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THE LOVE RIGHTS OF WOMEN

Written especially for The Birth Control Review

By

HAVELOCK ELLIS

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THE LOVE RIGHTS OF WOMEN

By Havelock Ellis

(Written especially for *The Birth Control Review*)

WHAT IS THE PART of woman, one is sometimes asked, in the sex act? Must it be the wife's concern in the marital embrace to sacrifice her own wishes from a sense of love and duty towards her husband? Or is the wife entitled to an equal mutual interest and joy in this act with her husband? It seems a simple problem. In so fundamental a relationship, which goes back to the beginning of sex in the dawn of life, it might appear that we could leave Nature to decide. Yet it is not so. Throughout the history of civilization, wherever we can trace the feelings and ideas which have prevailed on this matter and the resultant conduct, the problem has existed, often to produce discord, conflict and misery. The problem still exists today and with as important results as in the past.

In Nature, before the arrival of Man, it can scarcely be said, indeed, that any difficulty existed. It was taken for granted at that time that the female had both the right to her own body, and the right to a certain amount of enjoyment in the use of it. It often cost the male a serious amount of trouble—though he never failed to find it worth while—to explain to her the point where he might be allowed to come in, and to persuade her that he could contribute to her enjoyment. This is generally the case throughout Nature, before we reach Man, and, though it is not invariably obvious, we often find it even among the unluckiest animals.

As is well known, it is most pronounced among the birds, who have in some species carried the love art—and the faithful devotion which properly accompanies the love art as being an essential part of it—to the highest point. We have here the great natural fact of courtship. Throughout Nature, wherever we meet with animals of a high type, often indeed when they are of a lowly type—provided they have not been rendered unnatural by domestication—every act of sexual union is preceded by a process of courtship. There is a sound physiological reason for this courtship, for in the act of wooing and being wooed the psychic excitement gradually generated in the brains of the two partners acts as a stimulant to arouse into full activity the mechanism which ensures sexual union and aids ultimate impregnation. Such courtship is thus a fundamental natural fact.

IT IS AS A NATURAL fact that we still find it in full development among a large number of peoples of the lower races whom we are accustomed to regard as more primitive than ourselves. New conditions, it is true, soon enter to complicate the picture presented by savage courtship. The economic element of bargaining, destined to prove so important, comes in at an early stage. And among peoples leading a violent life, and constantly fighting, it has

sometimes happened, though not always, that courtship also has been violent. This is not so frequent as was once supposed. With better knowledge it was found that the seeming brutality once thought to take the place of courtship among various peoples in a low state of culture was really itself courtship, a rough kind of play agreeable to both parties and not depriving the feminine partner of her own freedom of choice.

This was notably the case as regards so-called "marriage by capture." While this is sometimes a real capture, it is more often a mock capture, the lover perhaps pursues the beloved on horseback, but she is as fleet and as skilful as he is, cannot be captured unless she wishes to be captured, and in addition, as among the Kirghiz, she may be armed with a formidable whip, so that "marriage by capture" far from being a hardship imposed on women, is largely a concession to their modesty and a gratification of their erotic impulses. Even when the chief part of the decision rests with masculine force, courtship is still not necessarily or usually excluded, for the exhibition of force by a lover—and this is true for civilized as well as for savage women—is itself a source of pleasurable stimulation, and when that is the case the ends of courtship may be attained even more successfully by the forceful than by the humble lover.

THE EVOLUTION OF SOCIETY, however, tended to overlay and sometimes even to suppress those fundamental natural tendencies. The position of the man as the sole and uncontested head of the family, the insistence on paternity and male descent, the accompanying economic developments and the tendency to view a woman less as a self-disposing individual than as an object of barter belonging to her father, the consequent rigidity of the marriage bond and the stern insistence on wifely fidelity—all these conditions of developing civilization, while still leaving courtship possible, diminished its significance and even abolished its necessity. Moreover, on the basis of the social, economic, and legal development thus established, new moral, spiritual, and religious forces were slowly generated, which worked on these rules of merely exterior order, and interiorized them, thus giving them power over the souls as well as over the bodies of women.

The result was that, directly and indirectly, the legal, economic, and love rights of women were all diminished. It is with the love or erotic rights only that we are here concerned.

No doubt, in its erotic aspects, as well as in its legal and economic aspects, the social order thus established was described, and in good faith, as beneficial to women, and even as maintained in their interests. Monogamy and the home, it was claimed, alike existed for the benefit and protection of women. It was not so often explained that they greatly

benefited and protected men, with, moreover, this additional advantage that while women were absolutely confined to the home, men were free to exercise their activities outside the home, even, with tacit general consent, on the erotic side

Whatever the real benefits, and there is no occasion for questioning them, of the sexual order thus established, it becomes clear that in certain important respects it had an unnatural and repressive influence on the erotic aspect of woman's sexual life. It fostered the reproductive side of woman's sexual life, but it rendered difficult for her the satisfaction of the instinct for that courtship which is the natural preliminary of reproductive activity, an instinct even more highly developed in the female than in the male, and the more insistent because in the order of Nature the burden of maternity is preceded by the reward of pleasure.

But the marriage order which had become established led to the indirect result of banning pleasure in women, or at all events in wives. It was regarded as too dangerous, and even as degrading. The women who wanted pleasure were not considered fit for the home, but more suited to be devoted to an exclusive "life of pleasure," which soon turned out to be not their own pleasure but men's. A "life of pleasure," in that sense or in any other sense, was not what more than a small minority of women ever desired. The desire of women for courtship is not a thing by itself, and was not implanted for gratification by itself. It is naturally intertwined—and to a much greater degree than the corresponding desire in men—with her deepest personal, family, and social instincts, so that if these are desecrated and lost its charm soon fades.

THE PRACTICES AND THE ideals of this established morality were both due to men, and both were so thoroughly fashioned that they subjugated alike the actions and the feelings of women. There is no sphere which we regard as so peculiarly women's sphere as that of love. Yet there is no sphere which in civilization women have so far had so small a part in regulating. Their deepest impulses—their modesty, their maternity, their devotion, their emotional receptivity—were used, with no conscious and deliberate Machiavellism, against themselves to mould a moral world for their habitation which they would not themselves have moulded. It is not of modern creation, nor by any means due, as some have supposed, to the asceticism of Christianity, however much Christianity may have reinforced it. Indeed one may say that in course of time Christianity had an influence in weakening it, for Christianity discovered a new reservoir of tender emotion, and such emotion may be transferred, and, as a matter of fact, was transferred, from its first religious channel into erotic channels which were thereby deepened and extended, and without reference to any design of Christianity. For the ends we achieve are often by no means those which we set out to accomplish.

