Practitioner*. A careful reading of this clearly shows that there is something radically wrong with the present education of medical practitioners in regard to this subject. The methods which seemed to be most popular with the majority of the medical contributors were the most unpleasant and the ones which interfered very greatly with the consummation of marital happiness. In the main, the opinions were not based on professional experience and scientific evidence, but were rather the non-medical beliefs of the general public. Only one doctor (Mr. Norman Haire) made a genuinely sustained effort to collate practical experience and draw sound theoretical conclusions therefrom. *Contraceptive Technique: A Consideration of 1400 Cases*, by Mr. Norman Haire can fairly be said to be the only example of legal proof.

During 1924, in the United States and elsewhere different medical enquiries have been prosecuted, and it may now safely be antici-

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pated that very soon Birth Control will be lifted from the realm of hectic propaganda and sordid quackery to the place where it rightly belongs as one of the most important branches of Preventive Medicine.



DEBATE ON BIRTH
CONTROL

CHAPTER XII

DEBATE ON BIRTH CONTROL

IN the *Socialist Review* for October, 1924, there is an article entitled: "ASPECTS OF BIRTH CONTROL," by Dr. Ethel Bentham. This article is typical of many others, and constitutes in some ways the case which advocates of birth control have to meet. Therefore I have gone very carefully through the article as a whole, and picked out to the very best of my ability what seemed to be its main arguments. After replying to these myself, I asked another medical woman, Dr. Barbara Crawford, to add her medical comments to each argument and reply. Following the Parliamentary rules of debate, the writer of the original article was offered the opportunity of rejoinder—which offer was refused. The debate is therefore limited to

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statement, reply, and comment—vigorous but honourable and impartial.

It is claimed that this article is an effort to summarize the arguments for and against, but there is clear evidence throughout of the writer's personal bias against birth control, if not against all manifestations of sex. If we are going to start out with the assumption that sex-life in itself is horrid, that all meditation upon it is in bad taste, that open discussion of the subject is destructive to individual character and dangerous to the community, that birth control is "unnatural," and sexual intercourse itself mainly a painful necessity for the continuance of the race, then—if these are the expressed or tacit assumptions—it is quite understandable that such articles should be published. Similarly, if it be assumed that the interests of the community demand that the so-called proletariat—that is, the prolifically fertile masses—should always exercise unrestrained fecundity, quantity being assumed to be more important than quality; that the highest type of

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woman — for the working-classes — is the biggest breeder ; and that therefore poor women should not be provided with Birth Control Clinics but rather with pulpits from which they should be incited to “increase and multiply,”—then all opposition to Birth Control must be accepted as gospel. Further, if it be assumed that wage-earners’ wives, keeping house on a fixed wage or dole, are really domestic geniuses, able by some miracle to divide a dinner into ten portions of the same size as only five portions, and to put five little frocks on ten little children at the same moment,—then, of course, as a matter of mathematics and economics, these propositions are of world-wide importance.

But, as a result of my experience as a professional reporter and journalist in various countries for over twenty years, as a result of my experience as a married woman, and because of my humanitarian and democratic sympathies, I am very sure that all these assumptions are false and mischievous. Therefore, I controvert in detail this most mis-

leading article in so far as its principal arguments are concerned.

I.—HARMFUL EFFECTS OF CONTRACEPTIVES

(a) *Socialist Review* :

“ The writer has no convictions either way, in spite of twenty years’ study : on one point only—a medical one, chiefly has she reached anything like certainty. It is that women do pay a heavy price, in health and well-being, for the artificial limitation of families.”

(b) *Reply* :

Married women cannot afford twenty years’ indecision. Nearly all educated married women have decided in favour of family limitation : practically all doctors’ wives have done so. Such women do not in all cases, if in any, “ pay a heavy price in health and well-being.” Even if they did, they would prefer that to paying a still heavier price by over-frequent pregnancies. Nearly all uneducated women do not apply contraceptive measures : hence have over-frequent pregnancies. Don’t such women pay a “ heavy price in health and well-being ” ? And does not the fact that so many doctors deny that there are any

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harmful effects from the use of suitable contraceptives in a proper way indicate that the writer of the article has reached certainty upon evidence which has failed to convince other doctors ?

(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :*

My experience is the exact opposite. I have never met a case of ill-health caused by the intelligent use of contraceptives. Women do not pay a heavy price for the artificial limitation of families, but they do pay an extremely heavy one for unlimited families.

(2) HIGHER AGE OF PARENTS : NATIONAL DETERIORATION : DECLINING POPULATION.

(a) *Socialist Review :*

“ Two probable results will be a higher average age of parents when their first child is born, and a proportionately larger increase in the less well situated part of the population. The lessened birth-rate will, unless immigration prevents it, in time mean a declining population.”

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(b) *Reply* :

Sexual love awakens before parental maturity is reached in human beings. Therefore the proper postponement of parenthood is a desirable thing—an advantage to society in general. If well-to-do and highly intelligent women suitably control their families and poor and unintelligent women do not, that is a reason for giving knowledge to the poor women—not a reason for imposing ignorance on the well-to-do. Dr. Bentham's last statement is loose and inaccurate. Whilst the death-rate decreases, and the average length of life of each individual is extended (it has been extended by more than ten years), a compensatory lowering of the birth-rate will *not* bring about a decline of the population, even in the absence of immigration. A high infantile mortality, a high death-rate, and a large number of abortions are the main factors bringing about a decline in population.

NOTE :—The London County Council's report for the year 1923 shows that Londoners are living *twenty years longer* than they did eighty years ago. In the period 1841–1850, the expectation of life was as follows :

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Men : 34.6 years ; women : 38.3 years.
In 1920–1933, the expectation of life has been raised thus :

Men : 53.8 years ; women : 59.1 years.
Thus in 1920, with a much smaller number of births, the Londoners would be obeying more effectively the advice to “increase and multiply” than they would be in 1840 with a far higher birth-rate. Is it not more moral to produce fewer people and make them live longer than to produce many people and kill them off sooner ?

