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# BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

## Presidential Address

*By* CHARLES V. DRYSDALE

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## Medicine's Responsibility for Birth Control

*By* WILLIAM ALLEN PUSEY, M D.

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# *The* BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE AMERICAN BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUE

Four Steps to Our Goal — Agitation, Education, Organization, Legislation

MARGARET SANGER, *Editor*

MARY SUMNER BOYD, *Managing Editor*

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## *Message to the President of the United States*

HON CALVIN COOLIDGE,  
*President of the United States,*  
Washington, D C

MR PRESIDENT



THE Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference, now convened in New York City, has aroused world-wide interest in the complex problems of national and racial health. It has emphasized the biological and economic waste to the American nation involved in the segregation and maintenance at public expense of the delinquent, defective and criminally unfit classes of our population. It has pointed out the organic correlation between an uncontrolled birth rate and the great national problems of maternal mortality, child labor, poverty, mental defect and crime, and the vast national expenditures necessary to meet these problems.

It is imperative, Mr President, that as a nation the United States meet this problem of an uncontrolled birth rate. As an American citizen, I respectfully suggest that you, as Chief Executive of the United States of America, take steps toward the formation of a Federal Birth Rate Commission. I suggest that this Commission be composed of impartial scientists drawn from the fields of economics, biology, sociology, genetics, medicine and philanthropy, and have free access to all facts and statistics as to all customs and conditions now menacing the racial health and economic well-being of our country.

The formation of such a Commission would, I am sure, win for you the eternal gratitude of all American citizens who carry in their hearts a deep and disinterested love for this country and who are concerned in its future. I believe that all patriotic American Citizens, including yourself, Mr President, must agree with me that our Chief Executive cannot willingly or consciously evade problems, upon a solution of which depends the fulfillment of our high destiny in the creation of the future.

Respectfully,

MARGARET SANGER,  
*President, AMERICAN BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUE*

**W**E wish to extend our warmest thanks to those delegates who made a **difficult trip** across the **Atlantic** in the **equinoctial** season and with a very **brief** rest after the strenuous days of the Conference started on the long journey home. **Without this sacrifice** on their part we should have lacked the **weight** of **experience** and **authority** contributed by the delegates from England, France and Germany, the European founders of the **international** Birth Control movement. We should have lacked as well the zeal and enthusiasm of the newer group of **pioneers** from other European countries who in a remarkable **brief** space of **time** have made Birth Control a **living issue** at home.

To Dr **Haire** and Dr **Drysdale** we owe special thanks for **acting** as our interpreters for the French and German delegates and for making themselves, in large degree, **responsible** for their comfort and **entertainment**. We sincerely hope that in **spite** of the handicap of proceedings **carried** on in a **foreign** tongue, the French and German-speaking delegates **derived** as much **inspiration** from the Conference as a whole as we derived from **their contribution** to it. To Dr Drysdale, **President** of the Conference, we owe a **special** debt of **gratitude** for his modest and **untiring** zeal, his **willingness** to be called on at all **times**, to do any task, great or small, and to assume any **responsibility** that would help lift the burden from the shoulders of others.

**B**IRTH CONTROL has not yet passed the stage of **persecution** here or abroad. **Carlo Tresca's** sentence of a year in Atlanta **Penitentiary** has, it is true, been commuted by **President Coolidge** to four months. The cruel and unusual penalty has been **lifted** and he now serves the same term it has been customary to **impose** on others for **violation** of this clause in the postal law. But this is not enough. Tresca ought to have been freed. He ought not to have served a day for his **violation** of the postal law was a **technicality** and his real sentence was for an affront to the **Fascist** government of Italy, not **punishable** under any **American** law.

**T**HE Tresca case is not the only recent **violation** of the **principles** of democracy. From France, the cradle of **Republicanism** in Europe, comes word of a case which has been described as "unique for its **revengeful ferocity** in the **persecution** of Birth Control advocates." Eugene Humbert and his wife, **associates** of Paul Robm, **pioneer** of **Neo-Malthusianism** in France, have served long terms in **prison** and are threatened with a further **imprisonment** if a **fine** and costs amounting altogether to about

37,000 francs (\$2,000) is not **paid** within a fixed **time**. The story is told in the following letter from an **American sympathizer**. "Eugene Humbert, formerly **director** of the Birth Control **periodical** *Regeneration* and founder of the *Generation Consciente*, has been condemned to two years for his **Neo-Malthusian** propaganda. His wife has received the same sentence. They have served their **prison** terms, eleven months of the **time** in **solitary** confinement. In **addition** they have been condemned to pay a fine which now amounts to 37,915 francs, and as they are unable to pay they are forced, both of them, to go back to **prison** for six months each. If M. Humbert alone had to serve he would do it and be through with his persecutors, but Mme. Humbert must serve too and they have a **little girl**. That means they must forsake their home **again** and leave the **little girl** in strange hands. I might add as a point of **tragic** interest, that Mme. Humbert's mother and brother were also condemned as **Neo-Malthusians**, to pay a fine. As they could not pay the mother served three months in **prison**, and the brother is just finishing his six months."

**A**N appeal for the Humbert Case was made to the **Sixth International Neo-Malthusian** and Birth Control Conference by M. Giroud ("G. Hardy"), son-in-law of Paul Robin. Pledges and **contributions amounting** to a thousand dollars were made and it has been arranged to pay the fine in monthly **installments**. More money is needed and readers of the **REVIEW** who did not attend the Conference are urged to make their **contributions** through the **American** Birth Control League.

**I**T TAKES a good deal to prevent an **English-**man or an **Englishwoman** from doing a **thing** he is convinced he is **right** in doing. This **enviable** **British** endurance has recently been eloquently expressed **again**. When the **conviction** of Guy Aldred and Rose Witcop—for publishing the pamphlet, "Family Limitation"—was affirmed by a **higher** court, the fighting spirit was not **extinguished** but rather lashed to greater **intensity**. Rose Witcop has **again** undertaken the **publication** of "Family Limitation" and in the event that this **right** is **again** challenged, she is prepared to test the case in the **highest** court. Undaunted by her experiences, Rose Witcop is **contemplating** the **inauguration** of a Birth Control clinic in the **thickly** populated **region** of **Hammersmith**. In this **district** she hopes to reach thousands of overburdened mothers of the needy classes who are not now reached.

# Place of Birth Control in the Woman's Movement

By ALICE DRYSDALE VICKERY

*Honorary President of the Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference*

**T**HIS seems to me a **very** critical period in the world's history. Either the world's **inhabitants** must face the problem of controlling the numbers of succeeding generations in proportion to the supply of necessities, or the struggle between the various races and nations will become intensified and lead to world-wide disaster.

This is a **time** in which it is of the utmost importance that women shall learn to realize their **responsibility** in view of the fact that the peopling of the world belongs to them. It is essential then that women shall come to the front and **insist** that they will no longer consent to be deprived of the knowledge which will allow them to **fulfill** their function in the way which will reflect **credit** upon themselves **individually** and collectively, and benefit the world at large. Sir Arbuthnot Lane has **written** of "the crass **stupidity** of man," and when we recall the obstacles which have been placed in the way of women's **education** generally, and **education** in physiology, biology, and all that concerns the reproduction of the human species in **particular**, we cannot think the phrase misplaced. The church has always looked with disfavor on the education of young people, more **particularly** women, in sex matters. Men also, have very largely desired Ignorance in their mates. The legal profession have placed obstacles in the way of woman's power of **acting** on her own judgment, by **making** her in the past so largely dependent on the husband as to feel it **impossible** to form or take any action of which he might not approve.

The subject which above all others craves the woman's outlook is that of maternity and reproduction.

## *Maternity and Dependence*

As woman did not know how to control reproduction and as she naturally, as did man, **desired** a mate in the early days of maturity, she fell, almost of necessity into a state of dependence, and that dependence has been fruitful of evil results. But **with** the knowledge of **contraception**, of birth control, there **is** no longer the same reason why she should accept a **position** of dependence. The young girl **like** the young man should find the same **opportunities** for employment and self-dependence open to her. She can postpone **marriage** until she meets **with** a **suitable** partner. And when she does meet **with** an apparently suitable partner (say at **21**

years of age) she will not be faced with the necessity of forfeiting her independent position for fear of the premature arrival of offspring. She **will** by means of birth control methods be able to **maintain** a **position** of self-dependence for some years. There is much to be said for a temporary postponement of parentage after marriage.

**First** as the age of **physiological** maturity is **25**, it **will** doubtless be granted that parentage should be delayed to that age in order that **maturity** and not **immaturity** should produce the next **generation**. **Again**, is it not well that the young couple should be able to enjoy to the full (say from **21** to **25** years) the delight of intimate **companionship**, until they can feel assured that they are well suited to one another, that their characters and ideals are **likely** to develop along mutually **sympathetic lines**, also that **their** career (**industrial** or **otherwise**) may not be hampered by the premature **arrival** of another mouth to feed and care for, **obliging** the young mother to cease her independent employment.

## *Home Building*

The young couple owe to each other **fidelity** and **companionship**, mutual solace and assistance. They will learn in this period of experience, to understand each other more fully, not merely **trusting** to the more or less superficial attraction which brought them together. They will besides be more able to assure their future, to **build up** the home and create and develop the little **capital** which **will** enable them to face the responsibility of parentage **without** alarm. The prospective mother, **with** health assured **will** be willing to cease her **contribution** to the **family** budget at a **suitable period**, having laid by what she deems **sufficient** for the **time** being. She will be prepared to **give** to the new-comer her **time**, her strength, her thoughts, so that together the young parents **will** mutually enjoy the delights of parentage, and by the careful use of **contraceptive** methods will feel assured that no second **birth** will come to cut short prematurely the mother-care due to the first comer.