In ancient classic days this moral order was even more severely established than in the Middle Ages. Montaigne,

in the sixteenth century, declared that "marriage is a devout and religious relationship, the pleasures derived from it should be restrained and serious, mixed with some severity." But in this matter he was not merely expressing the Christian standpoint, but even more that of paganism, and he thoroughly agreed with the old Greek moralist that a man should approach his wife "prudently and severely" for fear of inciting her to lasciviousness, he thought that marriage was best arranged by a third party, and was inclined to think, with the ancients, that women are not fitted to make friends of. Montaigne has elsewhere spoken with insight of women's instinctive knowledge of the art and discipline of love and has pointed out how men have imposed their own ideals and rules of action on women from whom they have demanded opposite and contradictory virtues, yet, we see, he approves of this state of things and never suggests that women have any right to opinions of their own or feelings of their own when the sacred institution of marriage is in question.

MONTAIGNE REPRESENTS the more exalted aspects of the Pagan-Christian conception of morality in marriage which still largely prevails. But that conception lent itself to deductions frankly accepted even by Montaigne himself, which were by no means exalted. "I find," said Montaigne, "that Venus after all, is nothing more than the pleasure of discharging our vessels, just as Nature renders pleasurable the discharges from other parts." Sir Thomas More among Catholics, and Luther among Protestants, said exactly the same thing in other and even clearer words, while untold millions of husbands in Christendom down to today, whether or not they have had the wit to put their theory into a phrase, have regularly put it into practice, at all events within the consecrated pale of marriage, and treated their wives, "severely and prudently," as convenient utensils for the reception of a natural excretion.

Obviously, in this view of marriage, sexual activity was regarded as an exclusively masculine function, in the exercise of which women had merely a passive part to play. Any active participation on her side thus seemed unnecessary, and even unbecoming, finally, though only in comparatively modern times, disgusting and actually degrading. Thus Acton, who was regarded half a century ago as the chief English authority on sexual matters, declared that "happily for society" the supposition that women possess sexual feelings could be put aside as "a vile aspersion," while another medical authority of the same period stated in regard to the most simple physical sign of healthy sexual emotion that it "only happens in lascivious women."

This final triumph of the masculine ideals and rule of life was, however, only achieved slowly. It was the culmination of an elaborate process of training. At the outset men had found it impossible to speak too strongly of the "wantonness" of women. This attitude was pronounced among the ancient Greeks and prominent in their dramatists. Christianity again, which ended by making women into the



Mrs Poor Patient — "If you're rich, the law don't count"

chief pillars of the Church, began by regarding them as the 'Gate of Hell.' Again, later, when in the Middle Ages this masculine moral order approached the task of subjugating the barbarians of Northern Europe, men were horrified at the licentiousness of those northern women at whose coldness they are now shocked.

That, indeed, was, as Montaigne had seen, the central core of conflict in the rule of life imposed by men on women. Men were perpetually striving, by ways the most methodical, the most subtle, the most far-reaching, to achieve a result in women, which, when achieved, men

themselves viewed with dismay. They may be said to be moved in this sphere by two passions, the passion for virtue and the passion for vice. But it so happens that both these streams of passion have to be directed at the same fascinating object: Woman. No doubt nothing is more admirable than the skill with which women have acquired the duplicity necessary to play the two contradictory parts thus imposed upon them. But in that requirement the play of their natural reactions tended to become paralyzed, and the delicate mechanism of their instincts often disturbed.

They were forbidden, except in a few carefully et-

quetted forms, the free play of courtship without which they could not perform their part in the love life with full satisfaction either to themselves or their partners. They were reduced to an artificial simulation of coldness or of warmth, according to the particular stage of the dominating masculine ideal of woman which their partner chanced to have reached. But that is an attitude equally unsatisfactory to themselves or to their lovers, even when the latter have not sufficient insight to see through its unreality. It is an attitude so unnatural and artificial that it inevitably tends to produce a real coldness which nothing can disguise.

It is true that women whose instincts are not perverted at the roots do not desire to be cold. Far from it. But to dispel that coldness the right atmosphere is needed, and the insight and skill of the right man. In the erotic sphere a woman asks nothing better of a man than to be lifted above her coldness, to the higher plane where there is reciprocal interest and mutual joy in the act of love. Therein her silent demand is one with Nature's. For the biological order of the world involves those claims which, in the human range, are the love rights of women.

THE SOCIAL CLAIMS of women, their economic claims, their political claims, have long been before the world. Women themselves have actively asserted them, and they are all in process of realization. The love claims of women, which are at least as fundamental, are not publicly voiced, and women themselves would be the last to assert them. It is easy to understand why that should be so. The natural and acquired qualities of women, even the qualities developed in the art of courtship, have all been utilized in building up the masculine ideal of sexual morality, it is on feminine characteristics that this masculine ideal has been based, so that women have been helpless to protest against it. Moreover, even if that were not so, to formulate such rights is to raise the question whether there so much as exists anything that can be called "love rights." The right to joy cannot be claimed in the same way as one claims the right to put a voting paper in a ballot box. A human being's love aptitudes can only be developed where the right atmosphere for them exists, and where the attitudes of both persons concerned are in harmonious sympathy. That is why the erotic rights of woman have been the last of all to be attained.

Yet today we see a change here. The change required is, it has been said, a change of attitude and a resultant change in the atmosphere in which the sexual impulses are manifested. It involves no necessary change in the external order of our marriage system, for, as has already been pointed out, it was a coincident, and not designed, part of that order. Various recent lines of tendency have converged to produce this change of attitude and of atmosphere.

In part, the men of today are far more ready than the men of former days to look upon women as their comrades in the every-day work of the world, instead of as beings who were ideally on a level above themselves and practically

on a level considerably below themselves. In part, there is the growing recognition that women have conquered many elementary human rights of which before they were deprived, and are more and more taking the position of citizens, with the same kinds of duties, privileges, and responsibilities as men. In part, also, it may be added, there is a growing diffusion among educated people of a knowledge of the primary facts of life in the two sexes, slowly dissipating and dissolving many foolish and often mischievous superstitions.

The result is that, as many competent observers have noted, the young men of today show a new attitude towards women and towards marriage, an attitude of simplicity and frankness, a desire for mutual confidence, a readiness to discuss difficulties, an appeal to understand and to be understood. Such an attitude, which had hitherto been hard to attain, at once creates the atmosphere in which alone the free spontaneous erotic activities of women can breathe and live.

This consummation, we have seen, may be regarded as the attainment of certain rights, the corollary of other rights in the social field which women are slowly achieving as human beings on the same human level as men. It opens to women, on whom is always laid the chief burden of sex, the right to the joy and exaltation of sex, to the uplifting of the soul which, when the right conditions are fulfilled, is the outcome of the intimate approach and union of two human beings. Yet while we may find convenient so to formulate it, we need to remember that that is only a fashion of speech, for there are no rights in Nature. If we take a broader sweep, what we may choose to call an erotic right, is simply the perfect poise of the conflicting forces of life, the rhythmic harmony in which generation is achieved with the highest degree of perfection compatible with the make of the world.

It is our part to transform Nature's large conception into our own smaller organic mould, not otherwise than the plants, to whom we are far back akin, who dig their flexible roots deep into the moist and fruitful earth, and so are able to lift up glorious heads towards the sky.