(c) Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :

A somewhat higher age of parents at the birth of the first child is no disadvantage ; twenty-five years is early enough for motherhood, before that age a woman is hardly fully physically mature herself.

There is no fear of a declining population in Britain—we are increasing at the rate of half a million annually though we have not work or houses for those already here.

(3) LOW BIRTH-RATE THE CAUSE OF WAR

(a) *Socialist Review* :

“ That the main cause of the Great War was the nervousness of a decadent nation with a falling population face to face with a vigorous and increasing one ; that the need for production in a falling population will always encourage immigration of aliens, not only of comparatively like races as Scandinavians, Swiss or Germans, here and in France before the War, but quite certainly of coloured races with different standards of life and all the problems that must then arise. That, therefore, we should devote ourselves to securing reorganization and redistribution, education and a higher standard of life nationally and internationally.”

(b) *Reply* :

It is very difficult to reply to such loose and muddle-headed argument. Surely a more sensible suggestion is that the cause of the War was the fact that a certain nation was breeding at such a rate that it felt bound to go out and rob and murder in order to provide for its numbers ? To accuse France of being “ decadent ” when she has restored

her devastated areas, reorganized her trade, and is spreading herself over the earth in an effort to make good her losses which is quite as marvellous as her contribution to the War, when we British have not restored our devastated areas (unemployed workers), have not reorganized our trade, and won't spread our population even throughout our own Empire, is a most amazing example of self-complacent insularity. To ask one nation to outbreed another in producing cannon-fodder is quite impracticable. Throughout all history, an over-high birth-rate has been a well known excuse and reason for provoking war ; and war is inevitable under the present social, economic and moral conditions of mankind. It might be noted, however, that it was the "vigorous and increasing" Germany that lost the Great War, and the "nervous and decadent" France that won the War. The statement that "a falling population will always encourage the immigration of aliens" is flatly contradicted by the well known fact that it is the increasing populations (such as the United States of America) which are attracting aliens. Great Britain is one of the increasing populations. In the Pacific

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the worst problem is the over-breeding of the Japanese. Is it seriously suggested that white races should endeavour to outbreed the coloured races, rather than teach the coloured races to apply reasonable limitation to their own production? The last sentence quoted above is just a string of blessed words—like “Mesopotamia.” It aims at nothing in particular—and hits it.

(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :*

This is no medical point, but the prejudiced statement of a misinformed mind. The main cause of the War was the desire for expansion of a huge, greedy, and recklessly-breeding nation.

(4) EUGENICS

(a) *Socialist Review :*

“Another set of people support birth control on the ground that it would produce a fitter race.”

(b) *Reply :*

Birth control in the sense of family limitation cannot possibly make any appreciable difference to the “race.” If contraception is

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practised by high-class mothers and neglected by low-class mothers, that will accelerate national deterioration—the swarming unfit may outnumber the controlled fit, and do this more quickly than would otherwise happen. Birth control and sexual selection are both needed to “improve the race,” as well as the sterilization of the truly unfit and the improvement of the environment of the masses.

(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :*

Properly used, birth control would certainly better the race. All having serious transmissible defect should refrain from parenthood. Those too defective to exercise such control should be prevented from propagating. Public opinion is already growing in this direction.

(5) LESSENING OF ABORTION, PROSTITUTION
AND VENEREAL DISEASE

(a) *Socialist Review :*

“Great damage is often done by provoked abortions (which is the method of limitation most commonly practised by the poor)”

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. . . . "They believe that prostitution will be lessened and venereal disease less prevalent by reason of the earlier marriages which will take place when " (there is) " full knowledge of preventive measures. . . . A much larger indulgence in sexual matters, both in and out of marriage, is almost certain when the restraint of possible consequences is removed."

(b) *Reply* :

Necessarily there will be fewer abortions if all adult women have an intelligent understanding of contraception. Even if contraception be an evil, abortion is a greater evil : of two evils choose the less. Early marriage and birth control must also necessarily decrease prostitution, and prostitution is admittedly the worst of all social evils. The removal of the fear of disease and the fear of pregnancy will also undoubtedly lead to an increase in the number of love-relationships inside and outside marriage, in so far as their restraint was based on Fear. But Fear is *not* Virtue ; and " prostitution " is much more deleterious than " trial marriages " based on genuine love and affection.

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(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :*

Self-induced abortions will practically cease when women understand how to guard against unwanted pregnancy.

The conclusion is pessimistic and wrong—that class which now knows and uses preventive methods is the most self-controlled and abstemious of the nation—i.e., the professional class.

(6) SEXUAL EXCESS

(a) *Socialist Review :*

“ Much of the ill-health and exhaustion of women is due to this (sexual) excess. . . . Men also suffer from this cause. . . . Youthful marriages are often ill-assorted, and in any case tend to age the partners unduly early . . . those who have indulged too early do not make the best parents.”

(b) *Reply :*

Sexual excess is bad ; so is sexual starvation ; and incomplete satisfaction causes ill-health and exhaustion to both sexes. That is a reason for making sexual relationship more loving, more efficient, and more well-

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disciplined: not a reason for decrying or minimizing it. Men and women who marry late often prove ill-assorted, being too "set" in habit and less adaptable: such generalised comment has little or no value. What evidence is there that reasonably early marriages "age the partners unduly early"? Too late sexual intercourse is probably just as damaging as too early intercourse—especially for women. The whole statement is of the loose and unsupported kind that is always brought into this discussion. Produce the evidence.

(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford:*

Much ill-health and exhaustion is due to sexual excess, and more, in the case of women, to the nerve-racking anxiety due to fear of pregnancy. Without birth control knowledge every occasion of intercourse is one of dread and terror to many overburdened women, already the mothers of more children than they desire. Give them full knowledge and the dread disappears, and with it much exhaustion and reluctance. It is the dreaded result of intercourse, not intercourse itself, that is harmful in most cases.

(7) STERILITY

(a) *Socialist Review* :

“ It has been remarked by some doctors that in cases where prevention has been tried for any length of time, sterility appears to result. Clearly, reliable evidence on this point would be extremely difficult to obtain, but there is a strong impression to this effect on many minds.”