Think what all this power of **direction** means to the young couple in **their** early **married life**. The power to go slow, to adjust their expenses to **their** means to **avoid** all the overstrain of **being** always a little **behind**. Poverty is held at bay. Slums are not

(Continued on page 155)

# Medicine's Responsibilities in the Birth Control Movement

By WILLIAM ALLEN PUSEY, M D

**I**T is not for me to elaborate before an audience of this sort upon the problems of population that are concerning us. These topics are peculiarly your own, but an amateur may perhaps with propriety say a word upon them, because he at least is at the advantage of having a different viewpoint.

With the Earth's population increasing, under the favorable conditions of modern civilization, at an unprecedented rate, with the frontier advancing so rapidly that the hospitable parts of the Earth will soon have been occupied, with the saturation point in sight, beyond which the Earth cannot afford decent sustenance for its inhabitants, the time is rapidly approaching when the problem of population will engage some consideration from even the less thoughtful of men. What is to happen to the

world's population is a question that should now be recognized and considered by the thoughtful. Mankind must face the extreme probability that, under the favorable conditions of life of present day civilization, we are rapidly approaching the point where the support of the population of the Earth will be its most pressing problem.

No intelligent student of the subject believes that population will continue indefinitely to increase with the rapidity of geometrical ratio, but it requires no particular gift of prophecy to see that if the tendency of population remains unchecked, we will soon be upon a situation, where an unsuccessful struggle for decent maintenance will have become the lot of most men throughout the Earth, as it is their lot now in the most densely populated parts of it. The only possibility that anyone suggests that might prevent this otherwise inevitable development is some *deus ex machina* in the form of inventions of chemistry that will furnish food for mankind in some altogether unnatural and now unknown way. No man of reasonable caution can rely upon this as offering any probable solution of the problem. It is altogether probable that it offers no prospect whatever for the furnishing of a food supply for the world, greatly beyond what can be produced by methods now in use. Let the situation develop naturally and the only relief for the overpopulation of the world lies in wars of the strong against the weak for a place in the sun, in pestilence and other great disasters, and in the inevitable increase in the disease rate and the death rate that are sequences of the degradation and misery of overpopulation.

I saw a statement recently by Dr. Raymond Pearl, I think, to the effect that this all seems so inevitable that he is inclined to question its accuracy. I imagine he must have had in mind the various unhappy influences that would affect the otherwise inevitable development of this situation, for I cannot understand the reasoning that questions the accuracy of the conclusion that two and two make four because it seems so unassailable. Subject to the restraints, which can only act to postpone the situation, but not to prevent its ultimate occurrence, one must accept the conclusion that the situation is in sight now where the population of the Earth will tax its capacity for furnishing sustenance.

## Humane Restraints

What can be done in the face of such a prospect? The obvious answer would seem to be that kind should strive to imitate nature and attempt to provide for the preservation of the most fit of its members. Nature provides for this in the long run by its cruel and inexorable methods of eliminating those least able to preserve themselves. It is the temporary setting aside of this principle through the applications of man's new knowledge which has within a hundred years brought us face to face with this situation. But these are possibilities of producing nature's results by less cruel and costly means. There are two rational measures that present possibilities in this connection. One is to improve the race by breeding, the other is to check by birth control the tendency to the submerging of the better stock by the greater fecundity of the inferior.

The practical application of eugenics, except in the gross way of eliminating the manifestly unfit, presents an exceedingly difficult problem. It is a problem, however, not beyond man's attacking. We can see in isolated human strains now some fortunate results of its action. There can be no question of the importance of the problem and the fact of its practical difficulties should not make us give it up as hopeless or even altogether impractical.

The application of methods of birth control is also a matter of great difficulty, but it is a more tangible problem. It is capable of more direct application and it offers some practical prospect of influencing the situation. It would seem, in the face of the facts we now have, to be one of the highest duties of thoughtful men to consider it. The question is, in fact, when it is reduced to its bald terms, this. Shall we undertake by intelligent methods to

put some **guidance**, through **birth** control, upon the **population** of the Earth, or shall we leave the problem to be handled by nature's ruthless methods of **checking population** of the Earth, by fetal and infant **mortality**? But, as I have said, the problem of the Earth's population is one upon **which** the **physician** must appear as an amateur in any group whose **specialty** is the study, not of the **individual**, but of **society** as a whole. There are **certain aspects** of birth control **which** fall **peculiarly within** the **purview** of the **physician** and upon **which** he can speak perhaps **with** some authority from the standpoint of **special experience**.

Upon no class can it be impressed more than upon **physicians**, that the sexual appetite, after hunger, is the **dominating influence** in life. But in spite of its **overwhelming importance**, the **relations** of the sexes is the unsolved problem of **civilization**. Nature makes the sexual appetite one that is **insistent**. On the other hand **society** says it is an **appetite** that must be repressed, but it need hardly be said does not abide by its precept. The **irresistible biological** fact and the **attitude of society** towards this fact are not **consistent**, and this **inconsistency** produces a **situation** in **which** there is constant **deceit**—with all that that **entails**—**struggle** and failure.

elemental fact upon **which** satisfactory **family** life, as a rule, depends and that **without satisfactory** sexual life, **marital** life, as a rule, is **irreparably** damaged.

And it is here that the **importance** of **birth** control comes into **this** problem. Nature has provided in man, as in animals, for the **maintenance** of the **species** by a **capacity** for reproduction far in excess of the needs for it or for the **possibilities** of its **exercise**. The way that nature takes care of this anomaly in man, as in animals, is by **providing**, under **conditions** of extreme hardship, for the **reduction** of **fecundity**, but more frequently by the **destruction** of the excess. Always some form of **birth** control or of **destruction** of the young or the less **resistant** is **exercised** by nature. In man, even if **child-bearing** is carried to the **limit**, nature **provides** restraints upon it, frequently by **breaking** down the overburdened woman, and always by the **disappearance** of **fecundity** in the woman in **middle** life. **Civilized** man, who is above the state of **brutality**, always **exercises** some form of birth control in the general sense of **that term**. **Consciously** or **unconsciously** **practically** every couple make some effort to **avoid** **breeding** like rabbits. And the **higher** men rise in the **intelligence** scale the more effort they make to **avoid** nature's inexorable methods of **eliminating**

### *Contraceptive Resolution, Sunday Afternoon, March 29th*

*That this session on Contraception of the Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference, made up of physicians, affirms that Birth Control, being a very important and complicated problem requiring scientific study and guidance, comes properly within the province of Preventive Medicine, and that the subject should not only have a place in the program of County and State Societies and of the American Medical Association, but also become a part of the work of suitable clinics, hospitals and other medically supervised organizations engaged in scientific study and prevention of disease and crime*

No one who knows **anything** about the **history** of man's rise from savagery would advocate, regardless of any freedom he **might** have from considerations of **conscience**, **unrestricted** sexual **license**, but those who, like **physicians**, get a new of the concealed part of the **motives** and **activities** of life must **realize** the supreme **importance** to the happiness of **mankind** of a proper sexual life. It is society's **business** to see that this is **attained** by **providing** proper **conditions** of married life. **Civilization** is built upon the **family**, and **satisfactory** **civilization** can be built only upon **satisfactory** **family** **life**. I do not mean to **intimate** that happiness in **family** life is dependent altogether upon sexual **gratification**. I know that in **extraordinary** **conditions** **satisfactory** **marital** **unions** can be built upon the **higher** **aspirations** and tastes of life alone, but I am **willing** to say bluntly that sexual life is the

the excess, by **limiting** their progeny to those that they can **provide** for.

And it is in this effort at **birth** control in married life that **such** havoc is played with the happiness of marriage. In the lack of **knowledge** of how to **attain** the ends that they must **attain**—in other words, in the lack of knowledge of proper methods of **birth** control—in the **uncertainties** of the **situation**, **penalties** are put upon what should be the pleasure of proper sexual life in **marriage** that are so great that they often utterly destroy it. Sexual enjoyment is largely **psychical**, the constant **intrusions** of the **necessity** for these restraints, their **uncertainty** and the consequent **anxiety** tend to destroy it. It is **particularly** in the **plastic** period of young **married** life that these unhappy factors have their **widest** play and do so much to break down the happiness of marriage. There is, I believe, no other

factor that **contributes** more—I think I might say as much—to sexual **immorality** than the **seeking** by **married** men of that sexual **gratification** from **illicit intercourse** that they have found **lacking** in **married** life. And **this situation** arises largely as a result of the **difficulties** and **anxieties** that come from **efforts** at **birth control**. There could be no greater **contribution** to the **morality** of the world, as well as to its happiness, than would be the removal of **this** unhappy state that **interferes** so greatly with **marital** happiness.

Now these are **material** facts. They are not facts that appeal to the **mooning sentimentalist**, or the **so-called moralist**, or to the **ethical** dreamers who would **like** to have mankind not as **it is**, but as **their** dreams would **picture it**. But they are facts. Sexual life **is** a part of man. **It is** not unclean or **disgusting** or **something** to be hampered and repressed and destroyed. **It is** the **foundation** of the **family**, and happy **family** life **is** one of the few great **enduring** **satisfactions** of life. But **with** all of its **esthetic** and **psychical** values, **family** life **is** founded upon **biological** and unchangeable facts.

Even in **Irregular sexual life** there are, I believe,

there can be no atonement, **either** by the mother or the **child**. **With** the sexual instinct as **it is**, **with** custom **stimulating** this **appetite** by every **suggestion** **prurient** **ingenuity** can **devise**, **with** the **possibility** of **marriage** refused to many women, **with** the atonement for an **illegitimate child** beyond **any possibility**, the women of any **intelligence** or **decent instinct** who find themselves **in this condition**—and there are plenty of women of **this** sort who find themselves **in this condition**—are confronted by only one **possibility**, and that **is abortion**. The aggregate of **human** agony that **is** the result of **this situation** **is** beyond any **computation**. I am not **saying**, in order to **avoid** argument, that these women are not **deserving** of **their** agony, but I would call **attention** to the fact that **it** would be better for society **if** the **situation** were handled **differently**.