HAVELOCK ELLIS

To the Little Unfortunates

By Gertrude Boyle

BORN MID the turmoil and the noise,
Cradled in foulest tenement,
Hushed by the onrush of the "L,"
Rocked by the jolting on cobble and surface-rail,
Nursed on fumes from "Sub" and curb,
Fed on the refuse of the rich,—
Poor little cripples of this grinding town!
O would that Progress on its pompous march
Might stamp the struggling spark entire out!
E'en better, that bold Science, kind-smother it
Ere blind Nature nurse it into human flame!

FEAR AND THE FUTURE RACE

By Maude Durand Edgren

IT IS NO LONGER the fashion to preach the devil, hell and damnation at our up-to-date religious gatherings. But all so-called new departures in devotional teaching seem to agree in ascribing to the small word, "fear," all the evil powers and potentialities formerly ascribed to his satanic majesty.

Professor James classes fear as one of the three most powerful emotions which the human being is capable of experiencing, the other two being lust and anger. When we stop to think that emotion is the incentive to action, we find fear, then, to be one of the most important agents in human activity or behavior. Fear comes to man through a long inheritance, back through human and animal experiences. Human beings probably never feel fear to the extent that their wild ancestors did in their long struggle for existence where only the fittest survived. Progress along the evolutionary path from mineral to man and beyond is marked by decreasing numbers of real causes for fear.

It has been said that all our institutions are the outgrowth of fear, fear causing individuals to band together for mutual protection. The state was developed for political protection and the protection of property. The church was developed for protection from unknown and unseen, but nevertheless dreaded, powers. Thus we see that even religion itself becomes a product of fear. Fear of the supernatural is probably the most uncanny emotion we can entertain. What one of us but would hold his breath and feel icy chills run up and down his spine if the chair he had been sitting on suddenly began to wriggle from under him and saunter gracefully out of the room?

FEAR CANNOT BE defined any more than can electricity, which it resembles in many ways. It is a force, a power, a cause, the effects of which are plainly seen. Again, just as there is a positive and negative pole to a current of electricity, so there is a positive and negative pole to the force we call fear. What we call fear is the negative pole of current, the other pole of which is called faith. We might picture in our minds a magnet with its positive pole named faith and its negative pole named fear and we get a rather definite idea of how this tremendous force operates. Faith, we are told, can move mountains. If one pole of our magnet can move mountains, what must be the terrible potency of the opposite pole!

It is much more difficult for mortals to operate the faith end of the magnet than the fear end. Why? Because of inherited habits of fearing. Practically all of our ancestors both animal and human have been victims of fear. It has been one of the prominent factors in our evolution. We know how much easier it is to tread the old beaten paths of custom than to forge new ones for ourselves. But it is just this forging ahead and substituting faith for fear that makes the individual stand out from the mass. He begins to attract conditions to himself through faith instead of being at the

mercy of his fears. Progress is made as faith increases and fears disappear, in other words, as fear is transmuted into faith.

There are other powerful emotions beside fear. We have mentioned lust and anger, we should not forget hate. Just as the proverbial dark cloud has its silver lining, so have all these dire emotions their positive side. Opposite hate we have love, opposite lust the desire for purity, opposite anger or warring, we have the desire for peace. These emotions should be transmuted into their opposites, never denied.

It is impossible to deal with a subject like fear without considering the two sides of our existence, the outside and the inside, the objective and the subjective. The objective is always before us like the foreground in a landscape, looming large in the perspective of our attention. We make a great mistake if we consider this side more important than the inner or subjective side. The two are related, as effect to cause.

ONE OF THE BEST illustrations of this is to be found in our photo dramas or moving pictures. We see a story depicted on the screen and follow with more or less interest our shadow hero or heroine. They represent the objective side of life. The subjective side is represented by the scenario writer, director and actors themselves who cause the picture. You say to yourself "The camera has something to do with it." Indeed it has, it is the instrument through which the subjective becomes objective. Our emotions do the same for us.

We ourselves are the actors in our life drama. We cause the pictures we make on the objective screen of life to be beautiful or ugly. We may have very beautiful ideals subjectively, but unless we know how to behave before the camera we may produce a most distressing picture.

We know that the screen in a cinema theater is two-dimensional, it has length and breadth. We also know that the actors and scenery in the picture were taken from objects having length, breadth and thickness. In other words, on the screen we see a two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional occurrence. Our objective existence is three-dimensional. Everything in the world about us that impresses the five senses has three dimensions. We are continually making a three-dimensional moving picture, but in reality we are more than the objective representation of ourselves that we see daily. We are four-dimensional beings projecting our three-dimensional objectivity on the screen of life. To get in touch with our four-dimensional existence we must become subjective. We can now begin to see how vastly more we are subjectively than we can possibly be objectively. The faith-fear force is one of the means at our disposal of bringing into objectivity a portion of the abundant subjective supply. How often we hear, "Nothing succeeds like success!" The successful individual

(Continued on Page 15)

The Only Way Out

DR PARKER WAS bitterly opposed to birth control. Early one morning he was sitting in his office reading a discussion on the subject when his mail arrived. Opening the first letter he read

Dear Sir —

Yesterday I escaped from an insane asylum and when this reaches you I shall be beyond capture. But before I go I want to plead with you to use your influence for birth control. You attended my wife during several confinements and will perhaps remember me.

When I was thirty years old, I was married to a sweet girl of twenty. In less than a year, a little son was born to us. My wife loved children and was delighted. Fourteen months later a little daughter came. We welcomed her also, but regretted that she had come so soon for the boy couldn't walk yet. A year and a half later another daughter arrived. In another year a little son was added. My wife began to plead for continence or some preventive. I could see that her strength was failing, but two more babies followed in quick succession.

About this time my health failed and I was unable to continue at my regular work and was often without employment or income for months. Although my wife was a splendid manager we were compelled to run into debt and this worried her almost to distraction, and she went without proper food and clothing to avoid deeper debt. Then she began to have serious trouble with one of her limbs and often wished for help about the house but we couldn't afford to hire any.

She had a pleasant, cheerful nature, but during her seventh pregnancy she became very morose, scarcely speaking for days, and often I found her in tears. When our seventh child was six months old she told me she was pregnant again, and the thought of bearing and caring for another child was unendurable. I tried to comfort her but gloom hung heavily over her for a week. One evening I came home and found her and the children prettily dressed and the table set for a festive occasion. The children were allowed to sit up late and we passed a delightful evening together. My wife was so sweet and like her usual self that I concluded she had become reconciled to her condition, consequently I was wholly unprepared for what followed.

When I came home the next night the house was shrouded in darkness. There was always a light and someone to open the door and call a greeting as soon as I stepped on the porch, so the darkness and silence puzzled me. I entered the dark, quiet kitchen, struck a light and carried it to the dining room. The whole family was seated at the table with heads bowed before them. Thinking they were playing a joke on me, I said, "Boo! what kind of a game is this?" Nothing but silence greeted me and a deadly chill struck my heart. I called frantically to my wife, rushed to her side and touched her hand—it was cold and stiff. Pinned to the table cloth I found the enclosed note.