(b) *Reply* :

What is “ any length of time ” ? “ Impressions ” are not evidence, and evidence is easily available. Mothers have been practising contraceptive methods for many years, sometimes in order to “ space out ” their children suitably. Obviously not sterility, but control of fertility, has been the result in these cases. The complaint educated women have regarding contraceptives is—*not* that they cause sterility, but that they are not sufficiently reliable in controlling fertility. In what way is it suggested scientifically that contraceptives could destroy a woman’s fertility ? Don’t some contraceptives prevent this destruction by preventing gonorrhoea ?

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In any case, the inevitable alternative to the proper use of contraceptives is a high abortion rate. May not these abortions be a far greater cause of "sterility" than are contraceptives?

(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :*

Sterility does not result from modern clean methods of birth control. There is much evidence to prove this. I personally know numerous cases where prevention has been used for long periods and babies have followed later when they have been wanted.

(8) CANCER

(a) *Socialist Review :*

"It is also suggested that the necessary frequent manipulation may set up an irritable condition of the organs and be conducive to malignant disease (cancer). This is a possibility, but again there is at present no exact evidence on the point."

(b) *Reply :*

If there is "no exact evidence on the point,"

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why make a panicky suggestion, sure to frighten and distress many women? There is a great deal of evidence to suggest that severe and prolonged constipation is much more likely than any other condition to be conducive to cancer. The reproductive organs are a part of the excretory system; when so important a part of that system as the large bowel is overloaded with heavy masses of putrefying waste-matter pressing on the uterus, etc., damage is inevitable. Many women come to the Birth Control Clinics so badly constipated that it is impossible to fit a pessary for them till the lower bowel has been emptied; and the Medical Officers warn them that if they are constipated and have sexual intercourse, the matter in the bowel will push the pessary out of place, in all probability, so that it will be no longer a protection. The connection between constipation and cancer can be said to be almost completely proved; but the connection between contraceptives and cancer has no evidential foundation at all. Constipation, uncleanliness, and sometimes unsuitable contraceptives are the real evils to attack.

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(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :*

This is an unfounded suggestion and should not have been made without exact evidence. Modern methods of birth control hardly entail more manipulation than does strict cleanliness of the parts.

(g) STERILIZATION OF THE UNFIT

(a) *Socialist Review :*

“Nor many think, would there be much diminution in the number of births of tubercular, syphilitic or deficient children. Conscientious persons who are aware of these taints do not now have many children. Reckless ones would be reckless still. So though this knowledge might be in a proportion of cases a defence to a wife who knew, the net result would be small. . . . Whether the political and industrial consequences of a sparser population would enable them to be better brought up is, as we have said, an entirely different aspect of the question, on which there is also great divergence of authorities.”

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(b) Reply :

The prevention of syphilis and the prevention of tuberculosis and (failing that) the sterilization of such unfit parents are also necessary measures. Because irresponsible unfit parents ought to be sterilized is no reason why responsible but unfit ones should be discouraged from practising contraception or have the value of their social-welfare efforts decried. The value of an improved environment, due to lessening of overcrowding, is admitted in the case of all plants and of all animals—excepting Man !

(c) Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :

When public opinion is sufficiently educated, reckless, tubercular, syphilitic and deficient persons will be prevented from passing on their taint : otherwise, with the fostering of the unfit practised at present civilization will perish.

(10) FAMILY LIFE

(a) Socialist Review :

“ Authorities differ, too, as to the effects upon the prevalence of venereal disease.

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Many hold that the general loosening of restraint would counterbalance any gain that might ensue from possible earlier marriage, while earlier marriage would increase divorce and render family life less, rather than more, stable."

(b) *Reply :*

The stability of family life is not based upon the ruin of women and children but upon the promotion of virtue. Marital fidelity is based on love and loyalty—not on the fear of syphilis. To refuse knowledge of the medical prevention of disease and the medical prevention of undesirable conceptions, on the ground that such knowledge *might* be abused, is doing evil that good may result. It is a monstrous doctrine and could be used, e.g., to justify the wanton and fanatical destruction of such valuable aids to medicine as Morphine. Is it a fact that early marriage increases divorce? Did not our grandmothers marry early and have few divorces, whereas we marry late and have many divorces? Are there any statistics to support these seemingly wild statements?

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(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :*

That there would be any "general loosening of restraint" is theory only. I have already pointed out that birth control knowledge has not increased vice, for instance among doctors and their families.

(II) OPINIONS OF MEDICAL PROFESSION

(a) *Socialist Review :*

"While the medical profession is deeply divided on the question and at least half of them believe the practice to be harmful and dangerous, no municipality is in a position to make it a test question in the appointment of medical officers of health and medical officers of maternity clinics."

(b) *Reply :*

Here again is a wild statement. What are the figures? Are there any figures in support of these statements? We know that it is *not* a fact that at least one half the doctors believe contraception to be "harmful and dangerous"; and the doctors have no right whatever to claim the responsibility of acting as "judgment and conscience for the human

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race." If adult women seek information on contraception from qualified medical practitioners, it is the duty of the doctors to give the women the information, and the duty of the women to apply it properly for the benefit of themselves and of society. A doctor who adopts any other professional attitude is obviously unsuitable as a medical officer of a welfare clinic—just as unsuitable as an anti-vaccinationist would be in the position of a medical officer of health. Don't nearly all doctors apply this alleged "harmful and dangerous" practice in their own married lives? A statistical return as to the families of medical practitioners at the present time would be interesting.

(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :*

It is not true that at least half of the medical profession oppose birth control. About ten years ago Dr. Millard, M.O.H. of Leicester, took a questionnaire among a group of doctors, and the replies showed that even then about two-thirds were in favour of birth control. Since then, medical opinion has grown much more favourable, as knowledge has increased.

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NOTE:—In July, 1923, an International Birth Control Conference was held in London under the auspices of The New Generation League, and at the Medical Session about two hundred properly qualified medical practitioners were present, and this medical session of doctors passed by an almost unanimous vote the following resolution:

“That there is no evidence that the best contraceptive methods are injurious to health or conducive to sterility.”