The result of it now **is** **unending abortions** with **disease**, physical and moral **injury** and death in its **trail**. **This is** inevitable under the present conditions of society. **With** the **penalties** of **illegitimacy** what they are, for the mother and for the child, women **will** escape them by the **ruthless termination** of **con-**

*Having been during seventeen years an active member of the executive of the Dutch Neo-Malthusian League, in collaboration with the late famous promoter of the Birth Control cause, Dr J Rutgers and his wife, I greatly rejoice in the success of your enterprise. Since forty-five years ago Dr Aletta Jacobs began her medical practice, physicians have abundantly proved their ability in reducing the death rate, and we may now also hope, considering the March Number of the BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW, that the modern medical profession is beginning to realize its other duty, corollary to the combat against death, m/z, the controlling of too exuberant life on our limited planet, it will in consequence be obliged to limit its numbers. I hope that your congress with its splendid attendance of medical and social workers, will mark a milestone on the road toward human welfare.*

MARTINA G. KRAMERS,  
Apeldoorn, Holland

good grounds for the advocacy of **birth control**. **It** is a sad fact, but nevertheless a fact, that under the **conditions** that modern **civilization** sets up, sexual **immorality** **is** common. I do not mean to **intimate**, and I do not **believe**, that **this is** not altogether deplorable. **It is** much commoner in men than in women, but **it is** by no means **restricted** in women to those who are beyond the bounds of human **protection** or of humane efforts for **their** care. The regular prostitute has no problem of **birth control**, nature, as a rule, takes care of that by **making** her **sterile** and, if nature does not, the **prostitute** herself does by having no fear through shame of an **accidental child** or any **compunctions** about **abortion**. But for all except the hardened **prostitute**, the **situation is** entirely different. Under the standards of **morality** which society sets up, but does not observe, an **illegitimate birth** **is** a fact for which

**ception** at any **risk** to themselves and at any **risk** of the law's **penalties** for **their** acts. The fact that they can do **this** is not due to the low honor of the **medical profession**—**medicine's position** upon **this** matter **is** higher than that of society in general, the knowledge of how crudely to produce **abortion** **is** as old as any knowledge in **civilization**. The trade **is** passed down from mouth to mouth and, **with** the demands there are for **it**, cannot be **extinguished**. The trade **is** most common among those who are least competent to **practice it**. **It is** one of the tragedies of **civilization** which **is** most completely concealed. **Practical** methods of **birth control** offer the only **relief** from **this** tragedy.

The **objections** which are offered to facts that I have referred to above are, first, that as respects **married** life, it puts **gratification** of sexual **appetite**

(Continued on page 156)



# A Great Sociological Congress

THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, MARCH 26-31

**W**HY, a discussion like this might change one's whole life!" one young woman was heard to say to another, as the audience drifted out of the session on sex and reproduction of the Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference. What was true in respect to the individual of this session on psychic release, as the earlier programs called it, was true in a different sense of each of the sessions on the seven days program. Some paper or papers in each session—in some the whole discussion—opened a window to a new view of the life of society or the individual.

Not once but again and again was heard from scientists, sociologists, editors, physicians, the statement that the Sixth International was not only the most fundamental but the most vitally interesting sociological conference ever held in America. A sociological conference it was, and it was a matter of astonishment to many listeners at how many points Birth Control was found to touch the life of society.

sell, in France, Jean Longuet and Henri Barbusse, in Norway, Fridtjof Nansen, arctic explorer and humanitarian, in Italy, Professor Ettore Levi, international expert on child welfare. From India, Japan, Czechoslovakia, Sweden and many other countries came further messages.

Among the Americans who sent greetings were W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, of the Association for the Advancement of the Negro, Professor Franklin H. Giddings of Columbia University, Professor H. H. Laughlin of Cold Spring Harbor, Fannie Hurst, Upton Sinclair, Ben B. Lindsey, Professor Edward Alsworth Ross of Wisconsin University, Hendrik Willem Van Loon and many others, representing almost every state in the union and many fields of public activity.

Mrs. Sanger's greeting in the name of the hostess league, published in the April REVIEW, Dr. Drysdale's Presidential address, Dr. Norman Haire's report on England—the country which is today nearest success in having Birth Control rec-

## MESSAGE FROM HAVELOCK ELLIS

*The knowledge of Birth Control gives us mastery of all that the ancients gained by infanticide, while yet enabling us to cherish that ideal of the sacredness of human life, which we profess to honor so highly. We do not need and indeed it would be undesirable, to emulate in human breeding the achievements of Luther Burbank. We have no right to attempt to impose upon any human creature an exaggerated and one-sided development, but it is not only our right, it is our duty, or rather, one may say the natural impulse of every rational humane person, to see that only such children may be born as will be able to go through life with a reasonable prospect that they will not be heavily handicapped by a born defect or some special liability to some incapacitating disease.*

It was a truly international conference also. On its program appeared scientists or Birth Control propagandists from China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, England, Germany, Holland, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Russia, Sweden, Canada and the United States. The list of vice-presidents adds to these still another country, and perhaps the most remote, the Commonwealth of Australia, represented by Sir George Knibbs, Director of the Institute of Science and Industry of the Commonwealth.

From all over the world also came messages of felicitation in numbers so great that only a few could be read at the sessions. Among those in England who thus expressed their support were Havelock Ellis, H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, Arnold Bennett, Lawrence Housman, Bertrand Rus-

sell, and by the state—and reports from other foreign and American Leagues occupied the opening evening, March 25.

The scientific sessions, held at the Hotel McAlpin, began the next morning and the registration shows that more than 800 persons attended these sessions. Half the states in the union were represented and no small number of those who registered were official representatives of colleges, welfare and health organizations, women's clubs and religious bodies. One delegate was commissioned to report the conference in full for two important Massachusetts organizations. Others were from weekly and monthly magazines, which gave liberal space to reports of the proceedings.

The addresses and reports, to the number of, almost a hundred, will be published in the REVIEW.

and ultimately, in a series of volumes under certain subject groupings. Nothing can be given in this brief article but an impression of the sessions as a whole.

Two sessions on March 26 and the evening session on war the next day, dealt mainly with population problems. The paper at the morning session March 26—over which Professor East of Harvard presided—which presented the clearest picture of the relation of population to natural resources, was Professor Henry P. Fairchild's "General Idea of Optimum Population." This, one of the other participants pronounced the "star of the morning." It was in fact, one among a galaxy of stars. At this opening session the opposition was invited to make its statement and nothing on the program was more interesting than the discussion which followed Dr. Louis I. Dublin's paper on "The Excesses of Birth Control," to which, as one of the speakers said, the whole proceedings rushed the answer.

Outstanding addresses at the afternoon session, were "The Differential Birth Rate" by Professor Raymond Pearl, Professor Walter Willcox' brief

India were made by representatives of those countries. Dr. Peter Tutyskin was to have spoken on Russia, but his steamer was delayed and his report was given later. Resolutions on the relation of Birth Control to labor and to child welfare were passed.

The most striking address at the health session—in some ways indeed the most striking of the whole conference—was Dr. William Allen Pusey's paper on "Medicine's Responsibility in the Birth Control Movement" which is published in full in this number of the Review.

Eugenics filled nearly the whole day on March 28, the only papers on that day not having a direct bearing on that subject being Havelock Ellis on "The Evolutionary Meaning of Birth Control," Calvin Bridges paper on "The Mechanism of Sex Determination" and Roswell Johnson on "The Distribution of Birth Control Practices." Three foreign Eugenists, Professors Haskovec, Gini and de Lapouge, presented papers. After American papers by Professor Whiting, Dr. Little and Dr. Wile, the negative side of eugenics was presented vividly by Dr. Max Schlapp of the New York

#### MESSAGE FROM H. G. WELLS

*Wannest good wishes to the International Conference. There is no other subject of such importance as Birth Control. Knowledge of it marks a new and happier phase in the history of civilization.*

and illuminating analysis of the trend of population in the United States, and Professor Ellsworth Huntington's clear and picturesque illustration from China of how overpopulation causes racial deterioration.

Papers which made a distinctive contribution to the war session were that on the French population problem, by M. Giroud ("G. Hardy"), of Paris, and Harold Cox' paper on "A League of Low Birth Rate Nations."

A resolution addressed to the League of Nations followed the war session. Though there was no discussion of the legal aspects of Birth Control in the United States, a resolution on this subject was passed at the first session of the conference.

The economic and health aspects of Birth Control were discussed on March 27. At the first of these sessions over which the Reverend John Haynes Holmes presided, after papers on the relation of Birth Control to Poverty, by Dr. Alice Hamilton, to Juvenile Delinquency, by Miriam Van Waters, and to Child Labor, by Owen Lovejoy, Secretary of the National Child Labor Committee, reports on conditions in Mexico, China and

Children's Court Clinic, and even more convincingly by Dr. Walter Timme, who both exhibited slides showing the effect of endocrine disturbances on offspring. This is a form of unfitness which can, in most cases be prevented by Birth Control alone without recourse to sterilization, for the parents are generally to all intents and purposes normal. A eugenic resolution was passed at one of these sessions.

An integral part of the eugenics discussion was the round table luncheon at which Professor Irving Fisher of Yale, Professors H. H. Laughlin and C. B. Davenport of Cold Spring Harbor and Professor James F. Field of the University of Chicago met with Mrs. Sanger, Professor P. W. Whiting, Dr. C. C. Little and others to discuss the relation of Birth Control to eugenics.