Dear Charles —

Forgive me if you can. I intended to go alone, but at the last minute decided to take the children with me, it is better so. I could not bear again the weeks of awful nausea and the following months of weariness when I must drag myself about my work and often leave it undone. And the thought of caring for another little one without any comforts for it or myself is unendurable. The crying of the last two little ones filled me with unspeakable fury and I have had to struggle over and over again to keep from laying violent hands on them. If I knew this would be the last time I would perhaps be reconciled, but as you know there are still a number of child-bearing years before me, and this is the only way out.

Lovingly yours in death as in life,

Anna

I must have gone quite mad then, for I remember nothing until I found myself several weeks later in the asylum where I have been for two years.

Again I plead with you, for the sake of weary overburdened mothers, for the sake of tiny mortals already born, and others yet unborn, and who should never be born, and for the sake of men who love their wives and would save them and their children from unnecessary hardships, use your influence for birth control.

Yours in deep sorrow,

Charles Scribner

"Well," muttered Dr. Parker to himself, "I think this is a very extreme case."

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MY DEAR MARGARET SANGER

I have followed your career with interest, admiring your courage, respecting your sincerity. To a degree you have had my sympathy, tempered by the feeling that you were not always wise and that you exaggerated the importance of your cult. But this is usual and, perhaps, inevitable with enthusiasts. They look at their one fact through a microscope and are hardly aware of the existence of the great world outside the field of their lens.

I do not agree with you in the supreme importance you seem to attribute to birth control. Nature herself is a pretty good guide as to what is of first importance, and it is significant, is it not, that Nature has made birth instinctive and almost inevitable and has not furnished instinctive knowledge of birth control? Whatever we may think of the Great War, the need of children after it will be world-wide and tremendous, and this without any reference to "cannon-fodder." But the need was great before. Vast areas of the earth's surface, capable of sustaining a teeming population, were practically uninhabited, or scantily inhabited, and the birth-rate in many of the countries boasting the highest civilization, was declining, allowing the inferior types everywhere to outbreed the superior.

As I see the world, every human being is potentially an asset to the race, potentially a joy to himself and a means of genius, wealth and power to all. If it is not so, it is because the conditions are not right, and the setting right of these conditions "is the greatest humane work known today."

The democratization of all the nations on earth, universal woman suffrage, universal adoption of the initiative, referendum, and recall, collective ownership of all the means of life, production and distribution, universal free trade, a league of nations to prevent conquest, establish international law and settle international disputes, universal co-operation to exploit the undeveloped resources of the earth and seas, destroy disease, drain marshes, irrigate deserts, terrace mountains, build sea-walls, create islands, etc., these and many, many more things of a like sort, are vastly more important than birth control, for all of them would create a demand and an opportunity for more children, for both the spiritual and material expansion of the race. A greater passion for social service, a more eager and sensitive social conscience, a humane and scientifically organized system of universal co-operation—these are the supreme needs.

THE GREAT WEAKNESS of your cult is that, like anarchism, it is negative, it is more a stopping of doing than a doing. In many places the human race is in sore need of liberty, yes, but in many more places it is in still greater need of a socially-conscious, wisely administered discipline. Just so there is a real need of the universal knowledge of birth control, and with many individuals a real need of its application, but the greater need is that the race should take for its slogan "More and better children," instead of "Fewer and better children"—should make motherhood a specially trained and most honored profession, surrounded with all

social support and assistance, and by improved conditions and special training should transform as many as possible of the unfit into the fit.

Birth control has its place in the social armamentaria, but I would much more eagerly subscribe to a cult of eugenics and fecundity than to one of race-lesseening, if not race-suicide.

You will probably deny that your cult has any leaning toward race-suicide, but observation anywhere shows an overwhelming tendency among women of beauty, culture, ability and wealth—the very ones who should be the mothers of the superior race—to avoid motherhood wholly or in part. Among such women the knowledge of birth control has been a positive evil, for it has certainly been abused by them for selfish ends. And the women who do need birth control, the diseased, drunken, degenerate, irresponsible ones, are the ones least likely of any to use it.

I WOULD NOT DENY a knowledge of birth control to any (though I think a knowledge of it in some form is possessed by most intelligent women today, for knowledge of that kind permeates far and wide beneath the surface,) but if with this knowledge your cult was endeavoring to create a passion for superb, fecund motherhood among the higher types of woman, and a sensitive conscience of refusal among the unfit, it would much more appeal to my heart and brain.

Personally, the kind of birth control I consider ideal is that for which, many years ago, I created the word "magnetation," that which the Oneida Communists called "male continence" and Dr. Stockham named "Karezza." The whole array of "contraceptives," usually so called, are open to serious if not fatal objections. All are likely to injure the sensitive organs of the woman and shock her nervous system, all undependable and treacherously unsafe for the purpose designed, and all hideously interfere with the poetry and romance of the relation.

And now, having gotten this off my chest, and preached to you to my heart's content, I am enclosing a dollar, the worth of which you may send me in your magazine. Stop when the purchasing power is exhausted, for I do not promise to subscribe indefinitely.

Hoping that all laws which hinder you may be repealed,

J WILLIAM LLOYD,

Westfield, N. J.

(Of course, we do not share Mr. Lloyd's point of view. But his letter has the rare virtue of being friendly and constructive criticism. We gladly print it and invite our readers to send in answers for publication in future issues. We believe Mr. Lloyd to be in error when he states that contraceptives are "all undependable and treacherously unsafe." But then he falls into a host of other errors, and we look to our supporters to detect these and plunge into the fray in support of birth control as the most important of modern social movements.—Editors.)

Thoughts in War-Time

By J Rutgers, M D

THE INHABITANTS OF HOLLAND and other European countries have been placed on war rations. The authorities control the necessities of life. But, in my opinion, the first thing that every family should restrict is the number of its offspring. If it is a crime in ordinary times to have more children than one can decently bring up, it is now doubly reprehensible. The large family demands an extravagant share of the dwindling supplies of the nation.

We must think of the future, too. It is probably our first duty to provide really efficient soldiers to fight the coming battles of democracy. True democracy depends upon the people thinking for themselves. Autocracy, imperialism and militarism want crude numbers, on the theory that the greater the general misery the more complete the subjection of the masses. So long as the proletariat breeds blindly, so long will it be lacking in resistance and self-respect.

The best guarantee of democracy is the happiness of the family, the free development of every individual born into the world. This result can only be achieved if the number of children is limited. Birth control is not merely advantageous in special cases, it is indispensable.

I AM FREQUENTLY ASKED How is it that the United States is so backward in sex-consciousness and in rational breeding? I reply that that country is doing its best to catch up to us. Holland is an old nation and one of the first in Europe to have some conception of public welfare. From the earliest times the soil was cultivated. The land was divided up into innumerable small estates, and not an acre was allowed to lie idle. The cities which arose became more and more crowded. Finally, we felt the need of more space. We wanted comforts for ourselves. For our children we demanded sunny homes, and an up-to-date education which would insure them a proper start in life. This was only possible if we practised the sort of parental prudence which would save us from having too many children. We embraced the idea and it is now perfectly familiar to us.

