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THE BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

DEDICATED TO VOLUNTARY MOTHERHOOD

MARGARET SANGER, Editor

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No 4

Sheer Insanity

Editorial Comment

CHILDREN IN EUROPE are starving. Not only are the usual number, condemned to die of want each year by a callous and unthinking society, dying of hunger, but children who under ordinary conditions would have plenty of food and clothing and a chance for some sort of an education are perishing for lack of proper food. Other thousands are dying because they have no food whatsoever. The grim hand of starvation is reaching for the babies of Poland, of Austria, of Hungary, of Balkan countries and of Armenia. The pinch of want is already beginning to be felt in Germany, in Italy and even in France. England has been using one half of all her tonnage to bring in foodstuffs from her colonies and other parts of the world, but conditions are so bad there that each twenty four hours brings a new strike, or a new threat of revolution.

One appeal after another is being made to America to give food or sell it on credit to Europe. These appeals are being made by the ruling forces of the various countries and they are becoming hourly more insistent. Children are dying—dying for want of food, and the food is not forthcoming fast enough to save them. That is one side of the picture. The chief figures in it are the children and the rulers, official and unofficial, of Europe.

THERE IS ANOTHER side of the picture, though the chief figures remain the same—rulers and children. With one voice, the controllers of Europe's destinies call for food to keep the children now alive from starving, with another voice, equally unanimous, they call upon the women of the working class and of the lower middle class to produce more children!

Official and commercial France are turning heaven and earth to induce French women to breed. Clemenceau stumped the country upon that issue. Millerand has gone farther than his predecessor and made the "repopulation" issue the chief one of his premiership. Merchants and manufacturers are offering bonuses, the government is trying to enact laws encouraging or compelling larger families. And French children are already hungry!

THE DOMINANT ELEMENTS in Great Britain have imitated Clemenceau and the French imperialists with a vengeance. Millions of workmen strike and strike again for enough to keep their families from starvation. British shipping has been strained to its utmost capacity to get food into the country to maintain the population already there. Mothers

are crying out that they will have no more children until those now living can be decently fed and clothed. And yet out of this chaos comes the voice of the British imperialist, calling upon the British mother to bear more children and yet more children. And this voice ceases calling upon the mothers only long enough to call upon America and the far corners of the earth to feed the children alive and hungry.

THESE ARE STATESMEN, business men, politicians—the flower of the thought of yesterday—the best thinkers of the old order of things, who make these two calls. These men are the best ruling material in a man made world, conducted for purely masculine ends, in accordance with purely masculine concepts. And the acme of their logic is to crowd a planet in which children are starving with more children, who must be born weaklings and die of hunger.

If these statesmen were dealing with a group of families, in all of which children were dying of want, and were at one and the same time demanding more children and charity for those who are already born, public sentiment would at once condemn them as irresponsible fanatics or raving madmen. But when this madness is multiplied by millions and spread over the face of the world, it is harder for the average person to have all the facts by which to judge the situation and the madmen escape restraint. The sole difference between the situation now prevailing in Europe and of the hypothetical case suggested, is that the folly of the rulers is a million fold worse.

The policy is sheer insanity. We tolerate such exhibitions of imperialistic mental aberration only because we have become so familiar with them that we no longer realize the hideous results that are to follow. Monumental, murderous absurdities by men in high places have lost their power to shock us. "Our children are starving! Give us more children." This is the voice of a masculine officialdom. Is there any hope until women take these matters into their own hands? Is there a woman insane enough to listen to this plea?

THERE ARE 38,000,000 babies born into the world every year, according to the official birth statisticians of France, who have just completed a ten years' investigation. What are we going to do with the 38,000,000 children who will be born in 1920? This question is one which must be thoughtfully considered by the women of America as well as the women of Europe. With crop shortages and financial panic in prospect in the United States, and with Europe draining us of our food

supplies as fast as she is able to, with national boundary lines virtually wiped out as far as the flow of commodities from one country to another is concerned, what shall the American mother do? If it were practical under modern conditions to keep our foodstuffs at home, a blind selfishness might dictate the policy of multiplying the American population without limit and letting European babies starve, but even if we wished to do such a thing, it is impossible. A world food shortage in these days is a world food shortage and affects in greater or less degree every country. America must bear her part of the disaster with the rest of the world.

WHEN BABIES STARVE in Europe, American babies must at least go hungry. When industry breaks down and financial disaster paralyzes Europe, Americans must experience financial panic and ultimate industrial disaster which also means starvation. Whether we wish to or not, we share the fate of the world. Whether she live in Europe or America, the woman who has the welfare of society, or of her own children at heart, will not bear another child until the world's productive capacity becomes equal to the task of caring for the people already here.

Apply Real Remedies!

THE ANNUAL DRIVES of the Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor, the Visiting Nurse's Association of the Henry Street Settlement, The Babies' Dairy League, Maternity Center Association, and like organizations are now being conducted. In commenting upon that fact, it is not our desire to discourage anyone from making contributions to these or any similar organization, but we do desire to point out the fact that these agencies are dealing in palliatives when they might be applying fundamental remedies.

There are very few nurses in the profession who do not avowedly or secretly believe in Birth Control. They come into daily contact with the brutal, sordid misery and social waste growing out of the inability of women to avoid having children. Neither can any charity worker who comes into direct touch with the recipients of such relief doubt that the intelligent practice of Birth Control would soon do away with the need for organized charity. These are the facts of every day experience—they are written large in the story of nine out of every ten unfortunate families.

MOST OF THE contributors to organized charity are men and women who have small families or no children at all. It is but a fair assumption that most, if not all, of these contributors practice Birth Control at home. The fact that they contribute to charities may be taken as an indication, at least, that they wish to see abject poverty relieved and the diseases due to poverty decreased. Why then, in the name of common sense do they not insist that these institutions which they support shall apply remedies that will cure? Why not insist that they add to their palliative remedies, the fundamental remedy of Birth Control?

Every new baby in a family already wholly or partially dependent means the intensifying of a bad situation and the

multiplication of the misery that already exists. Every new baby in a family that is on the verge of submergence means one more family wholly or partially dependent upon charity. The general situation grows worse from year to year. Every twelve months it is necessary to raise greater sums, and all the while the charitable agencies are falling farther and farther behind in their hopeless task of sweeping back the waves of misfortune—waves swelled by the advent of thousands of undernourished, diseased, and unwanted babies. The situation will continue to grow worse until scientific family limitation is applied.

If every nurse, if every charity worker would carry into every home the message which the woman in that home is seeking—if, in a word, they carried the message of Birth Control, the mother instinct itself, finding a means to check the multiplication of misery would, in a few years solve the problems with which charitable agencies are now so hopelessly wrestling.

"Should Poverty Be Punished?"

"SHOULD POVERTY BE PUNISHED?" inquires the Maternity Center Association at the head of its advertisement appealing for funds, and then adds "Every year 75,000 women in New York through ignorance or poverty go into child birth without medical attention or nursing oversight. This association can help only 10,000 now."

It is shocking indeed that only 10,000 mothers should, through the generosity, and humane efforts of a few private individuals, have the ordeal of child birth lessened a trifle by medical skill, while 65,000 face the same ordeal without such help. But appalling as this comparison is, and grateful as we must be that even 10,000 receive the kindly ministrations

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Editors

MARGARET SANGER
FRANCES M. BJORKMAN

MARY KNOBLAUCH
BLANCHE SCHRACK

Art Editors

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of a noble purposed group, we must pause to ask just what is being accomplished for the 10,000 helped

IS THE OBJECT of the Maternity Center Association to bring only temporary relief? Is it only to see the overworked, drudging mother through an undesired pregnancy? Is she sent back into a life of despair, to return fifteen, sixteen or eighteen months later to give birth to another unwelcome child? Or is she instructed how to prevent the periodic recurrence of this tragedy? Is anything done to prevent these 75,000 helpless victims from becoming 100,000 or 200,000?

What hope is there, with the increasing population of the City of New York, that the Maternity Center Association, now able to care for only 10,000 mothers, shall catch up with its generous task? And in the meantime, what is becoming

of the 75,000 unwanted children who are being born of these mothers too poor to afford medical attention. If remedial measures stop with seeing the mother through her pregnancies, where will the matter end?

APPALLING AS ALL this is, it is not more sad than to reflect that a group of men and women whose names stand for the best intentioned thought of the country, is willing to go on indefinitely using up the resources of the people in remedies which only perpetuate the evils to which they are applied. The suffering of these women, heartrending as it is, is not more heartrending than the fact that such a genuinely earnest and sincere group as the Maternity Center Association goes on patching up a situation which it might permanently relieve through the application of Birth Control.