(12) WHITE SLAVERY IN MARRIAGE

(a) *Socialist Review* :

“These (contraceptive) methods leave the whole responsibility and burden upon the wife and may and do expose her to a veritable white slavery. This is not always appreciated by the happily married.”

(b) *Reply* :

As the woman is the one to be fertilized, obviously giving her control of her own fertility is giving her freedom, not slavery: it is giving her power—not taking it away from her. If she is unhappily married, ignorance of contraception makes her posi-

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tion worse—not better. The happily married certainly would *not* be able to “appreciate” how the unhappily married are to be benefited by having unwanted children repeatedly imposed upon them through their own ignorance of contraception. It is knowledge, not ignorance, that makes people free.

(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :*

If a wife is unhappily married there is no greater safeguard and protection for her than to know how to guard her own body from unwanted fertilization.

(13) BIRTH CONTROL CLINICS :

(a) *Socialist Review :*

“Where the teaching is conducted under the control of a reputable committee who are willing to publish their names and methods and derive no private benefit therefrom, it would seem to be the best hope of elucidating one important aspect of the matter, namely, the effects of systematic contraception on individual health of women and of their children.”

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(b) *Reply :*

Some medical evidence is already available in England and America ; and a great deal of medical evidence is available from Holland. Certainly it would be an advantage for the medical schools and colleges to collate this, record it impartially, and draw scientific conclusions from it. Till that is done, the birth control question is very largely a mixture of propoganda and quackery. That is the fault of the doctors for not studying the question quietly and scientifically. The public is most anxious to have accurate and impartial advice from trustworthy authorities.

(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :*

There is already much evidence obtainable from individual doctors who have given careful attention to the subject for years. All new methods prove their worth or otherwise by individual trial.

(14) SELF-RESTRAINT THE FUTURE CONTROL :

(a) *Socialist Review :*

“ If one may venture a prophecy, it will

continue to be practised until either the prospect of a failure of the stock brings about a reaction against it, as has now begun in France, or until the nation has so increased in wisdom and knowledge that married life can be lived in such freedom from material anxiety and such self-restraint and comradeship as shall make it unnecessary to depart from natural laws."

(b) *Reply :*

As already pointed out in previous pages, the high death-rate, high infantile mortality, high maternal mortality, and large number of abortions are the main factors in bringing about a decline of population. There are more babies born in France than in England but fewer survive. The economic improvement of those who produce the new citizens—the mothers of the nation—is, of course, highly desirable ; but economic improvement with all the development it entails does not raise the birth-rate : it lowers the death-rate and lengthens the span of life. Self-restraint is of no value whatever in the practical control of fertility : if by self-restraint is meant a lesser number of sexual

connections in marriage : and such suggestions merely indicate a morbid bias against the sex relationships of men and women. In any case, one connection per annum might result in the production of an annual infant. Sexual abstinence is no more in accordance with "natural laws" than is fasting from food. In any case, all civilization is artificial. The use of a tooth-brush, a pocket handkerchief, a knife and fork ; the wearing of spectacles and false teeth ; the lighting of streets and houses at night ; travelling by railway, steamer, or aeroplane ; the use of X-rays, anesthetics, disinfectants, contraceptives, etc. —all these things are "artificial." Why pick on the contraceptives instead of any one of the other "artificial" things that go to make up the difference between "Nature" and "Civilization?" What are "natural laws"? Is it "natural" to reduce and extirpate disease and lengthen life, and thereby increase population? No, that is "artificial." But if we have so increased the population artificially, is not artificial limitation by birth control a logical corollary to establish a suitable balance?

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(c) *Medical Comment by Dr. Barbara Crawford :*

Birth control will continue until no babe is born without its mother's love and wish, until children are fewer than at present and much more precious, until the continuation of the race is regarded as a high and sacred privilege only to be exercised by those physically and mentally fit for the task. It will no longer be the chance and unwanted result of lust and licence, chiefly carried on by the least worthy section of the community, as so often at present.

It will *never* be possible for all to increase without restraint in "freedom from material anxiety." The power of reproduction enormously exceeds the possibility of survival in Man, as in all other forms of life, and where the numbers of births are unchecked the death-rate will increase. Once the human race grasps the fact that it can control its fertility and regulate its rate of increase it will have the greatest means of security and happiness in its hands.

CONCLUSION

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CONCLUSION

A GAIN let it be emphasized that race improvement is positive—not negative. The prevention of the birth of the unfit does not “improve” the race: it merely prevents deteriorating. Similarly changes in environment may improve or deteriorate the individuals of that generation, but such changes are not inheritable. There is only one way in which the race can be improved, namely by CONSTRUCTIVE CHASTITY. Woman has innately the wisdom and power to select her proper mate and the best father for her child: Man has the wisdom and power to reciprocate when he is so chosen. At present women are not the mothers of the race: they are each individually the private property of some individual man. Once they

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are released from this bondage—made socially and economically free—their natural chastity will make them faithful to the men they love: Virtue will be enthroned and the race will evolve.

To argue that to grant Woman ethical and economical freedom, so that she may choose the father of her children in accordance with her natural instinct—that is, in accordance with her innate and fastidiously selective love—would encourage promiscuous intercourse and immorality, is false and fantastic. The evolved and enlightened woman is NOT promiscuous and immoral: she is the most highly selective creature and the purest in the whole realm of Nature. Given freedom and knowledge, she will not take ANY man as the father of her children: she will select the one man her passionate love teaches her to be the right man, and she will instinctively be faithful to him.