More than 800 doctors who attended the contraceptive session held in two sections at the McAlpin and Waldorf Hotels were a group quite distinct from the audience at the other sessions. Their numbers, the eagerness with which they accepted pamphlet copies of Dr. Pusey's speech and bought literature on Birth Control and the unanimity with

which they passed the **resolution** put before them gave the **decisive** answer to the statement that the **medical profession is** opposed to **Birth Control**. Speakers before these **meetings** were Dr James F Cooper and Dr Hannah M Stone, both of the **Clinical Research Department of the American Birth Control League**, and Dr Norman **Haire** of London. A full **discussion** from the floor followed these papers.

Chief among the **social** events of the conference, the concert, luncheons, receptions and dinners, was the **Pioneers Dinner** on the evening of the **twenty-sixth**, to which 355 guests sat down and at which they listened to the **experiences of pioneers**, old and new in the movement. To the older group belonged **Alice Drysdale Vickery**, "pioneer of pioneers," of that older generation of **Drysdale's** who turned **Malthusianism into Neo-Malthusianism**. Her paper we print in this issue of the **Review**. Dr C V Drysdale, **President** of the Conference, was another of this group and so was Dr Aletta Jacobs who founded the first **Birth Control Clinic** in Holland. Though they came many years

**ceding**. In the afternoon was held the ethical session at which the chairman was the Reverend **William H Garth** and the speakers were **with** two **exceptions, ministers**—**Baptist, Episcopal, Unitarian, Hebrew**. At this session at least one **Roman Catholic priest** was present and **listened with close attention**, and an aged **Episcopal** clergyman, a **traditional** opponent of **Birth Control**, confessed **himself** unable to cope **with** the weight of **opinion** on the other side, represented by **ministers of his own church**.

The **morning** session on sex and reproduction presented the **positive** argument for Birth Control, the **right** of women to the **psychic** release of sex, unmarred by the **blighting** fear of too frequent pregnancy. Dr G V **Hamilton** presided and the scientific aspect of the **subject** was presented by two psychoanalysts, Dr **Adolf Meyer** of Johns Hopkins and Dr A A **Brill** of New York. **Grace Potter** spoke both as a **psychoanalyst** and as a woman, and the **feminist** demand was clearly and eloquently put by **Doris Stevens** and by Dr **Helene Stocker of Berlin**. Practical facts as to the

*"I should like Dr Drysdale to convey to Mrs Sanger my most cordial wishes for the success of the Birth Control Congress, and to express the hope that the papers read there will effectually demohsh the objections which have been raised to Birth Control both on grounds of health and on grounds of morakty"*

PROFESSOR E W MCBRIDE, Vice-President of the Eugenic Society of Great Britain

later, for this group also spoke **Margaret Sanger**, who renamed **Neo-Malthusianism Birth Control** and **Kitty Marion** who since the early days of the movement in **America** has made national and **international** contacts for the League by selling the **Review** on the streets of New York.

The speakers for the newer group of **pioneers** were **Thit Jensen** of Denmark and **Johann** and **Betty Ferch** of **Austria**, who in a very few years have made **Birth Control clinics** a **reality** in their countries and have **obtained recognition** for them from the **medical profession**, and Dr Norman **Haire**, former director of the **Walworth Chmc** in London.

At the dinner also were read **messages** from other pioneers—Professor **Knut Wicksell** of Sweden, Judge **Ruppenthal** of Kansas, Professor **Phadke** of **India**, **Alice Stone Blackwell**, pioneer in another field who has thrown herself into the fight for free speech for **Margaret Sanger** in Boston.

March 30 was the last day of the **scientific sessions**. Its **discussions** involved a more **elusive** subject matter than the **meetings** of the days **pre-**

**effect** of Birth Control on the marriage rate were **given** by Professor **William F Ogburn** and the lack of it in **breaking up marriages** by Dr **William F Robie**. **Appropriate resolutions** were passed at this and the **ethical session**.

In the evening a public **meeting** was held at **Scottish Rite Hall** at which an audience of 1,200 heard addresses by **Norman Thomas**, Dr **Drysdale**, Dr **Norman Haire**, **Thit Jensen**, **Margaret Sanger**, **Ruth Hale** and Dr **James F Cooper**. The subject of Dr Cooper's paper was "The **Medical Status of Birth Control**" and at the end of the **meeting** a public health **resolution** was adopted.

It was on this day that Mrs Sanger sent to President **Cooledge**, in the name of the **American Birth Control League** the letter we **publish** on our **editorial** page, **calling** for the **appointment** of a **Birth Rate Commission**.

The morning of the **thirty-first** was mainly a business **meeting** with **discussion** of various **national leagues**, **closing words** by Dr **Drysdale** and Mrs Sanger and a graceful **presentation** of

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# Neo-Malthusian Philosophy

*Presidential Address at the Sixth International*

By CHARLES V DRYSDALE

## PART I

**T**HE vast majority of civilized people are now familiar with the idea of birth control, but it is safe to say that to all but a small fraction it appears simply as an empirical practical remedy for certain individual evils—a means whereby women can be relieved from the strain of excessive maternity, the family can be preserved from falling into economic distress, and the children can be given a better preparation for life. A few go further and soon begin to realize that it profoundly affects not only individual but social well-being, and that there is practically no department of human thought or influence upon which it has not a powerful modifying influence. But I doubt if there are many who appreciate that birth control is merely the practical side of a great philosophic scheme or scientific humanitarian religion which has been in the minds of its founders from the very outset, and that it is destined to revolutionize human ideals from their very foundation.

The organized Neo-Malthusian movement, which bore as its motto "A Crusade Against Poverty" may be said to have started from the Bradlaugh-Besant trial of 1876 and to have had four main objects

- 1 *Quantization or Economic* To promote the understanding of the Malthusian doctrine, and to diminish the birth-rate until it is in harmony with the increase of subsistence and thus to eliminate misery or absolute poverty, i. e., to secure that all shall secure adequate nourishment.

- 2 *Qualitative or Eugenic* To improve the quality of the race by advocating abstinence from parenthood on the part of the hereditarily diseased or defective and limitation of births in each family to the number which can be satisfactorily reared without external assistance.

- 3 *Physiological and Moral* To promote healthy understanding of the sex functions, and the knowledge of hygienic contraceptive devices, and to promote sexual purity by advocating universal early marriage which can only be achieved by removing the fear of the economic evils of large families.

- 4 *International* To remove the international rivalries caused by the pressure of overpopulation and thus give opportunity for the establishment of international law leading to federation and permanent peace.

We are now nearing the completion of the first half century of our Crusade, and it is opportune to take stock of our achievements in each of these departments.

### 1 *The Malthusian or Quantitative Aspect*

The inspiration for our Crusade arises from the great doctrine of overpopulation first clearly enunciated by Malthus in 1798, and which in my opinion stands to social science in the same relations as Newton's law of gravitation does to physics and astronomy. Indeed I would go so far as to claim that no one should be regarded as competent to express an opinion on any social question whatever, who does not show his knowledge of this fundamental doctrine and its bearing on the question at issue. No astronomer at the present time would pay attention to explanations concerning the movements of the heavenly bodies in which the law of gravitation did not play a prominent part and no proposition for social reform should be considered seriously if it is put forward without reference to the population doctrine.

As regards the appreciation of this doctrine we can look back on our fifty years progress with great satisfaction. After a period of almost total eclipse, it has won its way in every section of the community, even among those which started with denial and contempt of it. I would like in this connection to pay a tribute to the prominent American economists, who have been foremost in maintaining the importance of the doctrine, during the period of eclipse in all other countries. On the other hand I cannot but notice with regret a tendency in modern sociological workers to depreciate the exposition of the population doctrine as given by Malthus himself, more especially his famous ratios. Science has no use for Popes in any department, and we have ourselves departed widely from Malthus as regards his practical proposition, but after many years of study and attempts to render the population doctrine as clear and precise as possible, I must confess to complete failure to improve upon Malthus's exposition, and in my booklet "The Malthusian Doctrine and Its Modern Aspects," I think I have demonstrated that even the ratios of Malthus are sound in principle and I cannot but wonder at his prophetic insight.

But when we look at the practical results which have followed our propaganda, we can only be filled with joy and thankfulness that we have been in-

**strumental in producing** the greatest amelioration in human conditions which has ever taken place in the world's history. Immediately after the Bradlaugh-Besant trial of 1876, the birth-rate of the most important European countries which had shown an upward tendency before that time, began to take a rapid downward course which has persisted to the present day. It would probably be an underestimate to claim that two and one-half million fewer births now take place annually in Europe alone, than would have occurred if the birth-rates existing in 1876 had been maintained. Now according to the Malthusian law the rate of increase of population, i e., the difference between the birth and death rates, is determined by the rate of increase of subsistence. Let us suppose for simplicity that the rate of increase of the food supply of a country is one percent or ten per thousand per annum. Then if the birth rate is fifty per thousand as it has been in Russia and Egypt, and only ten per thousand can survive, the death-rate must be forty per thousand. But if the birth-rate falls to forty or thirty, the death-rate can fall to thirty or twenty respectively, i e., every rise or fall of the birth-rate will be followed by a corresponding rise or fall in the death-rate, if the Malthusian doctrine is true and no sudden alteration of productive power had taken place.

#### *Birth and Death Rates*

The course of events have completely justified our anticipation on this point. Wherever the birth-rate has fallen there also has the death-rate diminished and usually by a closely corresponding amount, while where the birth-rate has been stationary or rising the death-rate has either remained nearly stationary or has actually risen in spite of all advances in medicine and sanitation. We have therefore considerable justification for the assumption that in the great majority of countries there has been a pressure of population on subsistence and that the great fall of the death-rate which has been witnessed in most civilized countries is principally due to the fall in their birth-rates and would not have occurred if the old high birth-rates had been maintained. In Great Britain alone we now have nearly half a million less deaths annually, than would have taken place with the birth-rate which subsisted before 1876 and the average length of life has been increased from about 35 to 57 years.