Eugenics and The Social Problem

By Henry Bergen, Ph D

I EUGENICS

A FEW MONTHS AGO a small paper covered volume of about seventy pages, entitled *Eugenics and Environment*, by Professor C Lloyd Morgan, was published in London. As a popularly written and sound and clear outline of a subject which is very much talked about and very little understood, it deserves, like Professor J Arthur Thompson's book on *Heredity* and Dr Edgar Schuster's admirable little *Eugenics*, to be widely read. For it is a noticeable fact that a good deal of scepticism has been expressed of late, especially by economists and students of ethics and sociology, in regard to the practical value of eugenics, and although much of this scepticism is a result of pure, and to a certain extent, unpardonable ignorance, nevertheless when we consider the quality of much of the work, and especially of the statistical material, which has been put before the public by professed eugenicists, it is easily to be understood. But however justified it may be in regard to certain particulars, it is unfortunate and in the main undeserved, because eugenics, as "the study of agencies under social control that may improve or impair the racial qualities of future generations, either physically or mentally" does not contain anything in itself that ought to awaken in us any other feeling than the hope of improvement in the constitutional strength and consequently the general health and welfare of the human race. Nothing is of more importance to us as living animals than our health, and not only our own health but the health of our descendants depends in large measure on our "racial qualities," in other words, those physical and mental characters which are transmitted to each of us by his ancestors.

EVERY LIVING ANIMAL has his origin in a fertilized ovum, which is formed by the coalescence of two reproductive cells, one of which is supplied by each parent. If the elements, or rudimentary constituents, of the germ plasma contained in the parental reproductive cells are defective, the chances are very great that the individual who develops from them will be constitutionally weak, that is, one or another of his vital organs, including the nervous system and brain, hav-

ing been built up out of inferior material, so to speak, will be below the average of the race. And although there is probably no such thing as constitutional weakness in the sense of the popularly conceived notion of a general lack of vitality shared to a greater or lesser extent by all the organs of the body, there are certainly constitutional, i e., genetic* weaknesses of specific organs. Children are born with transmitted organic weaknesses which range all the way from, let us say, a defective heart, circulatory system or digestive glands, to an apparent inability of certain of the tissues to produce "antibodies"* in sufficient quantity or strength to secure them immunity from certain infectious diseases, and there is no doubt that many of the physiological factors which predispose to "feeble mindedness" (a loosely used collective term standing for a whole complex of symptoms), epilepsy, certain forms of insanity, all manner of neuroses and functional deficiencies of the various organs of the body, including some of the very complicated series of defects, both structural and functional, which make up the tendency to tuberculosis, can be transmitted from parents to children and are so transmitted in countless cases. The offspring of the genetically inferior come into the world with a physical handicap which inexorably condemns them sometimes to premature death or susceptibility to disease and chronic ill health, sometimes to mental deficiency which can often be so great as to render them useless as citizens and a burden to themselves and the community.

Since the underlying weakness is in each case germinal, having its origin in defective rudimentary constituents of the

*The terms constitutional, "genetic" and "germinal" are here used indifferently to qualify such organic defects as have their origin in the germ plasma. The words "congenital" and "inborn," sometimes used in this connection, are misleading because they imply the inclusion of such defects as may have been acquired by the embryo during its pre-natal life, and which, although they may be of an exceedingly injurious nature, have no necessary relation with genetic defects. I use the word "race" not in its technical sense of "a variety of the human species" but simply to mean the people of a nation or nations. The term "stock" is equivalent to family or group of blood relations from which the individual is descended.

germ plasm, it follows that as a portion of the parental germ plasm is set aside in the fertilized ovum for future reproductive purposes and transmitted in a practically unchanged form, the chances are very great, even in the case of a weak marrying into a sound stock, that a large proportion of the offspring of the second generation will also be defective, and that in some cases, especially when like (as is its apparent inclination) marries like, the ultimate result will be either the extinction of the stock or a wholesale breeding of hopelessly defective individuals

IT MAY BE said at this point in order to clear up a wide spread misconception in regard to the terms "inherited" or "transmitted" weaknesses, that no disease can, properly speaking, be inherited or exist as such in the ultra microscopic components of the reproductive cells. What is transmitted in the case of an "inherited" disease is defective rudimentary constituents of the germ plasm, which, because of their defective nature, are incapable of furnishing a sound foundation for the cells of the body which in turn are built up through their agency and subsequently develop into functionally defective tissues or organs. If a specific disease arises on the basis of such organic defects, it is because a tendency to that disease was implicit in the defective germ plasm in which the new individual had his origin, but no disease process can take place in the germ plasm itself

IT MUST ALSO be clearly understood that the presence of a transmissible defect in a parent does not necessarily imply that all or any of the offspring of that parent will be likewise affected. If the Mendelian theory, according to which we "inherit" each of our essential characters from one or the other parent but not from both parents, is true, this can easily be understood, it is also, however, wholly consistent with the essential features of Weismann's theory of the germ plasm. In case both parents are affected by the same weakness, the chance of their having sound offspring is of course greatly reduced. All that can be said with certainty is that if a person suffers from genetic weakness, we may assume that defective rudimentary constituents of certain tissues have been transmitted to him by one or both of his parents. The defective rudimentary constituents must also exist in his own germ plasm, and whether they will be transmitted to the third and succeeding generations or not depends upon the action of a number of unknown factors. Nor will the most careful and elaborate statistical investigations enable us to foretell with any certainty what the inheritance will be in any particular case, although we may learn to know precisely what is to be expected on the average. For not only has it been observed that the children of a parent who is affected by a specific disease or constitutional weakness themselves frequently exhibit wholly different pathological tendencies, but it also frequently happens in cases where the originally sound germ plasm of a parent has suffered injury, that, for reasons which will be explained later, the expression of this injury will take an entirely different form in the offspring. Thus it has been remarked by Ebstein (1902) and others, that gout, diabetes and obesity, three characteristic diseases of metabolism, often

appear to interchange with one another in the inheritance. The same observation has been made in regard to mental and nervous defects. In the words of Dr F H Mott, "As a rule

no particular form of insanity is hereditarily transmitted, but only a tendency to mental instability, which manifests itself in various and manifold ways. It is therefore necessary in any careful statistics, to learn whether any members of the family have suffered with neurasthenia, hysteria, epilepsy, petit mal, migraine, chorea, insanity of any kind, or suicide." Although in the case of the nervous system, of which the rudimentary constituents seem to be of a peculiarly unstable nature, this would seem to point to the transmission of a general predisposition to derangement, a more probable explanation, at any rate so far as the other organs and tissues are concerned, may be looked for in part in the correlation or interdependence of their functions, whereby the defective functioning of one may throw the entire system out of order, in part in the very important complicating action of intra uterine disturbances.

THUS ALTHOUGH WE are unable to predict the result of a given mating with any great accuracy, so far at least as the precise nature of the transmitted defects is concerned, the fact nevertheless remains that defective parents have defective children, and that the birth of defective children is an injury to the race. Difficulties are at once encountered here by the eugenicist in consequence of the necessity of determining the nature and degree of the defectiveness which in any particular case will warrant the abstention from having children and also in regard to the manner in which abstention is to be carried out or enforced.

So far very little has been done in either direction. We know that most of the insane together with many idiots and imbeciles are permanently confined in asylums, and that congenitally abnormal criminals (many of whom are genetically unsound) spend a large part of their time in jail, but the majority of epileptics, deaf mutes, chronic alcoholists, drug habitues, feeble minded and tuberculous people are naturally free and in general given to marriage and to the bringing up of large families. The suggestion of compulsory sterilization of extreme cases has not had a very encouraging reception, voluntary sterilization has only been carried out in a few instances, and the enforcement of restrictions on marriage is both difficult and unwise. It is also a noticeable fact that only the more conspicuous forms of defectiveness have received the attention of eugenicists. The study of the relations of organic weaknesses in general to the germ plasm has hardly yet begun, and in a great many cases, especially of idiocy and feeble mindedness, it is probable that the defect is not genetic at all, but acquired as a result of a diseased condition of the mother during pregnancy. As there is no reason why the genetically defective should not marry, so long as they are capable of leading responsible and decent lives, or that they should be deprived of a normal sexual life, the only practical alternative consistent both with their welfare and with the health of the race, is the practice of Birth Control.

(Continued on page 15)

Preparing for the World Crisis

By Margaret Sanger

FOR THREE MONTHS we have been suggesting through this magazine that women cease bearing children for five years—that is, until the world, most of which is disorganized industrially and financially, shall have had time to right itself in one way or another. The suggestion has received wide publicity in the daily press, and most of that publicity has been favorable. It has been discussed from platforms, as well as in private and in small gatherings. Some of the discussion from the platform has been unfriendly to a degree, some of it pronouncedly antagonistic. Many letters and verbal comments from thinking people who are aware of the actual trend of world affairs have confirmed the opinion that a cessation of births for a period of a few years will not only save an unimaginable amount of misery, and give society a chance to put its house in order, but that such a step is a prime necessity in our present situation.