Under natural conditions, it is characteristic of Women to be faithful to the fathers of their children—their natural chastity ensures this ;

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and it is characteristic of men to be faithful to the women who love them and whose love they reciprocate. Among primitive races, women exercise this choice and freedom in a primitive way. Children they do not wish to rear they destroy by infanticide ; children they do not wish to bear they " prevent " by abortion. Nothing will ever make women content to bear or rear children by men whom they do not wish to be fathers to their children. Efforts to impose such obligations on women have always failed : women invariably take the law into their own hands. They do this instinctively—not to save themselves, but to save the race. Under civilization women have advanced sufficiently to abhor infanticide. They still practise abortion very largely, but regard it as highly undesirable, if not immoral—admissible only to save worse ill. The advancement of the civilized woman is shown by her preference for contraceptive measures—measures which have been known in essence and practised imperfectly for many thousands of years, but which even now are

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only partially developed by medical science. The civilized woman and the primitive woman meet on level terms in their unchanging unswerving desire and endeavour—first, to prevent the temple of their bodies being profaned by men whom they do not love and upon whom they do not wish to confer fatherhood ; and, second, to give themselves freely and voluntarily to the men they love, and to secure fertilization by the finest possible fathers for the children they wish to conceive in love, and bear and rear for the welfare of society and the evolution of the race.

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APPENDIX I

FRENCH POPULATION STATISTICS

REFERENCE has been made in the previous pages to the fact that it is the failure of death-control rather than the success of birth-control which, in some cases, makes a population decline or remain stationary. This is clearly shown in the following extracts from the London *Times* in regard to the population of France. The first extract is taken from the *Times* of June 30, 1924.

“ POPULATION OF FRANCE

“ HIGH DEATH RATE THE DANGER

“ But while public attention is mainly drawn to the problem of increasing the birth-rate by giving financial encouragement to ‘ large ’ families, an examination of the latest figures of population shows that it is not the birth rate but the death rate which is

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really responsible. And this is a serious matter, for it is obviously much easier to produce children than to keep people alive.

“ People in England are inclined to look on our present vital statistics with a good deal of complacency, and to regard the French as practising birth control, for various special reasons, to an extent very prejudicial to the future of the race. But, while the populations of the two countries are nearly equal—the population of France in 1923 was 39,209,518 and of England and Wales 38,403,000—there were in 1923 actually more births in France than in England and Wales. In spite of this the population of England and Wales was increased by the excess of births over deaths more than three times as much as was that of France, as the following table shows :—

	Births	Deaths	Deaths of Infants under one year	Natural increase of population by births over deaths
France ...	761,861	666,990	73,283	94,871
England & Wales	758,386	444,869	52,362	313,517.”

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Some months later the following paragraph appeared in the *London Times* (October 16, 1924) :—

“ THE FRENCH BIRTH-RATE

“ (FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

“ PARIS, OCTOBER 15.

“ A striking decline in the rate of increase of the French population is shown by the statistics of the birth and death rate for the first six months of this year. In the first six months of 1923, there were 595,621 births and 514,442 deaths, representing an increase in the population of 81,179, whereas in the corresponding period of the present year there were 575,636 births and 544,287 deaths, being an increase in the population of only 31,349.

It might appropriately have been headed “ INCREASING FRENCH DEATH-RATE.” It is true that the births declined by nearly 20,000 : but the more important fact is that the DEATHS INCREASED BY NEARLY 30,000.

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The reactionaries in France and elsewhere are exploiting this situation by alleging that France is a dying nation, because of family limitation. The French people are dying—more of them are dying and they are dying younger. The remedy is for them to stop dying and go on living: in that way France can justify or counteract her family limitation.

APPENDIX II

THE CHURCH AND MARRIED LOVE (LORD DAWSON)

THE statement has been made that the Protestant Church is moving forward towards the acceptance of birth-control as morally right and materially beneficial. An example of the efforts which certain public-spirited Anglicans are now prepared to make to meet the popular demand for contraceptive knowledge is Lord Dawson's recent evidence before the Birth-Rate Commission. This evidence was published in full by the *Daily Express* of London, November 8, 1924, as follows:—

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“ THE CHURCH AND MARRIED LOVE

“ DRAMATIC CHALLENGE BY LORD DAWSON

“ FORCED HYPOCRISY

“ EVIDENCE BEFORE BIRTH-RATE COMMISSION

“ Lord Dawson of Penn, the King’s physician, has once more startled the medical and ecclesiastical world.

“ His championing of birth control in a speech at the Church Congress of 1921 caused a sensation which lasted for many months.

“ Now—in his evidence yesterday before the Birth Rate Commission of the National Council of Public Morals—he goes still further.

“ He challenges the Church on its whole attitude towards sex love. He declares that sex love between married persons, apart from parenthood, should be blessed, not cursed. He deplores the hypocrisy of the clergy towards the whole subject.

“ Lord Dawson is not only a distinguished medical authority, but his position as a legislator in the Upper House gives emphasis and authority to his opinions.



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“ It marks a dramatic cleavage between the church and the medical world. Lord Dawson’s challenge can hardly remain unanswered. —————

“ BEWILDERED GENERATION

“ Lord Dawson said :—

“ Sex love should be the physical expression of a lasting affection, and should be so intimately blended with the feelings of helpfulness, sympathy, and intimate friendship as to form a union of body, mind, and spirit. It further should be associated with the love of and desire for children.

“ By sex love I mean that love which involves sexual union or the desire for such. By birth control I mean that the conception of children should be a matter of choice, not chance.

“ Discussion of the principles and the methods of birth control should be kept separate. The methods of birth control should be set forth to those people alone whom they properly concern.

“ Regulation of the number and the occasions of childbirths has been brought about by several factors :—

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“ (1) Increasing density of population.

“ (2) Increasing sense of the value of child life and of the responsibility of parenthood.

“ (3) Desire of parents to equip their children in body and mind to the best of their ability.

“ (4) Social and domestic difficulties in the homes of educated people.

“ (5) Desire of woman for a larger share in the world's working—a share she cannot take if her best years are exclusively absorbed in maternity.

“ Birth control may be abused and utilised for unworthy ends, but is there any produce of the human mind of which this cannot be said? Broadly speaking, birth control is based on worthy and not unworthy motives.

“ FRIENDSHIP

“ This generation is not materialistic or sensual. Camaraderie and friendship between the sexes is a healthy feature of present-day life.

“ This generation is bewildered by the rapid development of material forces, and its thoughts and standards are different.

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It has weakened in its allegiance to existing forms of religion, and the unreasoning condemnation of such questions as birth control by the Churches has still further weakened that allegiance while in no way checking the spread of birth control.