The United States of America is a new country. It was populated by a selection of particularly energetic emigrants from Europe. Its vast territory is not yet fully cultivated, but the nation is growing fast and is now the richest in the world. So the time is coming when America will also be overcrowded. The people will cry for space. Birth control will be accepted as a necessity and will become the general rule. Even statesmen will eventually fall in line, and, perhaps, regret the fact that they were not more farseeing in their younger days.

The Hague, Holland

Society can overlook murder, adultery or swindling, it never forgives the preaching of a new gospel.—*Frederick Harrison.*

Governor Brumbaugh's Veto

REACTIONARY FORCES last year put through the Pennsylvania legislature an anti-birth control law, but it was vetoed by the Governor in the following terms:

"Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,

"Executive Chamber,

"Harrisburg, July 16, 1917

"I file herewith, in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, with my objections, House bill No 1643, entitled 'An act forbidding the advertising, publishing, selling, distribution, or otherwise disseminating or imparting, or attempting to disseminate or impart, knowledge or information tending to interfere with or diminish the birth of human beings in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, defining it as a misdemeanor, and providing for its punishment'.

"The bill forbids the publishing or otherwise disseminating of any information by anybody concerning birth control in this Commonwealth. The existing laws judiciously concern themselves with this matter. This bill does not. It is by far the most drastic bill in regard to birth control in this country. It is, by like token, one of the most reactionary enactments attempted in years.

"The popular mind is filled—if I may judge this mind from many telegrams and letters before me—with all sorts of misconceptions concerning the provisions of this bill. It is not a bill to regulate the size of families, but an attempt to prevent any one from doing anything 'to interfere with or diminish the birth of human beings in this Commonwealth'. Just how any one could diminish birth is not made manifest. The language is viciously vague and indefinite in the extreme. The bill might be construed to punish those that oppose the marriage of the insane or feeble-minded. Indeed, the Commonwealth's own acts in segregating these unfortunates in institutions like Laurelton would come under the penalties of this bill. It is, in other words, counter to the whole current of modern social endeavor, and, as has been pointed out, could be made a convenient club for the blackmailer. It would deny a physician the duty, in defined cases, of advising his patient. It would seal the lips of mothers and fathers in counselling their children. It is an attempt to do by legislation what should be done by education. It would be a law more honored in its breach than in its observance. It is impracticable and unenforceable.

"For these reasons this bill is not approved.

"Martin G. Brumbaugh."

Woman of the Street

By Gertrude Boyle

WOMAN OF the Street,
I stretch my hand to thee,—
Poor, dumb sister,
With no voice to utter the deep wrong
Mal-brewed laws inflict upon thee
And thy ill-starred offspring!

THE TOLL OF CHILD LIFE

BLOOD SEEMS TO BE the sympathy-producing liquid, and the sight of it gives rise to more emotion in the hearts of human beings than death itself. The proof of this has been made public by G. E. Earnshaw of Chicago, writing in the "Infants' Department." Earnshaw, through the published figures of war casualties and those from infant mortality records, shows that whereas the death rate of soldiers is 2 per cent, that of babies is 14! He does not go into the conditions which surround the child, the large family menace, inability of mothers of the working class properly to care for the infant because of eight or nine other children who must also be constantly attended, but from his statement it is easy to deduce why people will protest the destruction of war and never turn a hair at the astounding slaughter of infants in their cradles. He writes

"Let us compare the losses. In a statement recently made public, Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War, says 'Up to June 1 the losses of the British expeditionary forces from deaths in action and deaths from wounds were about 7 per cent of the total of all the men sent to France since the beginning of the war.' The war began three years ago, hence this total loss of 7 per cent 'since the beginning of the war' means a yearly loss of but little more than 2 per cent."

"The accuracy of this statement is strikingly confirmed by the published statement of an English insurance company—the London Prudential—which shows that out of a total of two million British soldiers insured, the losses during the present war have amounted to 30 per 1,000 per annum, but since the deaths in times of peace among men of the same age amount to 10 per 1,000 per annum, we must deduct the normal mortality (10 per 1,000) from the war-losses (30 per 1,000), leaving war responsible for only twenty deaths a year in each group of 1,000 men in service. Twenty deaths per 1,000 is two deaths per 100, or 2 per cent, as stated by Secretary Baker. This is the toll of war."

"Let us see now what happens in the nurseries. Out of every seven babies born one dies before it is a year old. One in seven is more than 14 in the hundred. So the soldier braving disease and death in the camp and on the battle-field has a seven times better chance than the new-born baby."

"Out of 2,500,000 babies born every year in the United States more than 350,000 die before they are a year old. Of the same number of soldiers only 50,000 will die in a year as a result of their exposure to the risks of war."

"Terrible as is the toll of life exacted by war the losses suffered by our infant population through improper foods and clothing, the ignorance of midwives, and—alas!—of mothers also, is yet more terrible. To our shame be it said that our soldiers on the field of battle are safer than our infants in their cradles."

"It is not possible, of course, to save the life of every little one that is born, but infant-welfare experts estimate that at least 50 per cent of the deaths are preventable. This is proved by the fact that in other countries the death-rate in

the first year of life has been reduced to less than half the death-rate in the United States. Also, by the fact that in certain cities in the United States infant mortality has been reduced to a point that is less than half the average for the whole country."

Mr. Earnshaw leaves it to his readers to reach a conclusion upon this parallel. And he brings home, unwittingly perhaps, one of the strongest arguments for voluntary motherhood, the argument to save the baby before conception in order to give those already born a more equal chance for life.—*Louis Weitzenkorn*

Small Families and The Bible

IDEAS IN REGARD to the size of families are changing (and probably rightly so), to quote from a modern writer "Two or three children are a necessary part of every good woman's education", when not so long ago a dozen or more were not considered too many. The world moves. We are apt to think, with Matthew Arnold's British Philistine, "That it is only necessary to present ourselves before the Great White Throne with our twelve children, our big family (anything big is so impressive), to be received among the sheep as a matter of right." Where have we gotten this idea? From the Jews, I suspect, who wished large families, because among their children might be the expected Messiah.

But if we read their history we find that it was the child of promise long deferred, often the only offspring, who was most useful. Isaac, in whose seed all the nations were to be blessed, was an only child, born after long years of preparation. Sarah, his mother, a beautiful talented woman whose council was highly valued. Isaac's only children were twins—Jacob (the father of all Israel) and Esau—and Isaac's wife, Rebecca, was of a lovely character. Joseph, the child of Rachel ("whom Jacob loved"), was born late in her life, and she had but one other child. Jacob's affection for Joseph was the cause of jealousy among his brothers, and we know from his Egyptian experiences what a remarkable person he was.