Everywhere in America the talk of a financial panic is growing. It may not come within a few months or within the year, as predicted by R. C. Martens, whose series of interviews have appeared in these columns, but the very fact that it is expected and that it is feared on every side, means that it is inevitable. And that means industrial paralysis, unemployment and want.

WITHIN A FEW days after THE BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW published one of the Martens interviews, predicting a shortage of farm products in the United States, the United States Department of Agriculture issued a statement in which it made substantially the same prediction for the coming year. The report, based upon information gathered throughout the country, said that there was a serious risk of reduced food production. And this when Europe is starving and America is constantly being called upon to send food, either as a gift or upon credit.

The financial crisis, which Speaker Gillette of the national house of representatives says is to be "the worst in history," and the altogether probable food shortage of next year, are enough in themselves to make every thinking mother refrain from bringing more children into the world until the situation is stabilized. But such conditions as those mentioned bring in their train others which are worse—the paralysis of industry and hunger among the masses.

MEANWHILE THE UNITED STATES is not taking proper care of the children already here. To say nothing of the two or three million child laborers, the hundreds who are perpetually undernourished and the vast amount of preventable disease that is at all times with us, new factors and situations are coming to light. The Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, in New York, for instance, is making a drive for nearly a million dollars, and promises nothing better than mild palliatives for a situation which it describes in dis-

heartening terms. This drive is typical of many now in progress. Mayor Hylan of New York City is trying to find the way out of an intolerable housing situation by an agreement between real estate operators, contractors and labor. There is no apparent prospect of success. Rents have doubled, upon the average, and no landlord seems to care to have children in a building that has all the modern comforts.

Milk continues at 18 cents a quart in New York and despite the constant agitation, the price doesn't seem to be inclined to come down. The housewife's dollar continues to be worth about forty cents or fifty cents, as compared with a few years ago, and high wages seem to rule only in spots. Moreover, there is a shortage of public school teachers in New York, owing to the salaries paid. Twenty two hundred more teachers are needed.

THE CONDITIONS MENTIONED are prevalent to a greater or less degree throughout the country, and on top of it all comes the report of the United States Bureau of Education, showing that owing to the low salaries paid teachers, 18,279 schools have been closed and there are 41,900 schools being taught by teachers who are not satisfactory.

The fact is that we are not caring properly for the children now here and the conditions which are in prospect for the near future will make it impossible to give even such care to children as they are now getting. The sensible mother will have no more until conditions are better.

THE SOUNDNESS OF the plan to curtail births until world affairs are sufficiently stabilized to give a better prospect of providing for children, is being attested by a number of facts, most of which are being brought to light by persons who become panicky every time the birth rate shows signs of going down. Speakers are beginning to clamor for more births in the United States, which is a good indication that a considerable percentage of the mothers have decided to bring no more children into being until the newcomers can be well cared for. France, officially and unofficially, is making a tremendous campaign, with bonuses and whatnot for mothers, in a thus far futile effort to induce women to usher children into the disordered world.

A Hayday, labor member of Parliament, in a recent speech in the Commons, served notice upon his fellow Britons that if the English imperialists who are demanding more babies should attempt to speak in districts inhabited by workers, *they would be mobbed by women and that "there is growing in this country today a woman's movement which may be called a birth strike."* This strike would continue, he said, until the mothers were surer of being able to provide for their children.

Those who demand of the middle class and the laboring class more and more children, are sending up cries from

all corners of the earth that women are not bearing enough children. No nation is exempt—even Germany with its firmly grounded “birth politics,” has a falling birth rate like the rest.

All of this means that women are already beginning to act instinctively upon the principle involved in the suggestion made in these columns. It is but a step to the application of the principle upon a broader scale. The call to women to cease bearing children until conditions are better is born of the bitter necessity of the times. It springs from conditions—not from a theory. The propriety and the common sense of it is as obvious as that of ceasing to overload a vehicle which is already breaking down under its burden. The plan is Birth Control applied to the world, just as it is applied to families—a limitation of numbers in accordance with our ability to provide.

Famine Kills Children

THE EUROPEAN FOOD shortage, amounting to famine in Austria, is taking terrific toll of babies there. So unendurable are conditions in this respect that some of these who are seeking for remedies are not content with advocating Birth Control, but are openly demanding the legalization of abortion, to the third month. A knowledge of Birth Control, which is denied to the women of Austria, would, of course, wipe out the practice of abortion. John Ferch, an Austrian author and propagandist, writes thus to *The Neo Malthusien*, of Paris:

“THE INDUSTRIAL CENTERS of Austria are in the most frightful misery. The greater part of the bourgeoisie, the officials, the workers, all suffer from famine. The authorities are utterly incapable of repressing the profiteering of the merchants, and the peasants seem to be equally avaricious and insensible to the remedy that must be applied. The population cannot pay for the most necessary articles of food. The children are in a frightful condition regarding consumption and rickets. The mothers are thin to emaciation, without strength, and bring children into the world only to die themselves and bring death to the new born and, incidentally, to the rest of her flock, thus left unprovided for.

“Children have been seen dressed in clothing made literally of newspapers! To bathe children is often impossible, people are not able to buy wood that costs 50 cents a kilogramme, and there is no soap to be had. The new born die of cold in the hospitals. In these establishments, badly kept up as a necessity under the circumstances, one sees nothing but undernourished children, they have neither milk for the babies, nor rice for those older than babes in arms.

“NEVERTHELESS, THE LAW puts in prison for a term of five years any woman who prevents pregnancy. Mothers, however, when possible, are going to terrible extremes to avoid bringing children to life. When doctors refuse to help them, for fear of imprisonment, they apply to midwives, to quacks, to the merest makeshift who exploits them merely, it would seem, to make them suffer more. Of the thousands that die outright, tens of thousands are made invalids for life.

“Against legal forces that ‘protect the germ of life,’ and sacrifice the life itself, I have contended in my paper, ‘Prison or Obligatory Maternity.’ I would abrogate this law, and substitute liberty for the mother, for the parent and relatives in general, to decide, even at the end of the third month, whether the child should be born or not.

“Here and there, someone understands the bearing of our agitation. Even the Austrian parliament has seized upon the gist of our arguments. Isn’t it self evident that any law which obliges a mother to bring to birth a child whose life must be short and painful, is unreasonable and cruel?”

“Until recent times, we have not dared to open our lips in Austria to express such opinions. The Hapsburgs exercised a pitiless censorship, of which you in France have not any conception. Three of my works have been suppressed. The press, servile by habit, has no tenderness for our popa ganda, and proscribes discussion of the subject.

“Before the war, a good many papers were beginning to assert their right to decide for themselves what they might say on the subject, but the apathy of the masses went steadily on producing children to fill the cemeteries.”

To this article the editors of *The Neo Malthusien* add a footnote which throws a sorry light upon the means employed by French imperialists to stifle opposition to their “more babies” campaign.

“It seems hard to understand that censorship should have been more severe in Austria than in France, at least for the Neo Malthusians. Our paper has been repressed by the military authorities and no newspaper, either of the Right or of the Left, made any allusion whatever to the fact!”

Starvation and Birth Control

IN A STRONG EDITORIAL, explaining and indorsing Birth Control, *American Medicine* has a number of things to say which are exceedingly pertinent to the suggestion that there be a cessation of births for five years.

Here is part of what the medical journal said: “Europe is starving. Countless men and women, subjected to four years of unprecedented strain, have come out of the ordeal worn and torn in body and nerve. Disease is finding a ready field for its ravages. And even in those countries which have come out best, there is much malnutrition and low vitality. It is from such a race that the future generation is to come. To encourage such men and women, scarcely able to provide for their own needs and comfort, to give the world its future citizens is to invite the breeding of a race of weaklings and neurasthenics. And yet that would be the effect of indiscriminate encouragement in that direction. It is from the strong, from those who were least affected by the strain of the war, that our future citizens should come, and no method will be effective that does not recognize this point. The advocates of Birth Control are urging this point. They declare that the world will not be the better for an increased promiscuous population, the product of the least fitted members of the community. It is not a question of numbers, it is a question of quality. It will not solve the

industrial problem if there are two men for every job, when these men can do only half the work they are expected to do. Even employers acknowledge that, though there is a shortage of help everywhere, their chief complaint is against the lowered productivity of the men they can obtain. The aim, therefore, should be not quantity, but quality. And it is this aim which the followers of Mrs Sanger have made theirs."