This "Law of Correspondence between Birth and Death-rates" as I have ventured to call it, is a direct deduction from the Malthusian law and is of the most stupendous human importance. In the first place it disposes definitely of the foolish cry of "Race Suicide." Reduction of the birth-rate in an overpopulated country not only does not diminish

the rate of increase of the population but may actually increase it, as those who come into the world to die in childhood contribute nothing to the increase of population but deprive the others of a certain amount of subsistence and reduce their strength and efficiency. Holland and Germany have both shown an acceleration of population increase with a rapidly falling birth-rate. France which is always spoken of as a "dying nation," has actually about the same rate of increase today with a birth-rate of about 19 per thousand, as it had before the Revolution with a birth-rate of 39.

#### *Population and the Span of Life*

The second valuable result from this law is that it permits us to estimate fairly closely what the birth-rate of a country ought to fall to. In a country of stationary population and of negligible net migration the birth and death rates must be equal and will be given approximately by dividing 1,000 by the average duration of life of the people. If the population is increasing or diminishing, this quotient gives us the mean between the birth and death-rates if the rate of increase is small. Now according to the law of correspondence we have just considered, the rate of increase or difference between the birth and death rates remains approximately constant however the birth-rate varies, in a stable overpopulated country. Our object is to eliminate overpopulation, i e., to raise the duration of life to its full physiological maximum, indicating that a sufficiency of the necessities and comfort of life has been obtained for all without imperious luxury. What should be the duration of life in this case? In highly overpopulated countries like India, China and Russia, the average duration of life is probably not greater than 25 years. In Great Britain before the decline of birth-rate set in it was probably not more than 35 years, but it has risen rapidly and it is now nearing 60 years. It does not seem unreasonable to suppose that the Psalmist's figure of "three score years and ten" or 70 years is attainable, in view of the considerable amount of poverty and preventable disease which still exists. Adopting this figure as our provisional ideal this would mean a birth and death-rate of 14 per thousand for a stationary population.

Let us apply this to France, the "dying nation." Its normal rate of increase appears to be about two per thousand. Its present birth-rate is about 19 and death rate 17, so that its longevity should be about 1,000 divided by 18, or 56 years—about the same as in Great Britain. For a longevity of 70 years and the same rate of increase the birth rate would be 15 and death rate 13, so that there is still need for the birth-rate to fall in France. With the accession of the mines and potash beds of Alsace-

Lorraine it is quite possible that the survival rate of France can be increased to something **approaching** that of other countries and in that case we shall see the death-rate fall faster than the **birth-rate**

For Great Britain and the United States of America a survival rate of about **10** per thousand seems normal, so that a **birth-rate** of **20** and **death-rate** of **10** seems the ideal to be aimed at

## 2 The *Qualitative* or *Eugenic Aspect*

Side by side with the **quantitative** question of population, and of equal or even greater importance in Western nations at the present day is the question of its quality. The **importance** of this question was **realized** from the very beginning of the organized Neo-Malthusian movement and in the very first year of its **origin** in The *Malthusian* appeared **articles** laying down the **principles** which have since become known as negative eugenics, *i. e.*, that persons having hereditary **disease** or defect although they might marry should abstain from procreation, and that families should be **restricted** to that number for which the parents could provide satisfactory nurture and education without external assistance. Although modern Eugenics has added to our knowledge of what constitutes hereditary defectiveness, it has not in the least affected the above **principle**, and we are glad to see that Eugenists are **tending** more and more to accept it

It is of interest in this connection to recall that **Darwin**, to whom we owe the modern **appreciation** of heredity, avowedly drew his inspiration from Malthus, and his famous doctrine of natural selection through the struggle for **existence** is simply an extension to the whole of **living organization** of the **Malthusian doctrine**. In various communications which I have recently made to the British Eugenics Society, I have put forward a **definite guiding** principle for practical **Eugenic** reform, *i. e.*, that we should apply the rational selection made possible by **contraceptive** methods to **imitate** the **Darwinian** process of natural selection as closely as possible, by recommending abstention from further parenthood whenever the individual or his **offspring** would have been **eliminated** in the **struggle**, if not relieved by economic or **medical assistance**, and unless or **until** a better **criterion** is evolved, I suggest that **this** principle should be accepted. The matter is of the most extreme importance from the humanitarian standpoint, as the **painful** truth has been gradually forced on our **consciousness**, that all the well meant attempts at preserving the lives and improving the **conditions** of the unfortunate, are simply **swelling** the mass of

unfitness, and stifling the educated and thrifty classes by excessive taxation

But the selective agency of natural selection is equally well secured by preserving the **defective individual**, **provided** he does not reproduce, and once this is **recognized**, we can solve the greatest of **social** problems—how to **reconcile** humanitarian assistance with race improvement. Another great Eugenic factor in which we **Neo-Malthusians** have great **faith**, is the natural **instructive selection** of flee womanhood. The natural healthy woman is **passionately desirous** of **beautiful** children, but the feeble and diseased woman dreads the **arrival** of sickly diseased children above all other terrors, and when the knowledge of contraception enables each woman to be "mistress of herself" to use **Ingersoll's** phrase, an immense **eugenic** advance will be made

On the intellectual side, we can **rejoice** that our **eugenic** ideal is steadily winning its way towards acceptance. But as regards **practical** results **this** part of our aim has so far failed up to the present in every country except Holland. **Immediately** the **Malthusian League** was founded a campaign was at once launched among the working classes who **received** it with enthusiasm. But **within** a few months it was absolutely frustrated by the Socialists who **claimed** that it was a pretext for making the people content with their lot **instead** of **agitating** for their "**rights**," and that if the people would espouse socialism and work for the revolution, they would obtain all they needed **without limitation** of their families. Their success was so complete that it was impossible to **obtain audiences** for birth control **meetings**, and the scheme had to be abandoned for nearly forty years, when the **failure** of Socialist promises led the people to **listen** to us again

## *Differential Fertility*

In the meantime the educated classes rapidly seized on the new doctrine and adopted family **limitation** for themselves to such an extent that today families of more than two children are rare among them. The doctors and clergy are now at the bottom of the fertility list. But **instead** of helping us to **circulate** the information to the poor, they have opposed its **dissemination** in every possible way, on **medical**, moral and **national** grounds. It is little wonder, therefore, that the **selective** action of birth control has so far been almost **diametrically** opposite to that which we intended. We were further attacked by the early eugenicist who claimed that the poorer classes would never exercise prudence, and that birth control must **inevitably** be **cacogenic** in its operation

(END OF PART I)

# Legislators Wake to a Vital Problem

*Hearing on the New York Birth Control Bill*

**I**N the May, 1923, Birth Control **Review** there appeared an **editorial** on "Intelligence Tests for **Legislators**" Mrs Sanger had just come down from Albany where "noisy and ill-mannered politicians" had held a hearing on the Birth Control **Bill** which was in reality "no hearing because most of the legislators refused us the courtesy of listening to our arguments, like schoolboys impatient to return to their game of marbles" She suggested that there was "no more certain way in which the voters could appraise the fitness of all candidates for public office than by asking for a statement of their attitude toward the problems of health and racial hygiene—whether they are ready to safeguard and protect the child-life of the state or the nation from the widespread abuses and evils which have grown out of criminal neglect"

Though no such intelligence tests have been applied a very radical change has in the last two years taken place in the attitude of legislators in New York State toward the fundamental questions involved in Birth Control legislation No action has, it is true been taken as yet on the bill introduced this year by Assemblyman John Boyle, but the attitude of the Codes Committee at its hearing on March 17th, was not characterized by levity or discourtesy On the contrary, it was characterized by profound interest, increasing as the hearing progressed, in the subject matter of the bill

The surprise of the hearing was that no Roman Catholic opposition materialized, and indeed no effective opposition of any sort Only two persons appeared on the negative side One of these was the aged Canon Chase of Brooklyn, traditional opponent of Birth Control, whose views were listened to politely but aroused no apparent enthusiasm The second was a physician who claimed to represent a small group in the state medical society, and whose statement appeared to rouse at times the antagonism, at times the levity of the committee

In the early part of the hearing there was a suggestion of heckling in Chairman Esmond's frequent questions while arguments for the bill were being presented Later, Mr Esmond took pains to explain that he desired merely by his questions to bring out the answers to certain objections which would be sure to come up in the legislature These were three, that such a bill would be useless on account of the "natural indolence" and stupidity of the poor whom it was meant to aid, that

race suicide would result, and that by removing the fear of pregnancy, it would increase immorality

The last objection the chairman himself answered, expressing his belief that even if a few took advantage of this immunity the state would benefit by doing away with illegitimacy and abortion, the present consequences of irregular sex relations Percy L Clark of Cornell University showed the dangers of overpopulation and he with other speakers, answered the race suicide objection with figures as to the relation between birth and death rates

In respect to the indolence and stupidity of the poor, Mrs Sanger stated that the Clinical Research Department of the American Birth Control League teaches methods so simple that once learned any mother who is intelligent enough to keep a nursing bottle clean can use them Those below this standard should be regularly cared for in a public clinic or, under certain special conditions, should be sterilized As for indolence, she had reason to believe from the thousands of poor and ignorant mothers who wrote her, that the poor would not let laziness stand in the way of protecting themselves from excessive childbearing

**T**HE humanitarian and personal aspects of the subject were brought out by the Reverend Dr Garth, Mrs Ernest Adey, Mrs Rose Halpern—herself a mother helped by Mrs Sanger—and Mrs F Robertson Jones

It was the medical testimony that clearly carried most weight with the committee Four physicians spoke for the bill Birth Control as a preventive of abortion was Dr John C Vaughan's theme, and Birth Control as the highest expression of preventive medicine the subject of Dr Hannah M Stone, whose address appears on another page of the Review

Dr James F Cooper gave impressive figures showing the growing support for Birth Control that is coming from physicians Two years ago 700 physicians put themselves on record for the New York bill This year, in two days no less than 53 signed for an opinion expressed their hearty approval, and in the same period of time 325 applied for invitations to the contraceptive session of the 6th International Conference Over three thousand physicians have visited the Clinical Re-

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# "MEDICINE'S RESPONSIBILITIES"

*Mothers Who Have Been Unable to Obtain Help in the Consulting Room*

No statement is more general in letters from poor mothers than the statement that the doctor warns them against having more children but refuses to tell them how to avoid pregnancy. It appears in almost every other letter and it effectively answers the claim of those who tell us that doctors always give contraceptive advice in cases where it is needed. A few—relatively few—do give that advice, but the rank and file do not, some because they do not know, others because they fear to or have scruples, others—we hope not many—for the more sordid or cynical motives some of these mothers attribute to them.