Sampson, also, was a child of promise. Samuel, who judged Israel forty years, and of whom the people proclaimed that he had never wronged anyone, was an only child, born after years of prayer and supplication on the part of Hannah, his mother, who was herself a remarkable woman, and whose husband appreciated and loved her greatly, asking her, "Am I not more to thee than ten sons?" The child of the Shunamite woman (than whom no stronger character is portrayed in the Bible) was the only one and long delayed. What strength and decision was hers, and with what spiritual insight she recognized the Prophet in Elisha, and ministered to him with all faith, receiving help from him in return. John the Baptist was also an only child, and his parents were well along in years when he was born. By the Roman Catholics, Jesus himself is said to be Mary's only child.—*Jessie Thomas Knapp*

The Birth Control Conference

A TWO-DAY CONFERENCE of the birth control groups of the Eastern states was recently held at the headquarters of the National Birth Control League, 200 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Delegates and letters came from Boston, Philadelphia, Syracuse, Buffalo, Washington, D. C., Indianapolis, and Chicago.

No one listening to the discussion could doubt the virility of the movement. Indeed, knowledge of Birth Control is more acutely needed now than ever before.

The Conference emphasized the necessity of intentional family limitation because the lowering of the birth rate has always resulted in a more than proportionate lowering of the general death rate.

The most serious obstacle to progress is the ignorance of health officials and many physicians, who have not yet learned that a lowered birth rate results in an even more lowered death rate. It is forgivable if the people do not know this truth, for it has never had wide publicity. But it is unforgivable for physicians, health officials, and university professors whose business it is to study the basic necessities of health, to be so completely uninformed. The prize ignorant letters recently received by the National League are from Dr. John S. Fulton, Secretary of the Maryland State Health Department, who declares that "the aim of the National Birth Control League, however well-intended, is not that of Nature, Country, God, or Truth," and that nowhere in religion, science, state-craft will an authoritative voice be raised for the National Birth Control League, that is to say for race murder."

More literature was the emphatic demand of the Conference. The two most popular leaflets are one giving reasons for urging birth control in war-time, and the one called "The Figures Prove It," giving the birth and death rates of some of the larger countries, showing the contrast between these with and without easily available contraceptive knowledge.

Among the new publications planned by the Conference was a leaflet on Birth Control as a health measure, another was a collection of typical letters received from parents in need of information.

A special edition of Drysdale's "Small Family System," usually sold for \$1.50, is offered to members of the League for 65 cents.

The conference gave a hearty welcome to Mrs. Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Review. The Review is not officially the organ of the National League, but five members of the Executive Committee are also directors of the Review.

One of the members of the National Executive Committee, Mrs. Lillian R. Sire, president of the Society for the Aid of Mental Defectives, associated with the Post Graduate Hospital, spoke at the conference urging the necessity of birth control information for defectives who

are capable of understanding the use of contraceptives but who cannot be the parents of normal children.

The Conference voted that a similar larger meeting should be called in Chicago probably in the autumn.

MARY WARE DENNETT, Secretary

Observations of a Nurse

OF 289 WHITE MOTHERS examined by the social service department of a university dispensary, 49 had induced from 2 to 8 abortions apiece previous to the present pregnancy. Of these 49 women, 7 were of Jewish faith, 20 Catholic, and 22 Protestants. Among the 253 colored patients, 14 had induced abortions.

From these figures it will be seen that more than one-tenth of the patients applying at the clinic try to avoid carrying babies. In many cases their motive in going to the clinic is to find out whether they are pregnant, and when the birth is due, so that they can induce abortion. This makes the work in the department very difficult in the way of reducing the infant mortality, as no matter how hard the nurse may work she cannot present a report without miscarriages and abortions.

From the experiences of the worker, it was found that most of the miscarriages were induced by doctors, a very small number were done by midwives. There is only a nominal fee—\$5 to \$25—for this service.

When the nurse calls to find out why the patient did not return to the clinic she is met with a smiling face. The patient says, "Thank the Lord, I have been relieved." The doctor took the risk and induced a four months' miscarriage. She is very much astonished when it is explained to her that she and not the doctor took the risk as it might have cost her her life, and that she would probably realize the effects of it in the future.

One patient, only 21 years of age, induced 8 abortions between 6th and 8th week of pregnancy, with present pregnancy she had a hard time to carry to full term as her uterus was so badly affected from the abortions previously induced.

Clara Taylor



LETTERS FROM WOMEN

LETTER NO 16

I WANT TO TELL you a little about myself my average weight is 90 lbs but since my last three children were born I never reach more than 80 or 83 We have had four children the oldest was with her father out and got hurt so nothing could save her, that was 14 days after my third baby was born So you see it was pretty hard I have never felt well since I have nursed all my children as long as I could I will tell you how close together they are My girl was 4 years the 9th of April, a boy will be 3 the 22nd of November, the youngest boy will be 2 the 11th of December The one was only a few days over a year when the other came I am never sick or notice anything till I am about 4 months along then my legs ache both night and day so I am hardly able to walk or lift the children I have The last 4 and 5 weeks if I am alone, I don't dare to sit down if I did I wouldn't be able to get up, if a child should fall and hurt itself my back and legs refuse to get up without help I nearly always had my time when the baby was 9 months old but this time I never had them till in February and had them 3 times I always feel tired and worn out Do you suppose it could be that I am not regular or can it be that I am caught again I can't be a month along as yet Do you not think if it is, an abortion is justifiable in my case They will never be necessary in my case again as my husband is in the same will about it as I My mother was a small woman not as small as I I am a twin I was not full grown when I was born I weighed 2 lbs They kept me wrapped up in cotton with hot flat irons around me My sister was full grown but did not live My mother had fourteen children the last four or five were too weak to live We are 8 living, six boys, 2 girls Why is it right to have so many and not have them so they are able to live If you should doubt what I have written isn't true, write to my sister, Mrs J L She is the one that asked you to send your pamphlet to me She has children when she wants If you can send us anything no matter what price please do so I am nervous and wakeful in the night

Yours truly,

Mrs L E J

LETTER NO 17

I HAVE READ SOME of your books and have heard people speak of you, and now I am going to ask you for a little advice or help, please I am just 22, I have been married 6 years, I have three children, the oldest is five years old and my baby is 11 months old My husband has tuberculosis and has been to the state sanatorium and as yet can keep his business going My husband's parents are dead and we had to take their children three of them not large enough to work for themselves, and the other to pay board There is five of them and five of us with baby making ten in family and I have to do all the cooking housework and sewing for all and my baby to attend to also I am

telling you this so you won't think I am foolish for writing you, still I think I go crazy thinking about everything Now, what I want to tell you is I have missed my monthly sickness once and I am afraid I am pregnant as I never miss unless I am I don't know how it happened as I've been careful since my husband has been sick I have taken laxatives and quinine and it has failed I have been to my family doctor, and he knowing how it is with me refused to help me I would pay you whatever you charge and keep quiet about it, and be so much obliged to you If you can help me any or can't please answer this so I won't be writing and bothering you

Sincerely,

Mrs C M C

LETTER NO 18

I KNOW HOW MUCH some people need your advice, I would like to help the cause I am a coal miner's wife We have five children, so I think you will readily see how badly I need your advice, and many families are far worse, because the men do not earn quite as much as my husband Still we have to economize He is earning over 100 dollars a month, but everything is so dear, it's hardly sufficient, and I would like to see my children have some education, but if we get some more it will be impossible I believe in having less and have them better I know of families where there are 9 and 10 children and as soon as they are 16 years old are sent in the mine It is absolutely necessary, because they need so much, and the earning of the father is not sufficient