Clinics in Holland

By Dr J Rutgers

(Late Honorary Secretary of the Dutch
neo Malthusian League)

IN 1879 AN international medical congress was held in Amsterdam, at which neo Malthusianism was one of the topics, and before which Mr S van Houten and the late Dr C R Drysdale set forth the great importance of the question from the point of view of public welfare, and especially from the hygienic aspect. As a neo Malthusian League similar to that in England was soon afterwards founded in Holland, one would have thought that public opinion would readily have accepted the new ideas. Not at all. Only a small number of advanced persons joined the League, and it was not always easy even to circulate our leaflets, in the beginning public meetings for the discussion of the subject were very rare. The law did not forbid anything, but so much the more was conservatism opposed to the propaganda. Dutch people are always somewhat afraid of new things, and even if they wanted the information for themselves individually, they were very much afraid lest anyone should have an inkling of the fact.

So theoretical propaganda was not very effective. Advanced people adopted our teaching from the beginning, the others would not even hear of it. The action of two persons determined the development of the League in a more practical direction—Dr Mensinga, a very religious man and a sincere gynaecologist, invented an appliance for women, and Dr Aletta H Jacobs, the first woman doctor in Holland, founded a clinic in Amsterdam for women and children. This was, indeed, a real clinic in the workingclass quarter of the city, but you must not think it was merely a neo Malthusian clinic, it was a general clinic for women and children, and so it was tolerated. But whenever they made the request, the poor mothers were taught how they could be saved from having too large families, not only by theoretical instruction, but by practical demonstrations and advice.

SO EXCELLENT WORK was done in a quiet way, though Dr Aletta Jacobs had to put up with much abuse on account of it, and was now and then brutally insulted, even to the extent of being pelted with mud in the street. She persevered for twelve years, and it is impossible to say how great a blessing she brought to very many families both in the crowded city of Amsterdam and far beyond. When Eve in Paradise caused the damnation of mankind, part of the punishment decreed was "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth

children' Dr Mensinga and Dr Aletta Jacobs have saved mankind by their humanitarian work!

In the meantime, when once the ice was broken, a few other doctors were also ready to give information when wanted, but only in their consultation hours. All their addresses were published in our little pamphlet relating the different methods of prevention. Indeed, considerable devotion was required in those days to give one's address for this purpose, and it was no wonder that only a very small number of doctors dared to do so. Besides, most women were somewhat ashamed to ask for such things from a man doctor, and for a long time Dr Aletta Jacobs was the only woman doctor in Holland.

But as the number of women who wanted to be helped became greater and greater every year, the League looked out for more helpers, and engaged some midwives in the greater cities of the Netherlands to give free private consultations twice a week, only the appliances being charged for. So a practical system was organized that has silently resisted all affronts and calumny for many years. The addresses were only published in our practical leaflet, which was sent confidentially to applicants, the character of the midwives being the best possible guarantee against abuses.

THESE MODEST PRIVATE clinics were so great a benefit in the most crowded centres of our country that other towns also wanted to have the same, but the difficulty was to find reliable midwives in other places who would devote themselves to the work. A fortunate chance solved this problem for us. A distinguished lady married to a railway official, and therefore having the privilege of free travelling, was helped by me, and was so grateful that she wished to help all the poor struggling railway workers' wives in her district. She came to me with one of them, begging me to give her free advice in the manner already explained. I gave her the needed instruction, and as the poor woman did not at once understand me, the lady explained it to her in simpler words, upon which I said "You do it better than I, you should do it yourself, then you need not come to Rotterdam every time." Oh, if it were only possible! The Bureau of the League agreed to make the experiment, and the success was so brilliant that now we have in all the greater towns one or more addresses of ladies specially educated by the League, theoretically and practically, from whom women can get instruction and help, even when they are poor.

The addresses are only communicated in the confidential leaflet of the League, which is to be had at the headquarters of the League, and at the offices of all our local subdivisions and correspondents everywhere. Many thousands of copies are circulated every year, always gratis and post free, these expenses being paid by the League, which has about 6,000 members, even in this small country.

THESE LADIES ARE chosen from very different social positions—rich or poor, married or single, Protestant, Roman Catholic or Jewish—but they must have means of subsistence without the small fees they may receive from paying clients, and, of course, they must have an excellent character and reputation, and their work must be quite disinterested.

When they fail in these requirements their addresses are eliminated. The number of women applicants who apply to be helped by them every year is, indeed, very considerable, and they are helped with great devotion. I could tell you very many stories of disinterested assistance and of the benefit resulting from it.

These addresses have been referred to as clinics, but it would be better to call them private clinics or consultation hours at private houses. Some of these ladies help hundreds of women a year, others but few. In the greater towns there are more addresses in the different quarters. The secret of the success is that we work silently and practically. So it

has happened that even when we had once a Clerical Government which began to obstruct our propaganda, they did not dare to stop these modern clinics. Moreover, legislation would have proved ineffective, because it is impossible to eradicate institutions which are so private. Now public opinion has been educated in practical matters so far that if a woman cannot afford the small price demanded for the preventive, she thinks she has a right to ask it gratuitously from the League. For this purpose, also, our League has a Fund.

NOTE—This article is published in America by courtesy of *The Malthusian* (London)

The French Population Problem

By Genevieve Grandcourt

(Continued)

IN 1917, A POSTER made its appearance in Paris showing the German Eagle dripping with blood on the French sword. In large black letters, one read "The Boche must be vanquished, then, for the extermination of that other scourge—TUBERCULOSIS."

It particularly aroused my interest because of recent conversations with a young French lady. She was much concerned about her brother and his family. Didn't I think his pallid, wizened little daughters were pitiable objects? They were born unhealthy, and when the third proved as frail as the other two, his wife said "I don't know what's the matter with our children, but I am satisfied we ought not to have any more." In 1914, he had been rejected for the French army on account of his light weight, and at the time I first talked with his sister, he was under clinical care as a consumptive. Nothing did him any good, apparently. Some time later, the family went to the south of France, and presently I heard in a roundabout way that he had responded to treatment for syphilis.

Not crediting the implication that the two diseases could be confused in diagnosis, the thing went entirely out of my mind until one day, I chanced upon information that an American physician (Janeway) had somewhere, either in a book or lecture, mentioned this as a possibility. On looking the matter up, it was to learn that Meltzer, agreeing with Janeway, said "The difficulty in diagnosis would seem to be still greater if we take into consideration the statement of Hansemann that out of twenty-two syphilitic lungs, there were only five in which he did not find the tubercle bacillus."

THE ANNUAL STATISTICS for consumptives treated in Paris hospitals before the war revealed 90 out of every 100 of them as alcoholics. Sobriety being, on the whole, a Latin virtue, drunkenness (in France, at any rate) would thus figure as effect before its cause, the effect, that is to say, of generally unfavorable inheritance on the one hand,

and on the other, of constitutions undermined by malnutrition, over fatigue, unhygienic living and working conditions (especially those due to overcrowding), etc., etc.

Syphilis—tuberculosis—drunkenness—insanity, all of them probably related by blood or marriage, replenish the earth with wretchedness, increase and multiply under absolutely preventable circumstances. Glance at the following tables compiled from the figures of Ernest Moreau for a period covering eleven years, and published in 1907 by the Municipal Council of Paris, to see what happens in connection with but one of these afflictions to large numbers of the "children," young or old as the case may be, which women go down to death to bring into the world.

| Number of Houses | Occupants | Tubercular Deaths | Deaths Per 1000 |
|------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 4,443 | 320,376 | 26,509 | 7.52 |
| 820 | 106,300 | 11,500 | 9.834 |

Of the 820 houses, 195 were rented furnished and occupied by 13,630 persons. The mortality was 2,888, "the formidable annual proportion of 19.26 for each one thousand persons."

LIKEWISE, LET US examine with reference to the six leading cities of the country, the Sanitary Statistics for 1911, issued by the Ministry of the Interior.

| Town | Population | Total Mortality | Tubercular Mortality | Mortality Per 1000 |
|------------|------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Paris | 2,847,229 | 48,942 | 11,574 | 4.065 |
| Marseilles | 550,619 | 11,581 | 1,655 | 3.0014 |
| Lyons | 523,796 | 8,958 | 1,395 | 2.6616 |
| Bordeaux | 261,678 | 5,277 | 799 | 3.0513 |
| Lille | 217,807 | 4,478 | 744 | 3.4110 |
| Nantes | 170,535 | 3,709 | 828 | 4.853 |

The situation did not improve in the three years immediately preceding the war, and has become worse since. Tuberculosis is preventable and curable, and—France gives 84,000 lives annually to this Moloch! Yet we are told, by Bertillon

for one, that the problem of French population is concerned not so much with the large numbers who annually die as with the small numbers who are annually born

Just what is meant by this?

Edouard Galleur in *Recherches Statistiques sur les Tuberculeux* made at the Leon Bourgeois dispensary, says that tuberculosis is a social malady, especially in France, where it acts not only as an enormous factor in mortality, but "still more as a cause of the impoverishment of the race, and the diminution of the birth rate" (The italics are mine)

Now, there isn't the least doubt that if women had had any part in public affairs, any voice in the sanitary administration, however slight, they would have been found somehow to blame. But, fortunately for our argument, they have confined themselves to more strictly "feminine objects" than helping to keep the population alive!