During the past year the increase of interest in contraception has been very great, and a greater number of physicians are giving advice. Courses in contraceptive technique in our medical schools, combined with amendment of our laws, would equip all physicians to give not only warnings, but aid

## "They Won't Do Anything for Me"

I purchased one of your books called "Woman and the New Race" If there was ever a book written and told the truth, yours certainly does. I certainly am happy that I had an opportunity to read it, because I am in misery myself, just the same as some of the letters you printed in the book.

I just came from the hospital and am too weak to write so I am asking my husband to write for me. I have three living children now and in 1918 I had a serious operation. Since that, I lost one child at birth and had two abortions, the last I was five and one-half months. I have to pay the ambulance doctor, hospital, and undertaker all at once. Ever since the operation, I am getting weaker and losing weight and color, but with all my pleas with doctors, they won't do anything for me. I went to several and they think that what I ask for is an insult to them. So since I read your book, I didn't ask any of the doctors for help as I know I won't get it.

When I sent for your book, I was in hopes that I would get some information, the kind I was seeking. So, dear Mrs. Sanger, I am asking you to tell me how to obtain good contraceptives, the kind that would last for years as you mentioned in the book. Please let me hear from you soon and tell me what to do and I will always be grateful to you for this favor.

## "They Act as if It was a Sin"

We are just more of the unfortunates. We are farmers and when we go to our doctors here, they act as if it was a sin and a crime to give us help or advice.

My mother was tubercular and I am not very large or strong, although I do not think I have any signs of T. B. But my trouble is this, I am married and have two sweet

babies. They are only eleven months apart and another on the way, which will make only 16 months between the baby and the next, and only two years and two months between the oldest and next one. I am in miserable health—no strength to take care of what I've got, or help one bit with the work and perhaps you know a farm woman has twice or three times as much to do as any other woman, with chickens and garden, children and housework, washing and sewing, and just everything.

I am sure most of us are glad to have work to do if we can just have health and strength to do it, but it is torture to be in such health as I am, and see these things go undone, and be unable to help any. I cannot be the mother my children should have and feel so bad all the time. We are very poor financially, but we wouldn't mind that if I could just be well.

My mother died when I was twelve, so you see she did not get to help me by giving the much needed advice how to keep from having so many children, and retain my health. Now I would rather die than live in this misery the rest of my life, so can you and will you help me by telling me what to do to keep from having so many children, that we have no means to care for.

We are hoping our nation will wake up soon to the value of such as you.

## Warned but Gave No Help

Pennsylvania

I am just one of many in harmony with the movement you have tried so hard to advocate. I have a little story of my own to relate. When a girl scarcely in my teens, I was operated on for an abdominal abscess. Adhesions resulted that crowded my maternal organs to such an extent, that my uterus was crowded out of place and the continual pressure caused me considerable annoyance, so much in fact that I submitted first, to a minor operation, then a major operation to relieve me of the pressure without any



results **Physicians** advised me to have a baby, I had been **taking** no precautions and of course **continued** married hfe as before About one year after my **third operation**, I became pregnant on February 12, 1923 I **gave birth** to a baby boy at the **hospital** Scarcely a week **passed** by when **septic poison** set in For a month I was just **hanging** on, then I had to submit to another **operation**, an abscess had developed, and I had three **incisions** as a result **again** Finally on **April 30th**, I came home, after **being** there almost four months (January 5th to **April 30th**) Doctor told me I should have no more children and I **live in** constant fear Yet when he **might** have attended to me he never **did** Could you, would you, Mrs Sanger, **impart** your **information** to one so **crippled** bodily as I am I would rather lose husband, baby and **home**, than **submit** to such an **experience**, and then **not** know results

### The Doctor offers no Relief

West Virginia

I am **writing** you personal to try to **obtain** from you the advice I am **seeking** I saw an ad in one of our **magazines** for a book, "Woman and the New Race" I ordered **this** book and after **reading** it I found many helpful **things**, but no exact answer to the one great **question** "How can I **avoid** such frequent **child-birth**?" After **being** married three years and five months, I find myself the mother of three sons, the youngest **is** now 10 months old We are only a young couple 26 years old and have a small farm Our **income** **is** very small and **if** our **family** **continued** at **this** rate we can never be able to give our **children** much advantage **in** life When I was **married** I had perfect health I was a farmer's daughter and made a hand on the farm, that **is** I performed a man's labor every day on a farm Now I am a nervous wreck I can hardly do my housework and have been on our doctor's hands **since** our last baby came The doctor says my system **is** **in** a run down **condition** from such frequent **births** and yet he offers no **relief**, only to **build** me up **again** I am **tired** of **life** as it is at present and **if** you have any means of **telling** me how to control **child-birth**, I am sure it will be the one great turning **point** in my life

My husband **is** very **kind** to me and **is** a real father to **his** family Yet, all **his** love and sympathy does not help me to **regain** my health and enjoy hfe as I deserve I was brought up **in** Ignorance of all the **questions** of sex I come from a **family** of **six** children, so you see my mother knows **nothing** to tell me I have **tried** various **things** others have told me but to no effect

Now Mrs Sanger, please send your real answer and **if** there **is** any way to prevent **child birth** or **becoming** pregnant, I **certainly** will try to procure enough money to pay you for your **pains** I am very **anxious** to procure a real cure for **this** one great trouble

### The Doctor Says to be Careful

New York

Today, I had one of your **BIRTH CONTROL REVIEWS** of August last handed me and I find after **reading** it many Interesting things

I have been **married** 12 years and **in** that **time** I have been pregnant **nine** times, bearing five living children and two born dead and two **miscarriages** at about two or three months, and **my third child** was too weak to stand **this** world and left us at seven months The rest are well and strong, but I am not I am just **now** **recovering** from a **miscarriage** and am **very** weak I have been home from the **hospital** only a **week** and the two doctors that took care of me tell my husband "One more child and I won't answer for her life," and I asked them what we should do to prevent **conception** and they said you must be careful, that **is** all they would say **My** husband **is** very much **worried** We are very **dear** to one another He **is** very good to me but we both **realize** that we **have** our **life** and our four **remaining** children to care for and we can not go on like **this** with the suffering and **worry** and expense and **nothing** to show for it when we are done We are both very fond of children, too much so to see them brought to **this** world to suffer and die or die before they ever enter **this** world

I am **certainly** **in** favor of birth control **Think** it **is** a fine **thing** where one's health **is** at stake or the **income** not sufficient to maintain all expenses **My** husband **is** not a rich man We have enough, if not too much sickness and doctor's **bills**, and **hospitals** come in to eat it up We can live and care for what we have but **if** we have too many more or too many sick spells **between**, we will have to **begin** to **think** If there **is** anything you can do or say to help me, I would be very glad to hear from you and **in** the mean time you have both **my** husband and my own best **wishes**, also our prayers for help **in** your great work There are many **others** I wish you could reach who I know need your help as much as I

### "Hoped, by Sod, I Would Have no More"

Michigan

I am a woman 32 years old I was **married** when 21 and I have four children, the oldest **nine** and the youngest **three** years I was **injured** after the **birth** of the first by **being** dragged by a horse when three months along with the second child and **ever** since **child-birth** **is** a horror to me as I have to be **sick** from ten to **twelve** hours, take chloroform, and the doctor has to use Instruments He **advised** me the last **time**, saying he hoped, by God, I never would have any more, but there it stands as you say, **and** will not tell what to do to prevent it **My** husband **is** in favor of not **having** any more children as he **is** small and not as strong as he has been and four **children** are all we can afford to raise and educate as they should be

# An Appeal to Reason\*

By HANNAH M. STONE, M.D.

**T**HE American Birth Control League, in accordance with the present status of the law, organized some time ago a Clinical Research Department. In this department contraceptive information is given to married women who come within the meaning of the law, that is, to those who are ill and diseased, and in whom pregnancy would either endanger life or seriously aggravate the disease. This Clinical Department is under the supervision of a Medical Board, on which a number of prominent physicians serve, and cases are being referred to us by many physicians, hospitals and social service departments throughout the state. It is, therefore, natural that we, who work in this department, come in contact with a large number of women who require contraceptive advice, and are constantly impressed with the great importance of this work and with its imperative need. Medicine to-day strives to be not merely curative, its ultimate aim is to become preventive, and contraceptive advice is in innumerable cases the finest expression of modern preventive medicine.

Unfortunately, the law, as at present constituted, is inadequate to permit the physician to exercise his best judgment. Under it, we may give contraceptive information only to those women who are actually ill already, where a further pregnancy would be a distinct danger to life or health. Daily, however, there come to us other women, women who have born many children, women who have become exhausted with the tremendous task of bringing up their already numerous offspring, women whose husbands' pay is hardly adequate to provide for even a small family, and where every additional child would mean further deprivation and misery, women, who, should they become pregnant again, would inevitably turn to abortion with all the suffering, injuries and dangers it involves. And we, because of the present law, must turn them away, must close our doors to them without giving them that information which would prevent so much future ailment, misery and family unhappiness.