I am heart and soul with you, in your endeavor to let people have more joy out of life, not only misery I am,

Yours very truly,

Mrs J B

LETTER NO 19

I HAVE BEEN married eighteen years and during that time I have had ten miscarriages, seven living children and three dead Have always been in poor health and at the present am five months pregnant Have been in bed the same length of time and will not be able to leave it until all is over Now I have been to a number of doctors and all the information am able to get, is never to have any more children, as I can never stand it, or live through it, and also it would be a crime, but such advice has never helped me

So if you will kindly advise me which book or books would be best for me I never want to be this way again, as I suffer terribly all the time and my children cannot have the proper care or health

My husband is a day laborer, and our living and finances are very limited and I would like very much for you to tell me just what books I shall get on birth control, and by so doing you will greatly oblige

Mrs B P

THE MALTHUSIAN DOCTRINE TODAY

By C V Drysdale, D Sc

(Continued from the last issue)

NOW IT IS COMMON knowledge that in all but a very small minority of cases the wages of a family do not increase at anything like this rate, and if there were no other help a considerable number of the children would succumb as commonly happens, from insufficient nourishment or from diseases which it renders them incapable of resisting. The constant tendency to increase is the tendency for children to arrive whether food is ready for them or not, and although the wages or subsistence have not increased sufficiently and the numbers have therefore died down to equality with them, there is no doubt in the mind of any intelligent married couple that population in their family has been attempting to increase beyond the means of subsistence, and that terrible misery has been caused by it.

Now what Malthus did in his Essay was to do for the nation or the world what we have just done for the family. He asked himself two questions: (1) How fast would the population of a country increase if there were no checks on it? (2) How fast can we reasonably expect to be able to increase food? This led him to put forward his famous Ratios which have been so much criticised.

How fast would unchecked population increase? There are three ways of arriving at an estimate of this: (a) to consider the rate of increase of a family as we have done above, (b) to find out the rate at which population has actually increased in new fertile countries, (c) to consider how many births and deaths would naturally occur in such a country, from records of actual birth and death-rates.

Before doing this, however, there is another very important point: How should it increase? Should it increase steadily by an equal amount each year, or should it get faster or slower as time goes on?

Consider a sum of money invested in a bank paying say four per cent interest. If there is 100 pounds invested at first there will be 4 pounds interest at the end of the year, and if this is kept the owner will have 104 pounds. Next year there will be another 4 pounds interest, making 108 pounds total, and so on, the total increasing every year by 4 pounds. This is a steady increase, or what is called an arithmetical progression: the importance of which will be seen in a moment. At the above rate, in twenty-five years there will be 25 times 4 = 100 pounds of interest and the original 100 pounds will have doubled to 200 pounds, in fifty years it will be 300 pounds, and in a century 500 pounds.

But now suppose that instead of keeping the interest it is put into the bank every year to be added to what is there. This makes an enormous difference. The first year there would be 4 pounds of interest on the 100 pounds as before, but the next year there would be four per cent on 104 pounds = 4 pounds 3s 2d, and each year the interest would be greater and greater so that the total would increase faster and faster. It can be shown that the 100 pounds would have doubled to 200 pounds in about seventeen and a half years and in the next seventeen and a half years it would again double to 400 pounds, in seventeen and a half years more another doubling to 800 pounds and so on, so that it would become about fifty times as great or 5000 pounds in a single century. This is called a "compound interest" or geometrical progression, and in the case we have taken it means that the increase in a century is fifty-fold or ten times as great as with the same rate of interest at an "arithmetical" progression.

Now, it is pretty clear that population must increase in one or other of these ways. Starting with a hundred people of ordinarily distributed ages on an island there will be a certain number of births and deaths each year forming the increase or interest, and if this increase were added each year without in their turn swelling the increase there would be an equal number of additions in each successive year, so that if it was a four per cent increase, the population would increase exactly like the sum of money at simple interest considered above.

BUT IT IS OBVIOUS that the second or 'compound interest' rule is the true one for population if there is no emigration (i.e., withdrawing from the population bank). The excess of population, or 'interest' of each year is added to the existing population, and in its turn becomes a source of

new increase*. If the birth-rate (the number of births per thousand of the population) and the death-rate (deaths per thousand of population) remain steady as they obviously should do in a long settled country, this means a constant percentage rate of increase, and a total increase in a geometrical progression. If the birth rate is 50 and death rate 10 per 1000 the survival rate is 50-10 or 40 per 1000 = 4 per cent and the population must increase exactly like the sum of money at 4 per cent compound interest, doubling every 17½ years, and becoming fifty times as great in one century: 50 times 50 or 2,500 times as large, in two centuries, etc.

Now, what Malthus claimed was more moderate than this. He saw, what must be admitted by anyone who studies the question, that unchecked population in a settled country must increase in a compound interest manner or geometrical progression but he purposely took a figure less than the possible one and supposed that population would double each twenty-five years. This gives the following:

Year	0	25	50	75	100
Population	1	2	4	8	16

Malthus was able to show that in the United States and other countries population had actually increased for a century or more as rapidly or even more rapidly, than this quite apart from immigration.

THE MOST SIMPLE and commonsense way of starting out to find how fast population should increase is by thinking of what would happen in a normal average family. There can be no doubt that if there were no economic difficulty, almost every young man and woman would marry soon after the age of twenty, so that the progress of population in the nation as a whole would be practically the same as that of the families of which it is made up.

Let us then, first take the case in which a couple marry when the woman is twenty, and suppose that she has one child every two years from twenty-one to forty-three. Forty-five is usually taken as the end of the child-bearing period. Here, then is the series:

Age of mother	21	23	25	27	29	31	33	35	37	39	41	43
No of children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

It is a long and complicated business to work out from this the number of grandchildren etc., because the children come to the age of marriage in different years. But we can get a fair idea of the true rate of increase by taking it as if all the twelve children arrived together when the mother was at the age of midway between twenty-one and forty-three, or thirty-two years old. This means that in thirty-two years the number of people had increased from two to fourteen, or sevenfold. In sixty-four years there would be two grandparents, twelve parents and 12 times 6-72 children. But we will suppose the original couple to die at that age, so that there will be eighty-four descendants living—six times the number at thirty-two years. Thus it means that the population increases sixfold every thirty-two years, 6 by 6 or thirty-sixfold in 32 plus 32—64 years, and 6 by 6 by 6—216 fold in ninety-six years, and so on. This is equivalent to an increase of 56 per cent per year, or of doubling in twelve and a half years.

(To be continued)

* It may be objected that the children born in each year do not commence to reproduce till twenty years or more later. But although this is the case, in each year there are a certain number of others, born previously, who are arriving at the age of marriage.