The men, having only themselves to blame, a Birth Rate Congress was organized under the patronage of the presidents of the various French Chambers of Commerce. And, on convening at Nancy last September, it had under consideration, among things less well calculated, from the point of view of Birth Control advocates, to afford the country any permanent relief, "reports on the campaign against tuberculosis and insanitary dwellings"

So far so good. But as if this question of disease and misery is, at the most, a side issue, Pinard (one of the strong est advocates for the uplift of his country) said in an interview last November "France is dying. In France, the woman who considers maternity as a social and religious duty, is, unfortunately, the exception, and this in spite of the fact that maternity is her function, her function most high, most beautiful and most noble"

IRRESPECTIVE OF THE fact already insisted upon, that man should exercise what he recognizes (more or less) as his own function, that of keeping people alive after they get here, as he has not to undergo any of the suffering incident to maternity, and has, if anything, a slighter stake than woman in the welfare of the race, as well as of the state—he might confine his attention somewhat exclusively to the thousand and one matters with which he is at least supposed to have a better acquaintance than with the duties and the responsibilities of womanhood

Anyone who has been in France knows how unjust is a reflection upon the average French woman's sense of duty. The devotion of the French mother has passed into a phrase. Her sense of responsibility to her family in general would even seem, sometimes, to be overdone. As an Englishman declared to me in Paris "The greatest trouble with France is the man's attitude toward the woman." It has nothing to do with our present remarks that that is precisely, in one way or another, what is the trouble everywhere.

And France is waking up to the fact that French motherhood has not been sufficiently honored. From present indications, the future mother will not spend her last days in the almshouse, she will be welcome, wherever she may choose

to live, because she will be pensioned. If the children she gives to armies, forsooth, are worth a bonus here and there, why not she?

But the movement is going even further, they are saying that the child should not be a dishonor to the girl mother.

This is very good news but since when? Look at the French laws, and see what chance a girl has under circumstances of approaching confinement.

"She can only throw herself into the Seine if the man doesn't stand by her," an educated French woman told me.

But, thank God, men are often better than the laws they make!

NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS very little excuse for the contention of so many Frenchmen that women who know themselves unable to give children a good inheritance and a fair chance in life should go on bearing them, leaving them (the children) to round the same vicious circle humanity has been following since the beginning of recorded history, and from one arc of which Germany has so recently been switched with fairly indignant protests.

Nor is there sufficient excuse for believing that the sterility of marriages is the alarming condition in a country where people are dying at the rate of one every six minutes in the year—we repeat, from a single preventable malady, or when infant mortality, growing always with the ignorance and disability of mothers, has increased from its 15% to 18% in 1908-09 to well nigh the annihilation point during and since the war. Is it the worst condition one can think of, that there are fewer deformities and mental deficiencies accruing from child labor—only because there are not enough children to have an indefinite multiplication of such deformities and mental deficiencies?

Woman more patiently endured the lot assigned her in the society organized by man, before she began to realize what had come of enduring it in the past. She furnished armies for the pompous Louis XIV, and, with all the loss of life, he left France smaller and poorer than he found it. She multiplied the hosts which were mown down for Napoleon's personal glory. She weighs the fact that the mental anguish of French mothers during these successive wars was reflected in the progressively poorer physique, the shorter stature, of generations of the sons of France. Perhaps she even sometimes asks herself where are the descendants of those young, unmarried men who have been slaughtered like locusts for the past five hundred years and, in the long run, for WHAT?

Is, indeed, the death rate of less consequence than the birth rate when we consider, thus, that even the dead, themselves, affect the birth rate in a negative sense? And again there is its psychological effect upon women who might, perhaps, be mothers but for the horror of what is more likely than not to befall children in this cock pit men have made of our planet.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST Birth Control in France amounts, then, to this. Life not being as cheap as it

once was, it cannot be used like other cheap things, which, perhaps, threatens ambition in some quarters

Last but not least, it was never contemplated that in matters on which governments depended, woman would have any thing to say

Being made out of man's rib, that she would evolve sufficient mentality to command an audience of any size was never once contemplated, even fifty years ago

Nevertheless, Frenchmen will be the very last to deny to their women a superior (relative) intelligence. Not that French women are either intelligent or wise as compared with French men, you know, but (still paraphrasing Louis XI), they may be accepted as "the least foolish of their sex."

Of course, if Europe does not intend to clean house, if she does not mean to devote herself in the future more to keeping people alive than to destroying them, the record of lives lost in the latest war in France alone, will make a slighter appeal than the desire to have more men to kill off the next time

But suppose all women, everywhere, recognize that the matter is in their own hands, and act accordingly. What then?

Shades of that old Frenchman who prophesied two centuries or more ago that "It would be very dangerous to let women learn the alphabet!"

(To be concluded)

Bonuses for Babies

AN INTERESTING LIGHT upon the real motive of the French national campaign for more babies is shed by the action of a recently founded association of manufacturers in Paris. This association is not bending its efforts to procure more children in the families of the manufacturers themselves. It therefore offers a system of bonuses for children in families of employees.

These bonuses do not amount to a great deal in the long run, being far less than sufficient to take care of the children, but the manufacturers hope for results, nevertheless. Their efforts are doubtless inspired largely by the fact that the returned French soldier shows a strong disposition to strike for better conditions. The shortage of labor, due to the lives and limbs lost in the war, gives the survivors a chance to enforce more consideration from the employer. Hence the employer's desire for surplus labor and the "more babies" movement among manufacturers.

Here are the bonuses offered

A bounty for the first child of 250 francs, for the second and subsequent children, 150 francs

Second, a bounty of 30 francs monthly for ten months to every mother who nurses her children

Third, a monthly allowance of 10 francs for the first child, 20 for the second, and 30 for the third and subsequent children up to the age of 14 years in case of need.

All payments are to be made to the mothers of the children

What Women Want To Hear

AN EXCELLENT demonstration of the kind of subject that women are seeking information upon, was afforded by the Modern Thought Forum, 195 Lenox Avenue, New York City, when it arranged a series of lectures by Margaret Sanger on Birth Control and related subjects. These lectures occupied the Friday nights in March.

The Forum had been unable to attract women. Eight or nine was the average number that came out to hear a lecturer. No sooner was Mrs. Sanger's series on Birth Control and sex subjects began than the management discovered that women are more interested in Birth Control than in anything else. At each lecture the hall proved too small. At the second one, the audience had to change to a larger hall before the lecture could proceed, hundreds being turned away, after the room was packed.

At the third lecture, a still larger hall was too small to hold the women who tried to gain admission, and at least a hundred were again turned away, after a crush at the door in which women fought for admission. The fourth lecture is still to be given as *The Birth Control Review* goes to press and the management is looking for a still larger hall.

ON MARCH 21, Mrs. Sanger delivered a lecture at Philipsburg Hall, Yonkers, N. Y. At this meeting the Birth Control League of Westchester County was formed. This organization promises to be a powerful one. Miss Helen Todd also spoke at the meeting and Dr. Leeds, a prominent local physician acted as chairman, making a brief address.

Many meetings at private homes, where the subject was discussed thoroughly before small audiences, were held during the month. These home meetings continue to be markedly successful and have become a regular and prominent feature of the movement.

As the magazine goes to press, Mrs. Sanger is preparing to fill two dates in Cleveland, O. The first is for March 31, before the Woman's City Club. The second is for Sunday April 4, in the North Congregational Church.

The Real Question

IN THE BEGETTING and rearing of children the first question for the citizen is not so much, how many children are born in the republic, as the question under what conditions are they being born and reared, and what is the promise of their maturity to the wellbeing of society—*Henry C. Potter*

One Price of Overbreeding

FREQUENT CHILDBEARINGS and miscarriages almost certainly result in some sort of pelvic ailment. It is exceptional for a woman to give birth to several children without acquiring a pelvic lesion. Complaints dating back to a childbirth or miscarriage suggest the probable finding of an inflammatory lesion, a displacement or a laceration—*Fundley in Diseases of Women*

Kropotkin and Malthus

By B. Liber, M.D., Ph.D.

A VERY WIDELY READ book by Kropotkin contains the following words "Few books have exercised so pernicious an influence upon the general development of economic thought as Malthus' Essay on the Principle of Population exercised for three consecutive generations." It is now more and more evident that this influence derived from Malthus' theories is still continuing to work indirectly and will probably not cease so long as there are thoughtful parents who know the value of a child and the growing responsibility imposed upon them with the increasing number of children. We may even venture to guess, which is almost a certitude, that had not malthusianism come down to us from the Eighteenth century, a neomalthusian theory and movement would have been created later, as its seeds have been everywhere afloat since antiquity. But with due respect to Kropotkin's authority and greatness in so many ways, may not one of his admirers be permitted to retort to the above sentence? One of the books that have exercised a pernicious influence upon the minds of our radical youth concerning the necessity of a modern man to determine the size of his family, one of the books that have had a pernicious effect on the happiness of many individuals, is undoubtedly "Fields, Factories and Workshops."