“Is it desirable and possible to restore the conditions of former generations, namely large families with their high death rates and rough-and-tumble methods? If the answer is in the negative, then the birth rate must and will be controlled.

“Control must be by restraint, or by devices against conception. Restraint, to be effective, means virtual celibacy over long periods of time, and the advocacy of that method involves the adoption of the logical position that the only right purpose of sexual intercourse is procreation. But think what marriage, with continual abstinence, means when the desire on both sides is present.

“MARRIAGE SERVICE

“Is sexual union as an end in itself right? The question needs answering clearly and comprehensively. The view of the Church

is set forth in the marriage service. Church authorities evade the real problem; they half apologise for sex-love, or at other times seem to ignore the existence of this dominating force of the world.

“Reference has been made to the “intention of consummation”; the primary purpose of procreation of children; beauty and discipline of home; obedience to the law of sacrifice. All very well, but is that all? What about the glow of ardent love between man and girl, the growth of their mutual passion, the caresses of their courtship, the delights of sexual completeness in marriage?

“That is the moving force, and man glories in its possession. Why not take account of it? Why not give it its place? Why apologise for it?

“It is this neglect of realities which alienates the people from the Churches, and especially youth, which is only influenced by candour and directness.

“If to give physical expression to man's love of woman is wrong, then sound reasons must be given why it is wrong. Up to now they have not been forthcoming—only unreasoned condemnation.

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“ SOMETHING TO PRIZE

“ The right view is that sex love has, apart from parenthood, a purpose of its own. It is something to prize and to cherish for its own sake. It is an essential part of health and happiness in marriage.

“ Desire for physical union is associated with feelings of intimate sympathy and friendship—the blending of two natures. It is that love in its completeness that we should seek. As life proceeds the physical desire diminishes, but it has by its early passion made such people lovers to the end.

“ Without the physical desire and its periodic satisfaction for its own sake, the union is a poor, spiritless thing, feebly cemented—without fire or glow. Sexual union is kept in moderation by tenderness and sympathy, and by the demands of work and duty. Civilised mankind has always felt and acted thus ; it will never do otherwise than cling to such a possession, which the Churches should bless—not ignore or condemn.

“ HYPOCRISY

“ I have often had reason to reflect on the hypocrisy which is pushed on clergymen

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who are in love. They have the same passions and practise them with the same fervour as the rest of us ; yet their Church is making them implicitly condemn sex love—which they practise not only for procreation, but also wholly apart from procreation—the rising of conscious sex desire as an engagement proceeds ; the sexual indulgence of early married life and of established married life.

“ There is no doubt that sexual intercourse makes for health and contentment in married life, and that discontent and irritability arise from undue abstention. Such abstention may be due to absence of healthy desire on the part of one of the parties, or abstention may be due to the decision of both parties, as a means of birth control. Such abstention is deliberately harmful.

“ How can we expect more abstention in these days than in the Victorian days ?

“ HEALTH

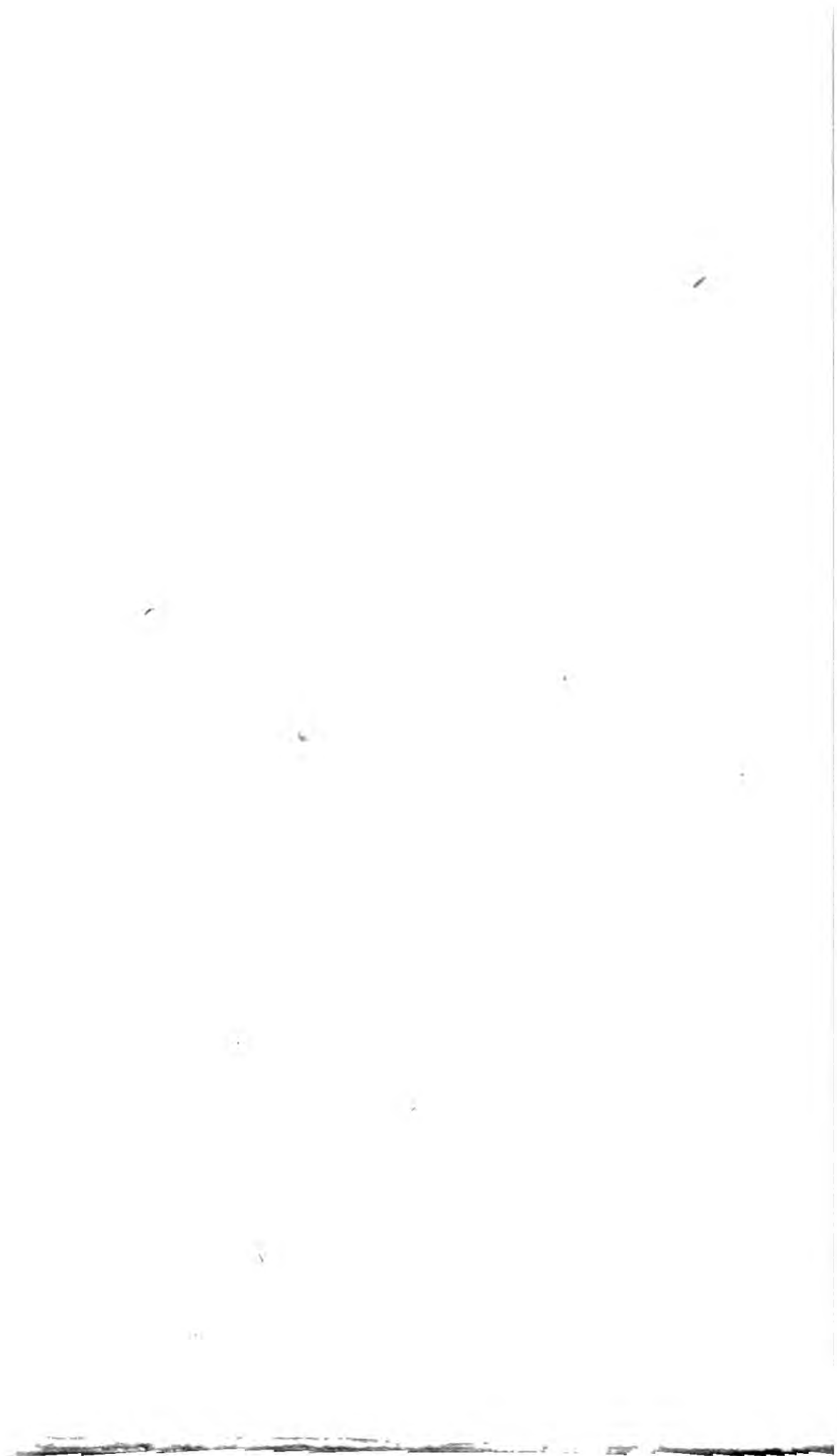
“ Sexual union under proper conditions makes for health. For youths and maidens it is in no way necessary. When love has come, and man and woman are united in