Married Love—By Marie C Slopes

This book contains a fascinating and tremendously illuminating interpretation of the sex impulse. It will interest every man who wants to understand woman—it will interest every woman who wants to understand herself. Price \$2.00, to be had at this office.



FEAR AND THE FUTURE RACE

(Continued from Page 7)

acquires the habit of self-confidence, which means having continually and increasingly more faith. Hence his ability to put things across from subjectivity into objectivity. It is also true that the fearful man or woman who is in a perpetual state of worry and dread usually brings about the very conditions dreaded.

When we are inclined to be too rash and to take foolish chances we should tone our attitude down to one of prudence and caution. In this case we reverse the current from faith to very moderate fear. Prudence and caution are beneficial mental states when not carried too far.

IN THE LIGHT OF the foregoing, it is interesting to consider what part fear has to play in birth control. Picture a woman living in constant fear and dread of pregnancy, and there are many such! The very fear she entertains makes her a prey to an army of egos looking for an opening into objective existence. It is a case of her will against theirs, and her fear makes it easy for them to objectify their desires at her expense. She is likely to have a very large family and to attract only those individuals who follow the line of least resistance. So her children are apt to be ordinary, if not rather worthless.

Suppose she conquers that fear. That would mean a tremendous stride toward self-control. If she should bring a child into the world under these changed conditions, it would be an ego of a very different type. If her self-control were not yet strong enough to prevent her becoming a mother against her will, still her child would be an ego more developed than she, to be able to overcome her resisting power.

Suppose faith has completely replaced fear in her soul. Then motherhood will of a necessity become voluntary. It could not happen against her will, for if she completely controls her faith she will objectify only what she chooses to. But if she should choose to become a mother, which is a wonderful privilege after all, she is now in a position to attract the type of ego she most desires her child to be. Ella Wheeler Wilcox declares that her mother desired and had faith that she was to give birth to a literary offspring, and it so happened. If we know the law of being and follow that law wisely, we mothers can all do likewise. What wonderful power lies in the hand that rocks the cradle! Think of being able to give birth to a Godlike race of supermen and women! This will be possible when we learn to control the forces already in our possession.

My Prayer

By Gertrude Boyle

ENERGY of mind,
Swift winged Thought,
Bear my being's desire out to responsive worlds!

O power, O magic of mind,
Force thy way through quivering ether
And quicken a cosmic impulse to aid
This that my art-self wills, burns to create!

Potent Self, snap the chains that limit thee
And lay thy plea before the Universe!

Lo, I open wide my suppliant arms,
From Omnipotence would I receive
The generous flow of grace—
The influx of infinite Spirit!

EDITORIAL COMMENT

EVEN CONFERENCES are human. Each has a spirit of its own and it is this spirit that counts and makes such gatherings useful. The keynote of the recent Birth Control Conference in New York was struck when workers in the movement testified that everywhere they found a greedy acceptance that birth control is a necessity for women. They found it easy to convince people of its desirability and expediency even when doubt was felt at first. War has opened the eyes of women to their own position in the world. What birth control advocates now need in their work is a classification of facts, scientific facts on health, facts on population, increase and decrease, facts as to what the laws are in different countries and different states. They want facts as to what doctors can legally do now and how clinics can be legally opened. They want to know why so many physicians are indifferent and ignorant regarding contraceptive methods. The facts are scattered through many volumes, some of which cannot be had by the layman. The birth control movement now wants accurate knowledge of all these things made readily available for their use in a campaign of education. It is a hopeful note. It shows the workers in the movement feel victory coming soon. We wish to add a word of gratitude and appreciation to the splendid work of Mrs. Mary Ware Dennett who organized the Conference and also to the devoted spirit of Mrs. Amos Pinchot who though constantly active in various war activities, has rightly proclaimed that standing by the birth control movement today is a great national duty toward generations yet to be.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH is the bigotted, relentless enemy of birth control. It makes no bones about its stand. This movement threatens its hold upon the poor and the ignorant, and probably only the existence of restraining laws prevents it from applying the thumb-screw and the rack to all those who believe in woman's right to practise voluntary motherhood. But, since the methods of the Inquisition are out of date, it would compromise by clapping us all into jail. "The birth-controllers are at it again" runs a medieval editorial in *The Holy Name Journal*, the organ of one of the most powerful Catholic societies in America. "Prison starvation seems but to have whetted their desire to continue the propaganda for what will ultimately be the extermination of the masses upon which our country must rely in the future." Observe the admission that our propaganda (as the Holy-Namers see it) "will ultimately" succeed. "Aside from its ethical and moral depravity," the article goes on to say, "the birth-controllers are disseminating a doctrine that is decidedly shortsighted and subversive of even the material welfare of the land. We need our teeming masses now, we shall need them more in the future. Would it not be a wise move on the part of the Government to intern all birth-controllers and suppress their teaching? It would be a prudent war measure." Do we expect ever to win over the Catholic Church to our way of thinking? Not right away. We are

aware that it will fight to the last ditch against this ideal. But we propose to go on enrolling Catholics under our banner of progress—by the thousands today, by the hundreds of thousands in a year or two. In the long run, reason will inevitably triumph over darkness and superstition. Even the Catholic Church will yield to the force of public opinion.

PRIESTS AND MINISTERS of many Christian sects (outside of the Catholic Church) have been among the converts to birth control during recent years. That men of their calling should join us has not sent us into special ecstasies of tickled vanity and gratified respectability. We have welcomed them as individuals, as intelligent persons who have had the courage of their opinions in the face of a good deal of social opposition. So the fact that the Rev. William Ralph Ince, dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, has recently come out in favor of birth control and eugenics does not impress us merely because he is a dean. We consider it deserving of comment, because in his public statement on the subject Dr. Ince pointed out that a reduction of births will be necessary to combat unemployment after the war. He is reported as saying that this movement would "save and make happy the population." Church of England incumbents are paid by the State, and the British Government is clamoring for babies. Consequently, by telling the plain truth at this time Dr. Ince proved himself to be an honest and brave man, and we take off our hats to him. It is interesting to note that he asserted that the average lifetime has increased one-third during the last sixty years—an additional reason for the general practice of birth control.

A REGRETTABLY FALSE idea of present conditions in the birth control movement has been caused in some quarters. The Birth Control League of New York held a meeting early in May, at which Hiram Myers was unanimously elected president, Mrs. Eugene P. Stone, vice-president, J. J. Goldstein, treasurer, and Elizabeth Stuyvesant, secretary. An erroneous newspaper report of the proceedings at this meeting stated that most of the leagues which had been founded following the prosecution of various leaders of the movement had now become inactive or gone out of business. "There seems to be something in the private nature of the subject," an ex-officer was said to have declared, "which makes it unsuited for a public movement." The misleading nature of the above statements must be apparent to the members of the twenty or more active leagues listed in our directory on Page 2. The birth control movement is very much alive. It is one of the few radical movements which has not been destroyed by America's participation in the war. The New York Women's Publishing Company has been formed to finance this magazine, and is offering \$10 shares in a \$10,000 fund to our friends and supporters. We have a growing circulation and have never felt more hopeful of the future.