This book, which is more important for the great perspectives opened by its conclusion and for its excellent criticism of present conditions than for its wealth of details presented as valuable facts, shows how a clear mind like Kropotkin's could be blind to the indubitable peril for any form of society that encourages unlimited breeding. This blindness is easily explained by the fear that a movement which is rapidly becoming world wide, might obscure the principal social phenomenon of our times, the class struggle, although a scientific thinker should not be misled from the path of truth by such considerations. But that in his attack on Malthus' work he should have been so careless and one sided as to try to prove but one half of the argument and neglect the other half, is unpardonable and inexplicable in such a writer.

BY MANY FIGURES, citations and examples, Kropotkin shows abundantly that with our continually improving methods we can augment our agricultural and other output to an extent undreamed of by past generations. However, that does not prove that our supplies may be multiplied indefinitely, and what is more essential, it does not demonstrate that this increasing quantity of food could keep pace with and could satisfy the needs of a number of earth inhabitants, who, if unchecked, would within a comparatively brief time be counted in staggering figures. This is what Malthus contended and this Kropotkin has not even attempted to disprove. When he talks about the 'productivity of the French village,—his strongest example,—he overlooks entirely the fact that the

progress of France in the practical science of limiting her offspring, if compared with her agricultural progress, weakens his argument considerably. Yes, France grows more food, but—proportionally—less children than a hundred years ago. And some artificial checking of the number of children—and a large degree of it—is taking place in almost all the countries given as models. Therefore, all the figures in the book fail to disprove the main contention of Malthus' theories, that the population, if unchecked, would grow too rapidly for the relatively slower growth of the food supply and would increase so tremendously that the quantity of food, even under the best circumstances, would be far below its needs, and that, instead of the check being a painful one, by disease and wars, it is desirable that it should be an intelligent, a calculated, a rational, a voluntary check.

However, even all this reasoning, interesting as it is from a theoretical point of view, is beside the real argument, as in most countries we have not yet reached the point where over population should grapple with under production. So far, we suffer rather from over production under the ineffective and wasteful management of the capitalist class. And the principal question at present is reduced to this: *Is it, or is it not, under our present conditions, a curse to breed too many children?* The people at large have already answered this question by their flocking to the Birth Control propagandists for anti-conceptual means, and by the constant cry of the most ignorant people for fewer children.

AS TO THE future, I would formulate the question this way: Would not any social system, no matter how richly supplied it might be with the necessities of life, become unstable within some time, if people could not control the number of births, as that would result in moral and mental suffering and *in less individual freedom?* This has been answered, too, in part by the majority of economically well situated men and women, intellectuals and others, who follow more and more Malthus—in his neomalthusian form—and not Kropotkin.

Furthermore, if we agree that the scientific regulation of production, as so warmly recommended by Kropotkin, is needful at all times, under present and future conditions, may we not say the same thing about the scientific regulation of the number of children, or should this be left to hazard?

As to the fear that a neomalthusian propaganda would divert us from recognizing the class struggle, this is ridiculous. The more liberated from misery of having to care for a surplus of mouths, the more class-conscious one is likely to become. The movements can and must go hand in hand for Birth Control and the disappearance of all classes.

"Cases"

By a Medical Student

I AS A FUTURE physician feel it is my duty to tell the readers of *The Birth Control Review* what I experienced during that brief period in which I took my maternity course at some of the maternity clinics of New York City. The law requires that before a medical student can be graduated he shall deliver six cases. I had in all about twenty cases in the period between January 7 and January 28, 1919. Some of these cases I delivered—in others, I merely was present or assisted.

First came Mrs. F. T., who was delivered by use of forceps. The baby was born dead, having been asphyxiated by the anesthesia. Her husband, a conductor, was at work, and no body was in the house to call for early aid from the clinic.

Next came Mr. T., a negro woman, who brought forth a stillborn child, prematurely. Neither the father or mother seemed much concerned that the child was born dead.

Mrs. F., 28 years old, had given birth to eight children of which only three were living. I was called to help her bring another unfortunate into the world.

Had I only the power, I would have brought into that room on that Saturday afternoon all the opponents of Birth Control. The rooms were cold and dirty, unhygienic in the full sense of the word. After much suffering and prolonged labor the sac was ruptured mechanically. The little unfortunate was expelled. Anybody, even without any medical knowledge could know by looking at that child that it would not enjoy life very long. The baby was premature and it died in a few weeks.

Every tragedy has some comedy attached to it. I remember while this poor woman was attacked by labor pains, the husband apparently a good Democrat with a red nose, repeatedly asked "Why does it take you so long? Make it quicker and be through." These are the types of humanity that the women of the world have to free themselves from.

HERE COMES a woman that Roosevelt (rest in peace) would really like. Mrs. P., an Italian, 32 years old, gave birth to the thirteenth child. Only eight are living, five dead.

These are some of the twenty cases within my experience in the maternity clinics. Three more children have died. God knows if the mothers and the seventeen children are all living while I write these lines. Instead of seventeen I must say nineteen for I had two twin cases.

Do I need now to argue more that the knowledge of prevention of conception should not only be legalized, but that it should be made the duty of state authorities to spread it among all those that need it?

I shall report to the readers of this magazine on the twenty cases telling how many are living and their conditions just as I shall find them.

For the present let me state that I believe now more than ever in Birth Control. These are my reasons:

1 The fewer children there are in a family the better education, the better food they can get.

2 The fewer children the woman is giving birth, the healthier she will be.

3 The fewer children the less child labor.

4 The fewer children the less likelihood of war.

5 The fewer children the fewer wage slaves for the capitalists of America.

6 The fewer children, the more time for the mother to live.

7 The fewer children the more time for the mother to read and study.

8 The fewer pregnancies the fewer abortions.

9 The fewer abortions the fewer untimely deaths due to infections by careless criminal abortionists.

10 The fewer abortions the fewer orphans in the United States.

AT THIS POINT I am reminded of the statement that was made by one of our professors in obstetrics. "Look how stupid it is. If the mother is tubercular, abortion is legalized, but to tell that mother how to prevent conception is not legal. And I have no right to tell you boys anything about it." My dear professor, indeed, the law of the state is stupid but I have obtained the precious knowledge without you. I have used it and I shall use it whenever I shall see necessary.

I respect law and order. But I think that human life is a million times, may a billion times higher and more valuable than this law.

Imprisoned in Spain

OUR FRIENDS OF the country of Cervantes and also Ignatius Loyola, write that our good comrade, Louis Bullfi, the founder of the *Neo Malthusien* review, *Salud y Fuerza*, has been imprisoned by the clerico-militaristic party of that unhappy country who accuse him of having cared for (our friend is a surgeon) the wounded of the committee of the Terrorist Syndicalists of Barcelona.

In entering his dwelling, the Barcelona police laid their hands on a vast quantity of leaflets and circulars, as well as of printed matter in general. And the bourgeois Spanish press announcing his arrest, accuse him of furthering a propaganda "immoral and against nature."

So we see once more a man imprisoned because he devotes himself to the moral and material emancipation of the oppressed. The bourgeoisie of Spain, avaricious and superstitious, scandalously enrich themselves at the expense of the workers.