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marriage, sexual intercourse is right and desirable provided both parties are fit.

“ Birth control is spreading now to the industrial classes, and there is every evidence that it has and will spread continuously. The Roman Catholic Church, with its compact organisation, has failed to stop it. Nothing but convincing reasons that it is harmful or wrongful, or both, will command any attention from the people.

“ Mere statements that it is immoral, is contrary to the teachings of Christianity, or is condemned by the Bible, will only bring disrepute on those who make them, and especially among the young, who matter most.”



APPENDIX III

BIRTH CONTROL LIBEL ACTION

Sutherland v. Stopes

AS there is a great deal of misunderstanding prevalent with regard to the House of Lords decision in this case, and that decision is being claimed by Roman Catholics and other opponents of Birth Control as a "victory," it is desirable to record here that the House of Lords proceedings related to a jury finding in a libel case, and that the principles of contraception and the spread of knowledge regarding this, were not involved. On the contrary, they were definitely excluded by the House of Lords, as shown in the following extracts quoted from the report published in the *London Times*, Saturday, November 22, 1924:

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“ The LORD CHANCELLOR (after stating the facts) said that he thought it was desirable to say that, in his opinion, the House was not concerned with any question as to the desirability of the use of contraceptives, or as to the propriety of encouraging such use by the circulation of printed matter, or in any other way. No such question had been, or could be, raised or argued in this action, which was founded only upon an alleged libel upon the plaintiff as to the mode in which she had carried on her campaign ; and accordingly he did not think it would be proper for him to express an opinion upon the wider question.”

LORD WRENBURY said : “ that the question of Birth Control was a question which had long engaged, and in the last fifteen or twenty years had, he believed, increasingly engaged, the attention of many thoughtful minds. From the *Times* newspaper of November 8, he had learned that the Birth Control Committee of this National Birth-Rate Commission met this year on November 7, under the presidency of the Bishop of Winchester, when Lord

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Dawson of Penn and others gave evidence. He mentioned these facts for the purpose of emphasizing at the outset that the question of Birth Control was a question of grave—of very grave—importance. To parents or prospective parents it was a question of personal importance. To others, and particularly to those who work among the poor, it was of public importance. To those who had at heart the welfare of the nation it was of national importance. There were cases in which the health and happiness of the woman were impaired by too rapid succession of conception. There were cases in which the parents' means did not allow of the proper maintenance, education, and advancement of more than a limited number of children. There were cases in which the mental or bodily health of the parents forbade or ought to forbid the procreation of defective children. There were those who thought that in none of these cases ought control to be exercised. There were those who thought otherwise. He expressed, of course, no opinion at all as to which were right and which were wrong, but so strong were the feelings of the one side and of the other

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that hard language might perhaps scarcely create surprise. Whether the language overstepped the bounds and fell into the territory of libel was for a jury to decide. They had the plaintiff's books before them, and it was for them to judge whether they were written too little from a medical and too much from a sexual or emotional standpoint."

The previous law court proceedings were briefly as follows (*Times*, November 22, 1924) :

The libel action was originally brought by Dr. Stopes against Dr. Sutherland (and his publishers) ; and the passage complained of, as set out in the statement of claim, was as follows :

" EXPOSING THE POOR TO EXPERIMENT.

" Secondly, the ordinary decent instincts of the poor are against these practices (meaning the plaintiff's system of birth control), and, indeed, they have used them less than any other class. But owing to their poverty, lack of learning, and helplessness, the poor are the natural victims of those (meaning the plaintiff) who seek to

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make experiments on their fellows. In the midst of a London slum a woman (meaning the plaintiff), who is a Doctor of German Philosophy (Munich), has opened a birth control clinic (meaning the said clinic), where working women are instructed in a method of contraception described by Professor McIlroy as 'the most harmful method of which I have had experience.' (Proceedings of the Medico-Legal Society, July 7, 1921) It is truly amazing that this monstrous campaign of birth control should be tolerated by the Home Secretary. Charles Bradlaugh was condemned to gaol for a less serious crime."

"Each of the appellants pleaded justification and also fair comment. The questions left by the Lord Chief Justice to the jury and their answers were as follows:—

"(1) Were the words complained of defamatory of the plaintiff?—Yes.

"(2) Were they true in substance and in fact?—Yes.

"(3) Were they fair comment?—No.

"(4) Damages, if any?—£100.

"Upon these findings the Lord Chief

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Justice held that the action was concluded in favour of the defendants (appellants) by the jury's answer to the second question.

“The Court of Appeal, by a majority (Lords Justices Banks and Scutton; Lord Justice Younger dissenting), held that the findings of the jury amounted to a verdict for the plaintiff (the respondent) for £100, and allowed the appeal. The appellants appealed from this judgment, and there was a cross appeal by the respondent claiming that, should the judgment in her favour not be upheld, she was entitled to a new trial of the action on the ground of misdirection.”