Shall I cite some of the cases which I meet so frequently at the clinic? It is quite unnecessary to bring up the unusual, or particularly pitiful, or especially dramatic case. Let us take an instance that almost every general practitioner sees in his office daily. A woman, say 28 years old, in poor circumstances, with four or five children, the last one probably a nursing baby at the breast. Unable and

unwilling to give birth to any more children, with no means at hand properly to bring up even those she already has, she comes to us for advice. What shall we say to such a woman?

**L**ET us all be frank. Either she has to abstain from all sexual relations as long as she does not want to become pregnant, or else she must employ some method of contraception. In the opinion of the most enlightened medical thought, abstinence in married people for a prolonged period of time is neither feasible nor desirable. It is distinctly harmful physically and mentally, and very frequently leads to irreparable domestic disruptions and social difficulties.

The other alternative is the employment of some contraceptive method. The choice of the method is plainly a health problem, for many methods are both harmful and useless. It, therefore, should be the privilege and even the duty, of the physician to instruct his patients in the use of the proper means of contraception. Contraception is a problem in preventive medicine, and its employment should be left to the judgment of those people whose duty it is to care for the health of the community.

I remember a woman who came to our clinic only last week. In the eleven years of her married life she had given birth to seven children. Two of the children died in infancy and three she brought with her. The last one was seven months old. The children she had with her looked anemic, undernourished and rickety. Her husband was a laborer earning \$4.00 a day. She came for contraceptive advice.

Now, what are such people to do, if we, physicians, are not permitted to give them advice how to lead a normal life without constantly begetting new children, children who are practically pre-ordained either to die in infancy, or else to remain malnourished and sickly most of the time? Well, they either secretly obtain and use contraceptive devices which often endanger their health, or else they submit, as they do in spite of our warnings, to frequent surgical abortions which often endanger their lives.

Should it not, then, be our duty as physicians, appointed and entrusted by the community to work for its welfare and health, to give such people safe, simple and scientific contraceptive information, information which will bring them the desired relief without the danger of ill effects? A law permitting the giving of such information by physicians would be a long stride forward in Preventive Medicine.

Gentlemen, I appeal to your reason.

\* Statement before the Codes Committee of the New York Assembly, March 17, 1925.

## Our Own Literary Digest

OVER a period of about two weeks the daily press of all but four states of the union put out almost eight hundred stories on the Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference. News stories covered the subject matter of practically all the sessions, and the New York Sunday papers published feature stories and made known the scientific foundations of the Birth Control movement by using in whole or in abstract some of the more important papers read at the sessions. The four states which gave no space to the Conference were, with the exception of New Hampshire, western states from which returns may come in later. The south, generally slow to respond to new ideas, showed quite as lively an interest as the north and west. All this group gave the news of the conference, no less than 24 stories being printed in Louisiana, 19 in Virginia and 17 in Florida.

Twenty-four editorials appeared in Massachusetts, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Montana, Illinois, West Virginia and New York papers. Many of these, including the *Springfield Republican*, the *Brooklyn Eagle*, the *New York Telegram* and the *New York World*, comment on the changed attitude of the public and the police. "It is a question that has evidently got beyond the stage of being settled by police clubs," says the *New Bedford (Mass.) Mercury*, and the *New York Telegram* makes this fact the text of an editorial on the delay of the Commissioner of Accounts to publish the report demanded of him by Mayor Hylan, fixing the responsibility for the breaking up of the Town Hall meeting in 1921. The *New York World's* excellent editorial statement of the changed public attitude, under the head "A Conference Which Marks Progress" is reprinted in full on another page.

The *Springfield Republican* concludes that "So far as appears from the reports of its proceedings, and considering also the imposing list of men and women of scientific and civic standing who are participating the conference is likely to prove of public service."

It follows this up toward the end of the conference with a brief note to the effect that "the decorum of the gathering continues to be scrupulously maintained."

On the whole, overpopulation is the aspect of the subject which impressed the editorial imagination most strongly. The *Rome (N.Y.) Sentinel* is especially struck by the discovery that "a declining birth rate is by no means necessarily accom-

panied by a declining population, but quite the reverse." The relation of the United States to the Japanese population problem gives reality in the mind of the editorial writer in the *Lincoln (Neb.) Star* to the general discussion at the session on war.

The *Anaconda (Mont.) Standard* publishes a wholly approving editorial on the relation of Birth Control to population problems, and the *Morgantown (W. Va.) Post*, though not in full sympathy believes that "such conferences as this should help to lead to a better survival rate of the really fit," while the *Poughkeepsie (N.Y.) Eagle* feels that "The average observer hesitates to endorse the movement, but occasionally when he considers population statistics and tries to look into the future he is likely to feel a little disquieted none the less."

### The Opposition

Some papers are in opposition to the discussion of population. The *Johnstown (Penn.) Democrat* believes that overpopulation takes care of itself. "The people in young lands" says this editorial writer, "are prolific because children are an economic asset. As lands grow older, children become less and less an economic asset and there are fewer of them. And that is just about all there is to it."

The *Boston (Mass.) Transcript* and the *Springfield (Mass.) Union* appear to desire to discourage discussion of population problems on account of their very importance. Says the *Transcript*: "These distinguished sociologists are addressing themselves, in point of fact, to some of the greatest problems which confront man-kind. They are talking about the population of the whole world. In other words, they are assuming to discover wise counsel and guidance to be parcelled out to 1,748,000,000 men, women and children."

"Will the sixth international Neo-Malthusian birth-control conference now be able even measurably to slacken it, or will the world's vast questions of population really be determined by forces more vast?"

What the "forces more vast" are, is not specified, but no other possibilities come to mind except battle, famine and plague. The traditional "acts of Providence" which have regulated population so far.

The *Union* writing of "The Birth Control To-Do" states that "There are few more ludicrous figures than the man or woman who goes about with heavy heart because of the dangers to the

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# Overpopulation and Migration as Causes of War

By WARREN S. THOMPSON

## PART I

**A**S dynastic influences dwindle and as personal animosities and injured self-esteem disappear or become less important as causes of international strife and as some of the most dangerous features of modern nationalism are done away with, it appears to many that war should soon be a thing of the past. But it is with war as with most other ills from which mankind suffers. As soon as one cause is removed other causes producing the same evil or other similar evils are likely to spring up.

We have now passed or are rapidly passing the stage of social development in the more advanced nations of the world where important events follow from simple personal causes, if indeed they have ever done so. There was a greater element of truth in Louis XIV's assertion "I am the State" than there would have been had the Kaiser or Czar said the same in 1914. The social and economic organization of the world is steadily becoming more complex, so that whatever truth there may once have been in the theory that great men are the most important causes of the course of events, there is now little practical truth in this doctrine. More and more we find our efforts to understand the course of history leading us to the study of intricate economic and social processes in which the important factors are great impersonal forces.

### Complex Causes of War

This does not mean that men are any less able than formerly to direct the course of history, nor that the personal qualities of leaders are any less important than of yore. It merely means we are now coming to see that with the growth in the size and complexity of our social organization and with more knowledge of the processes of life, we can no longer be satisfied with the easy, simple, personal explanations of events which have prevailed in the past. We must study actual situations as we find them developing in life, in their complexity and in their intimate connections with past situations, if we are ever to get forward in our efforts to control our destiny. We must squarely face the fact that life is complex and difficult and that easy explanations and simple causes are not to be desired because, as partial truths, they will not lead to efficient means of control—the aim of human endeavor.

A strong effort was made during the Great War to have people think in simple terms regarding its causes, for in this way the emotions necessary to its prosecution could most easily be aroused and sus-

tained. We were told that it was due to personal pique, jealousy, fear, or blundering, and an effort was made to convince us that the evil wills of a few swashbucklers and diplomats precipitated the greatest catastrophe in the life of modern times. For several years this simple, personal explanation of the causes of this war was accepted by the great majority of the people everywhere, and the few people who thought otherwise were made martyrs.

With the passing of the immediate crisis and the return of people to the humdrum of customary occupations, we are now experiencing a clarification of vision. We are able to see that this war at least had its origin not primarily in dynastic pride and squabbles, nor in the personal piques of diplomats, nor even in the evil wills of greedy capitalists, but rather in the whole situation in which Europe found itself as a result of its historical development and especially as the result of its very rapid growth in population consequent upon industrial revolution.

### Population Pressure

Do not misunderstand me! I would not underestimate the power of dynastic forces, especially in past ages, nor the suspicion engendered by current diplomatic practices, nor the traditional hatreds of nations, nor the deliberate efforts made to foster a bigoted nationalism, but I would insist that a very rapidly growing population made it easier, indeed made it very easy, for the leaders of the different nations to arouse the states of mind in their peoples which would not only tolerate war but would welcome it because they had been led to believe that it was the only possible solution of the unstable situation in which they were living. There are times when any kind of activity is preferable to remaining quiet, waiting for the unknown but inevitable to happen.

The equilibrium of the nations is always more or less unstable. There are many forces that can so disturb it at a given moment that war is likely to result. If ever peace is to be attained we must not only look for the forces which directly disturb the equilibrium at any given moment but we must go behind these to search out those which underlie a condition of unstable equilibrium. The removal of the immediate and direct causes of war will never stop war. We must go a great deal farther and remove the basic conditions which make it likely that the status quo will be altered by any nation if only it is expedient to do so. It will be my contention here that perhaps the most important force

making for an unstable equilibrium between the nations of the world is over-population and the consequent striving to migrate, or as I prefer to call it, the unequal pressure of population in different parts of the world. A condition of this sort had been developing rapidly in Europe in the half century preceding the Great War.