We wish that the working masses of Spain might come to disabuse themselves and so to deliver themselves as soon as possible, helping the battle by aiding our courageous companion above mentioned—*From The Neo Malthusien (Paris)*

An Indorsement

BIRTH CONTROL IS, of course, of vital interest to all members of society who realize the necessity of making an end of the huge waste of human material which is permitted at the present time

It is of special interest to many elements of society for particular reasons which, from time to time, have been set forth in the columns of this magazine. No element, however, has a greater interest at stake in the Birth Control movement than the productive element—those who are producing the things which we use

It is encouraging, therefore, to receive from the Pierce County, Washington Grange, the following resolution

Be it resolved that the Pierce County Pomona Grange go on record as indorsing the Birth Control Movement as sponsored by Margaret Sanger of New York City

"Whereas no laboring man, at the present cost of commodities, is able to support and educate more than three children and many cannot support two, therefore, be it resolved that each individual should be able to limit her family to her means"

Signed

J E WARD,

—MRS C MCCABE,

Committee

Eugenic and the Social Problem

(Continued from page 6)

SINCE A COMPATIVELY large but unknown percentage of the inhabitants of our industrial nations is genetically unsound, the net result of a simple decrease in their fertility, if accompanied by no corresponding increase in the fertility of the sound, would result in a considerable loss to the population. It has also been suggested chiefly on the basis of statistical investigations in regard to certain anthropometric data, which may or may not be a final test, that even if the defective germ plasm be eliminated, there would still be a general tendency of regression towards mediocrity among the genetically sound, unless the highest physical and mental types were to make a practice of entering into fertile marriages with one another. And although the present writer is not inclined to take this danger of so called filial regression very seriously, or even the danger of an absolute decrease in population, in so far as eugenists are imperialists and in favor of the present competitive economic system with its dense industrial populations, they recommend that the rate of reproduction of the constitutionally sound should be stimulated by graduating taxation in favor of the parents of large families and by otherwise making life easier for them, by awakening the social conscience of the genetically superior through education in the hope of inducing them to be more prolific, by encouraging earlier marriages, by carrying on an active campaign against venereal disease and tuberculosis, and by improving the medical care and, so far as it is practicable,

the conditions of life of pregnant women. Of these suggestions the only ones which are of very much practical value at the present time are those which have to do with venereal disease, tuberculosis, and the treatment of pregnant women. All are "positive" eugenic methods of race improvement as distinguished from the "negative" or "repressive" methods already described. It may also be mentioned here in connection with the negative methods, that so long as the practice of Birth Control is limited to the well to do classes, whose birth rate is much lower than that of the poor and especially the "submerged," and among whom there is a smaller proportion of defectives, it will act simply as a contra selective factor and will continue so to act to the injury of the biological qualities of the race wherever its propaganda is inhibited.

THUS FAR WE have treated of eugenics mainly as a question of heredity, assuming that the elimination of the constitutionally defective and the encouragement of reproduction by the physically and mentally sound will necessarily result in an improvement of the hereditary qualities in any given society. That this is superficially true only, and that under certain conditions the application of its methods may lead to no positive result whatever, will be shown in the following section on the action of the environment on the race, which so far we have left wholly out of consideration.

II THE ENVIRONMENT

AT THE PRESENT day man is by far the most important factor of his environment. He has gradually been adapted to the climatic and other physical features of the greater part of the world and is waging a successful war against his larger and smaller parasitic rivals in the struggle for existence. Granted a sufficient exercise of the intelligence which he already possesses, with a moderate allowance of honesty and common sense added to it, there is no reason why he should not be able to settle down to a rich and happy life in any habitable portion of the earth. And by a rich and happy life I mean not only a normal healthy life for every individual, but an improvement and strengthening of the desirable hereditary characters of the race.

Throughout all times the most potent factor in the welfare of races of living creatures has been natural selection, and this is no less true today for us than it is for any other living species. The "fitter," that is to say, those individuals of the species who are both physically and genetically well adapted to the surroundings in which they have their origin and pass their lives, are most apt to survive and to be perpetuated in their offspring, and the converse is true of the unfit, or defective. As I have said, the human race has during the course of its history been well adapted to its *natural* or physical environment. At the present time, however, there are unmistakable signs that the selection which is conditioned by its *social* environment of human institutions is having a deleterious effect on the genetic qualities of the race. Parallel with the decrease in the constitutional strength of the individual, there runs a corresponding decrease in the potential power of the germ plasm to develop into sound individuals.

On the one hand, through the application of increased medical knowledge a far larger proportion of weakly infants reach maturity and reproduce themselves than was the case a few score years ago, on the other hand, the probability is so great as to approach certainty, that during the last century the germ plasma has been exposed in constantly increasing measure to injury and has consequently deteriorated to a degree heretofore unknown

TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDING it should be explained that the so called inheritance of functionally acquired characters has no bearing whatever on the question of germinal deterioration. The latter signifies nothing more than that the germ plasma contained in the reproductive cells can on occasion be injured by the action of its environment. In this connection it is essential to remember that every individual, biologically considered, consists of two distinct parts, his "soma," or body, and the germ plasma contained in his reproductive cells. The position is analogous to a large receptacle composed of the "somatic" cells forming the body of the living organism, within which is a smaller receptacle containing the reproductive cells. So far as we know, the germ plasma as such bears no direct relation to the body beyond that of being contained in it and nourished by it, and consequently, although it would seem that the germ plasma cannot influence the body in which it is contained, we have reason to believe that, in spite of the fact that the reproductive cells are surrounded by protective tissues, the body and consequently the environment can exert a very great influence on the germ plasma, for the reason that it is only through the body fluids that the reproductive cells receive the nutriment without which no cell may live. Thus it is known that in the lower animals certain obscure geographical and climatic influences on the germ plasma may find their expression in what are known as discontinuous variations, and the loss of "points" in the case of certain pure breeds of domestic animals when bred in a different environment may also be accounted for in this way.

The experiments of Professor Loeb and of Dr Tower and of several continental biologists have shown that physical and chemical changes in the environment are often followed by corresponding qualitative changes in the rudimentary constituents of the germ plasma.

SO FAR AS the human race is concerned our lack of knowledge compels us to pass over the specific effects of climate and the question of discontinuous variations, for the reason that during the course of time all peoples have adapted themselves to their geographical environment, and whatever mutations there have been in the past, none of any significance to the race has occurred within historical times. So much the more important, however, is the question of the environment considered as a cause of injury to the germ plasma. It is evident that the germ plasma does in certain circumstances deteriorate when exposed to injury, and although we are unable to draw a sharp line of distinction between the variations in the germ plasma, which are a result of the inherent nature and development of its constituent parts, their chance

grouping in the course of cell division and perhaps even of the "normal" influence of a healthy soma, and what we may call *modifications* of the germ plasma which result from injuries, there is no evidence that the germ plasma can deteriorate spontaneously, that is, without adequate external cause. On the contrary, it is probable that in consequence of what Weismann called germinal selections whereby it is believed that the weaker determinants are pushed to the wall by their stronger companions in the struggle for food, there is a tendency towards regeneration whenever there are appreciable differences in the vitality of homologous rudimentary constituents. This is at any rate what we should expect from analogous phenomena of life in general. Yet it is very evident that the quality of the germ plasma does differ greatly in different groups of blood relations. If other things are equal, and they certainly were fairly equal up to within a few generations, the mortality of the offspring of the genetically defective must be greater than the mortality of the offspring of sound stocks, and unless the germ plasma can deteriorate as a result of external influence (for spontaneous deterioration is contradicted by our entire biological experience), it must follow that as time passes there will be a decrease in the relative proportion of genetically defective individuals and a relative increase of the sound, the rate of which must vary according to the difference in the net fertility of the two groups, but which must nevertheless end in the gradual elimination of the defective stocks. That the net fertility of the unsounds is, in spite of their present tendency to a higher birth rate, even today less than that of the sound is exceedingly probable.*

That it was less during the first half of the nineteenth century and in earlier times is certain. It is also evident that the intermarriage of sound and defective stocks is not only rather in favor of the former owing to sexual selection, but we have reason to believe that such marriages tend towards the attenuation and elimination of genetic defects as a result of germinal selection.

That the germ plasma is susceptible to injury through the action of a hostile environment is rendered still more probable by the fact that the more primitive the conditions of human life the smaller is the incidence of and mortality from the constitutional organic diseases in which germinal injuries find their ultimate expression, as opposed to diseases caused by parasites, including many species of micro organisms. And if we carry our investigation back to the higher animals we will find, as all observers are agreed, that organic diseases are if not practically non-existent, at any rate very rare among them. Even within the last seventy years the statistics of mortality in England show a continued relative increase in the deaths per thousand from diseases of the vital organs, especially the central nervous system, the circulatory system, the organs of respiration and excretion, and from cancer which, although its causes are yet unknown, undoubtedly stands in close relation with certain obscure disturbances of metabolism. On the other hand, a continuous fall in the incidence

*The only investigation I have seen is that of Dr Karl Hamburger, published in *Die Neue Generation* 1909. It supports the above contention.

of such infectious diseases as apparently stand in no very close relation to genetic conditions is shown in the same tables of mortality, and although the actual increase in the incidence of organic diseases is in reality somewhat less than would appear from the statistics and is in part due to improved methods of diagnosis and to the fall in the infantile death rate, nevertheless the general tendency in the direction of increasing constitutional (genetic) weakness is unquestionable, and unless it can be proved that this deterioration is "spontaneous," we must conclude that the germ plasma is degenerating under the action of injurious forces of the environment.