The case in the House of Lords came before The Lord Chancellor, Viscount Finlay, Lord Shaw of Dunfermline, Lord Wrenbury, and Lord Carson, and the decision is recorded by the *Times* as follows :

“The House to-day, by a majority, allowed this appeal from an order of the Court of Appeal, whereby it was ordered that a judgment directed to be entered for the appellants (the defendants) at the trial of the action before the Lord Chief Justice of England and a special jury, should be set aside and

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judgment entered for the respondent (the plaintiff) for £100 and one-half the costs of the action, together with the costs of the appeal, and restored the judgment of the Lord Chief Justice in favour of the defendants"—*i.e.* Dr. Sutherland and his publishers.

Lord Wrenbury alone dissented, as already recorded.



APPENDIX IV

EMIGRATION (AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO BIRTH CONTROL)

IT is frequently urged that whilst there are sparsely populated countries available, birth control in Great Britain is unnecessary—that emigration would solve any over-population problems for the British Isles. This contention involves a misunderstanding of the construction of the English-speaking nations, an under-estimate of the human costs to Great Britain of emigration, and a disregard of the fact that a large proportion of her trained artizan migrants go to the United States to reinforce the industrial resources of England's greatest trade rival. Inferentially, the contention also ignores the fact that England is not now and has not been for a long time a self-supporting nation :

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she has maintained herself by drawing on the virgin resources of various primitive and backward races, and now that the whole world is an open book she no longer has a monopoly of this natural wealth.

Great Britain is herself really a European "colony"; so are North America, South America, South Africa, etc., and Australia is now being populated by Southern Europeans excluded from the United States under selective immigration restriction laws. In the future it may reasonably be expected that Australia will become an Anglo-Latin community, somewhat like South America. There are really no strictly English colonies, and the colonization of the British Empire has been done mainly by the Scotch, the Irish and the Jews. The English have mostly preferred to stay at home, and when they have gone abroad they have preferred to engage in administrative work in such countries as Egypt, India, and other Asiatic lands. Thus England has been kept the workshop and distributing centre, as well

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as the centre for education, art, science, and literature, and the constitutional and economic headquarters. Self-governing dominions, such as Canada and Australia, are desirable for England for friendship and trade purposes. If they grow away from the Mother Country and become independent, that is not a loss to England so long as the ties of sentiment are not broken, and given mutual goodwill there is no necessity to break those ties. The fact is quite clear that the new English-speaking nations are not composed of English people, but of people drawn from the same stocks as the English themselves are drawn.

As to the human cost of providing ready-made adult citizens for all and sundry nations of the earth, it has certainly become a question of finance as to whether Great Britain can afford to continue this process as lavishly in the future as in the past, particularly when the net result is to disturb profoundly the balance of the sexes in her own town and country life. The new English-

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speaking nations have a problem on their hands in their surplus male populations, but that tends to solve itself in the course of time. The problem of the surplus women in England does not and cannot solve itself: on the contrary it becomes steadily worse and worse, until now in a population of about forty million souls there are approximately two million surplus women.

The migration of trained artizans to the United States in search of work is a new and acute problem. With America competing with England in the industrial and shipping world, the dice are being steadily loaded against England if her artizans migrate in the prime of their industrial activity—at the peak of their efficiency. As the United States is an English-speaking nation, naturally English-speaking artizans are more valuable than those of other nationalities, and the skilled artizans are the very cream of the English nation. Ireland and Scotland are what they are to-day, as industrial countries, largely because for the last sixty or eighty

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years they have been drawn upon by Canada and the United States as reservoirs of virile manhood.

Naturally it is the strongest and most active physically who migrate: necessarily therefore England's standard of physique tends to be progressively lowered by successive waves of emigration. When the best emigrate, the home lands do become impoverished, but emigration gives new ideas and new experiences, opens up new prospects, and makes us all richer. The loss of one region of the British Empire is the gain of another, and the gain overbalances the loss. More fine men and fine women are produced. The nations of the new world are old-world nations put into a new environment; they may temporarily lose something in the exchange for all that is gained, but in the long run the new advantages outweigh the old. The only loss which the Empire can never redeem is the slaughter of her young men in war: then they are gone for ever.

The attempt to slough off "undesirables"

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is seldom seriously made now, and it is becoming increasingly unsuccessful. A hundred years ago it was possible for England and all the European countries to empty their gaols and hospitals and asylums on to the hospitable shores of the United States of America. Now it is impossible to do anything of the kind. Australia had more than her share of "undesirables" from England in the 18th and 19th centuries. Now she knows too much about heredity and evolution to accept the waste-products of the old world nations. Every new and enlightened nation is determined to do its best to prevent racial evils before they begin.

Considering emigration as an alternative to birth control, necessarily there comes into view the question of whether it is really practicable, considering the population of England is increasing now at the rate of a thousand a day, to transplant successfully such ever-increasing numbers. There is a growing belief in the English working-class

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mind that such transplantations are frequently foredoomed to failure. The failure in some cases is actually due to want of birth control information by the mothers and fathers of young families.

It is a fact that birth control is sometimes of more importance, of more urgent necessity for the wives and mothers in newly settled countries than for those in the Old World countries. If the advocates of wholesale migration are prepared to establish adequate medical and nursing services for the settlers' wives, well and good. But the present arrangements of this kind are wholly inadequate. Hence unless the settler's wife can select suitable times for the birth of her babies, she is frequently in grave danger of her life in the "back blocks" of Australia, and such like places. Such new countries are dotted with mothers' graves; their cities are full of wives and young children separated from the husband and father who lives "up-country"; and when the young unmarried country men come into the cities

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on holiday and fall in love with the "surplus" city girls, these girls' parents and guardians oppose marriage unless the young men agree to take up city life. One of the main causes—if not, the main cause—of the high maternal mortality in Australia is the absence of properly directed and widely disseminated information on family limitation.

Needless to say, also, in various undeveloped parts of the British Empire, when wives are refused contraceptive information they are unable to join with their husbands in pioneer work. Enforced celibacy on the part of the husbands leads ultimately to consorting with native women, and thus instead of "Empire-building" what we actually get is—promiscuity, miscegenation and the spread of syphilis.

These are merely a few aspects of the problem which enthusiastic advocates of mass-production at home for emigration abroad will need to consider much more intelligently and carefully in the future than in the past.

THE END



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