IT IS GENERALLY believed that injury to the germ plasma is caused by the direct action of such harmful or poisonous substances as may be transmitted to the reproductive cells by the body fluids when the soma is in a chronically diseased or otherwise abnormal condition. It is also possible that injury to the germ plasma may also be caused by disturbances in its nutrition. Although many authorities maintain that alcohol is a true race poison, causing direct damage to the germ plasma, just as it causes direct damage to the body, and elaborate statistical evidence has been prepared by Laitenen, Demme, Jenny Thomann Koller and others in support of this contention, of which we may be morally certain, the evidence so far collected is not conclusive for the reason that it is a matter of extreme difficulty to find suitable statistical material. For in order to prove that the germ plasma is injured by the specific action of alcohol or any other foreign substance, it is first necessary to know in each case that it was normal before the poisoning took place. On the other hand, the statistics which have been presented by pupils of Professor Karl Pearson in support of the contention that alcohol is not a race poison, and which have been received with readily understood satisfaction in certain quarters, are wholly unsatisfactory and cannot be said to have demonstrated anything more than a lamentable waste of energy. Although lead, mercury, various injurious gases and other industrial and pharmacological poisons which may enter the body from without, are believed by some authorities to be no less injurious to the germ plasma than they are demonstrably injurious to the embryo, nothing definite is so far known about them, or known about the poisoning of the system by the action of the spirochetes in long standing cases of syphilis, by the tubercle bacillus, or by the organism that causes malaria. And although there are very many different substances which no doubt may exercise a deleterious influence on the germ cells, by substituting themselves for other materials, by forming fresh chemical combinations or by weakening the membranes by which the reproductive cells are surrounded, as it is believed alcohol may do, it must be admitted that as yet we know very little about their action. As Professor Hugo Rubbert says in his text book on pathology, "It would seem evident that the nature and concentration of the toxin no less than the length of time it remains in the body are decisive factors in the process of germinal deterioration. For if they [toxic substances] circulate a long time in the blood, if they are concentrated and of great virulence, it is probable that no cells, not even the germ cells, will be spared by them."

(To be continued)

THE FORUM

Under this head THE BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW will publish comments by its readers upon matter appearing in the magazine. These comments should be brief, so that as many viewpoints as possible may be presented.

A Letter And An Answer

IT IS PROBABLE that most stock raisers are in favor of Birth Control. Limitation of breeding is one of the prime essentials of their business, and it is hardly likely that many men in the business would insist upon either over breeding or continence for the human race. Here is a stock raiser, however, who has a unique theory. His letter and Mrs Sanger's answer follow.

Laurel Grove Maryland

Feb 20 1920

My dear Mrs Sanger

My son in law gets your Birth Control Review and I read it with the sickening details. Now honest—any woman having her life depending upon a pregnancy is not doing her duty to her then being children or her husband to submit to her own or her husband's appetite, and all your talk is not at all appealing to me. I have handled stock long enough to know that sexual intercourse should be for creation only and I also know that no animal indulges in that appetite during pregnancy except the hog, and that if the boar is allowed with the sow that she is apt to die of when the young are born—and the same is true of humans (and for such information given, Ida M Craddock was practically murdered by New York City although her book had the endorsement of such a man as Dr Rainsford, the then Rector of St George's Church, Stuyvesant Sq, N Y). Man is a hog and his wife a fool to submit. In my own experience and that of our family such risks were not run and a friend of my wife's her school chum, roomed apart from her husband when her children came too fast. She had 2 miscarriages and 3 healthy children, not too many but enough. This couple represented the best brains and blood in aristocratic Albany. Your teaching had better be for procreation only and no intercourse during pregnancy and then you would find under the Statistics Column

| | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Death in Child Birth | (instead of) |
| Birth | 25,000 |
| NONE | |

The calomel injectors in the army and your preventors make boars of human males. Go to the beasts of the field and learn the way to treat females. I would like to have you make note of this in your paper which I am not in accord for the reasons stated.

Signed

ELBERT WAKEMAN

MRS SANGER'S REPLY

New York City

March 5, 1920

MR. ELBERT WAKEMAN,
Laurel Grove, Md.

Dear Mr Wakeman —

Pardon my delay in answering your letter of February 20th.

I am very glad to have your observations concerning the animal world, and after reading your letter I could not help but wish that you knew human nature and human beings as well as you seem to know animals.

Your desire that human beings should remain continent is quite ethical for individuals and it's quite right that you should be given the privilege to follow such conduct in your own personal life as much as you wish. But have you a right to make laws or to uphold laws forcing this conduct upon others? And then really down deep

in your heart do you believe that there are ten human beings living upon this earth at present, especially married men, who could or would abide by the laws of the animal kingdom, viz.—intercourse only for conception?

There are many people who agree with you in this concept of life but very few who practice it. If they do attempt to practice it, do you realize how many children a woman could give birth to during her productive period? For marital union indulged in but once during the whole year would or could make the woman a mother of from ten to fifteen children during her life time. I think most women of today would object to this life of maternal drudgery, and I believe that you as a high minded individual would object to allowing such a condition to prevail with one that you loved.

What you say about intercourse during pregnancy is quite a different subject. I understand perfectly that no animal but the woman allows this to occur and feels that she must submit to it no matter how repugnant it may be to her feeling, but if you will look up the cause of this enslavement, you will note that most of the laws of the various states stand squarely behind the husband in all these so called rights on his part. He does not have to support his wife if she refuses him so it is the human boars themselves who make these laws for their own indulgence. Woman cannot rise above them until she is free from the enslavement of childbearing. Man will not change them for her.

Nevertheless I quite enjoy your criticism of our magazine. I am sorry, however, that you found its details 'sickening.' I have not been conscious of going into detail to such an extent and would be obliged to you if you would point out definitely any such material.

Again thanking you

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) MARGARET SANGER

Book Reviews

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CONFLICT By Havelock Ellis, published by Houghton Mifflin, \$2.50

That one European war cultivates the germs for the next is more than ever apparent after reading several essays in this volume which deal with the biological, geographical and social causes of conflict in general. Speaking of the way in which Napoleon literally ploughed Germany up, only ultimately to come to grief at the hands of lesser men than himself, the title of one paper, *Vae Victoris*, is justified to a striking degree. *Woe to the Victor!* Yet so great was the prestige of the Corsican, that France did not wake up to the significance of her lesson until another Napoleon brought it home to her. Vanquished, she turned to the arts of peace, and in every department of endeavor—from cooking to fashion setting, and from discoveries in science to inspiration in art, she soon led the world. Paris became the modern Athens, to which everyone looked, if not for signal achievement, at least for the ideas out of which achievement develops. Victorious Germany, in the same interval, produced not a single man of the calibre of those who previously had made her name glorious.

In discussing the *Mind of Woman* and the *Politics of Woman*, the writer duly recognizes that the manifestations in each case are colored by the fact that for a long time woman was not admitted to possess either mind or politics in her own right. But in a further article, he departs from this train of reasoning, and, attempting a definition of genius, sees some biological hindrance to woman's matching man at this, his highest, level. Genius being somehow analogous in its unaccountableness to the fourleaf clover, is a 'sport' of nature, so to speak, which does not condescend to sport with the feminine organism. Woman can afford to smile at this, questioning whether, even with all his vaunted physical superiority, Man himself would have risen so often higher than mere talent, had he labored for untold generations under the psychological and social handicaps which have resulted in the more or less arrested (though sometimes perverted) development of woman. Not that Mr. Ellis is out of sympathy with the Feminist movement, for he can scarcely touch upon the subject without showing

a generous appreciation of the changes for the better which woman's more general participation in practical affairs is likely to bring. Birth control, equality of opportunity, and universal education in the sense that everyone should have a better understanding of the things most vital to him are the burden of his song.

The essay *Psycho Analysis in Relation to Sex*, is, of course, a resume and in a space all too short, of the work of Sigmund Freud. We are still in the Middle Ages where a proper appreciation of the vital importance of knowing ourselves—soul and body as well—is concerned. Out of this ignorance untold misery results. Yet Freud may be in the position of a navigator who has barely touched upon the shores of the continent of his discovery. In closing, I should like to advise every American, jealous of his country's standing before the world to read the paper *Rodo* of this collection, in a spirit of self-criticism.

Genevieve Grandcourt

THE MENTAL HYGIENE OF CHILDHOOD by William A. White Little, Brown & Co. This is a singularly worthless book. The matter of it, while in part the result of hospital experience, is after all mainly a tasteless rehash of Freud—Freud indigested and incompletely read and, most graceless of all, not once mentioned as the source of practically all the ideas in the book. Dr. Freud is sufficiently established to need no advertising—but is Dr. White sufficiently established to borrow without an I O U?

Nor is Freud the only creditor. Rousseau, John Dewey, and G. Stanley Hall are among those present but not mentioned. It may be said that the source of the ideas is of no consequence if these are in any way freshly combined or applied. True. But alas there is not even a fresh or stimulating phrase in the whole book. The style he mentioned is execrable—heavy, tedious, repetitious, not even strikingly exact. All that can be said for the whole endeavor is that the subject is laudably chosen. The book will have served its purpose if it inspires some one else to treat the same subject adequately.

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the race

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