To make this clear, it may be well to review very briefly some of the facts of population growth in Europe since 1800. In that year all Europe had about 175,000,000 inhabitants. Just before the outbreak of the war, these 175,000,000 had increased to about 450,000,000. This increase had not been evenly distributed between the different nations. If we look more closely at facts of population growth for the great nations of Europe for the 40 or 50 years immediately preceding the outbreak of the Great War, we will better understand how population growth exerted its influence upon the policies of the different countries.

The German Empire had grown from slightly over 41,000,000 in 1871 to nearly 65,000,000 in

stand this feeling. If French statesmen, on the other hand, felt that France had already dropped into the position where she could no longer be the hammer and that she was rapidly slipping into the position where she could not sustain even the role of anvil, we can also understand why they did so and appreciate what it means to one nation to remain practically stationary while her closest neighbor is increasing rapidly in numbers and power. It would be beyond the province of my paper to discuss in detail how the growing pressure of population led German statesmen and the German people at large to feel that their rapid growth in numbers entitled them to control a larger share of the world's surface in order to insure the supply of things they needed to keep on growing. We can all imagine how we would feel if we were placed in the same situation. On the other hand, a weaker nation like France dare not admit a single encroachment without laying itself open to further encroachments whenever its stronger neighbors may feel inclined to undertake them.

*"I wish to express my hearty concurrence with the objects of the Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference and I trust that the publicity it obtains may do much to further a true understanding of the place of birth control in a well-developed population policy."*

PROFESSOR WARREN S. THOMPSON,  
Scripps Foundation for Research on Population Problems, Miami University, Ohio

1910, and was increasing at the rate of 13% per annum at the time of the outbreak of the war. This was a somewhat lower rate of increase than it had in 1900. It had passed the period of its largest excess of births over deaths. During the time that Germany was increasing 58.1% in population, France was increasing only 8.53% or from a little over 36,000,000 to a little over 39,000,000, and Russia had increased 71.0% or from about 76,500,000 to almost 131,000,000. Great Britain had increased 43.6%, Austria-Hungary 37.8%, and Italy 29.4%. In Germany, Great Britain and Austria the rate of natural increase had been declining for a few years and in France for a much longer time, while in Russia, Italy, and Hungary it was the largest it had ever been in the years immediately preceding the war, and in Russia the outlook was for a still more rapid growth in the immediate future.

German statesmen who had been watching the trends of population growth very carefully had begun to feel that they were between the hammer (Russia) and the anvil (France and England) and that they must crush one or both or be crushed by them. The very rapid growth of Russia and the smaller Slav countries should help us to under-

stand this feeling. Even in the United States with all its vast resources, we frequently hear business men complain of the attitude of the authorities of various countries who have not undertaken the development of their own resources and who are unwilling that American capitalists should undertake their exploitation on their own terms. How much stronger this feeling must be when the population of a country feels the real pinch of lack of natural resources and sees great abundance of these elsewhere to which they are denied access. None of us likes the "dog in the manger" when we want the hay on which he has made his bed.

I am not claiming that population pressure is the only cause of war nor that it is generally the immediate cause of war, but I do believe that we will never be in a position to understand the great complexity of the social and economic situations out of which war is likely to arise until we study far more carefully than we have been in the habit of doing the effects of the growth of population on national economic policies and therefore on international policies. Until we do understand the great complexity of the situation likely to bring about

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# Impressions of The Conference

From the *Information Desk*

By ANNE KENNEDY

**T**HE spirit of this Conference was best emphasized by the individuals who dally went in and out of the sessions, with their program in hand, expressing enthusiasm, interest and admiration for the great educational advantages that were available during the six days of the sessions, and to emphasize how wide this interest was, I will give a few personal conversations with some of the delegates and attendants

From the South, a little woman with black eyes and a southern accent, stepped briskly up to the desk and said "I want to represent the South at the Conference. I know that the women in the southern states and in New Orleans especially, are interested in this great problem of Birth Control, so I do not feel I should register from one particular state." She stayed through all the sessions and took voluminous notes, exclaiming over the wealth of material she would have for her club members.

A man stepped up and presented his credentials from the Mexican Consul General of New York City, asking that he be permitted to attend all sessions of the Conference. He was Professor Rodriguez y Cos, who founded the Department of Sociology in connection with the University of Mexico. He is making a world tour, investigating new educational methods and constructive movements for world betterment in every country. He was most enthusiastic about the Conference.

Instructors from twenty-four of our colleges and universities attended all or part of the sessions. Many of these men and women were most flattering in their praise of the dignity and interest of the Conference.

One professor, who is connected with a state university, said "This exceeds any scientific conference I have ever attended because it has inspiration and vitality in its program, and sincere and earnest enthusiasts connected with its organization."

## A Social Worker's View

A woman registered from New Jersey and said "I saw in the Paterson paper all about this Conference, and I just wanted to see Margaret Sanger. Could I go in and listen to her? We have a little sewing circle among my neighbors and I want to tell them just how Mrs. Sanger looks. I will describe her hat and dress, as well as the things she says, to these women who believe so in her work."

Many delegates came from the Neighborhood Associations and the day nurseries, all exclaiming

over the interesting papers and the valuable suggestions for their work among the poor.

One woman who came from West Virginia said "There is not a mining region in the whole country that so desperately needs the kindly hand of Margaret Sanger as West Virginia. We are working continually among women who are suffering from malnutrition and the hardship of poverty and yet are still bearing children. Not because they desire to bring more children into the world, but because they have no means of securing information as to how to limit their families."

A tall, fine looking Englishman handed me his card and said "I am asked by this magazine to attend the Conference and to write an article on the significance of this gathering." The next day, he introduced me to his wife. He had found the Conference so interesting he wanted to make it a family affair, and expressed his belief that he was attending a very great gathering of intellectual minds dealing with some of the greatest problems that concern our future civilization, all pivoting around Birth Control.

## Nurses in Attendance

Nurses from the hospitals rushed in hurriedly after registering, saying "I do not want to miss one bit of the papers or the discussion." There is no doubt that the nursing profession as a whole endorses this great movement. They know perhaps better than the doctors how keenly each mother longs for this information.

An alert and intelligent woman stepped up to my desk and said "I have come on from St. Paul to get your advice and to see if anything can be done in our state for Birth Control. My husband is a doctor and he is coming to attend the sessions for we have found that the law permits physicians in our state to give Birth Control information for the cure and prevention of disease, just as you have it in New York. We will attend the clinic and the sessions, and we hope to arouse active interest in this great cause when we return west."

Dr. Otto Neustatter, from Munich, Germany, was a popular attendant at the Conference. He is Scientific Director for the Society of Popularizing Hygiene.

During one of the sessions, my attention was called to a man in uniform standing at the rear of the hall, and on stepping up to him, I saw that he was a fireman, not an officer of the law. He said "Oh, I am the fire officer for the McAlpin and I

just wanted to stand here and listen to these papers. I think that it's about time for people to support Mrs. Sanger in her fight. What a fine little fighter she has been through these years, and say, could you just let me meet her for a few minutes to shake her hand when they're through?"

The Commissioner of Charities of one of the up-state towns expressed her deep and firm conviction that until Birth Control was established as part of our great public health program, no reduction could be made in the need for charity in any city. More and more, the overburdened mother was driven into the sympathetic charity offices, to lay her troubles on the shoulders of the citizens of her state, where they rightfully belong, as long as the law will not permit her to receive Birth Control information except when she is broken in health.

An earnest student of sociology from one of the Massachusetts colleges, told me he felt this to be one of the greatest privileges of his life—to be able to attend this Conference. He pledged enthusiastic support for the cause and will assist us when we go to Boston to challenge Mayor Curley's manifesto against any discussion of the subject of Birth Control in Boston.

A representative from Texas told me that the women who had elected Governor Ferguson would be equally interested in a campaign for Birth Control, and that she would advocate in all her clubs a study of the subject from every aspect.

A student from Columbia who is taking a course in sociology, told me that when he returned to Japan, he expected to lecture on the subject of Japan's future from the standpoint of the social worker and that he could see no hope for bettering the condition of poverty and malnutrition in the Nipponese except through the basic principle of Birth Control.

The reporter from the *New York Times* spoke of the interesting papers and remarked that he had never covered a Conference that was so free from politics. The sincerity and high scientific value of all those participating in the program, had never been equaled in any other Conference which he had reported.

At night, when I asked for the key to my room at the desk on the sixth floor of the McAlpin, the brown-haired woman who handed it to me so pleasantly, remarked: "Oh, Mrs. Kennedy, I feel this has been one of the greatest conferences ever held in New York. I want to go to your public meeting. I wish I could attend all the sessions, for I believe in this although I am a Roman Catholic. I am one of a family of ten, and know all about it."

Day after day people returned with more enthusiasm. Note-books were universal and the whole atmosphere was one of gratitude for the opportunity of being present at this historical event—the first international conference on birth control in America.

## Workers Birth Control Group in England

A REPORT •

By DORA RUSSELL,

*Hon. Secretary Workers' Birth Control Group*

### PART II

SEVENTEEN county committee members, distributed all over England, and all married women and delegates to the Conference, were elected to organize areas and correspond with the Central Committee. The officers of the Group, elected for a term of one year, were: Chairman, Mrs. L'Estrange Malone, Vice-Chairman, Mrs. Adamson, Secretaries, Mrs. Clifford Allen and Mrs. Bertrand Russell. The Group was open for membership to all men and all women in labor organizations, but, so far as possible, control of its policy was to be in the hands of men and women who had known the responsibility of parenthood. Miss Jewson was the only single woman on the com-

mittee. There was and is, no married Labor woman in the House of Commons. Miss Jewson has been a valiant helper, untiring and unfatigued in her advocacy of the cause of working mothers.

The Group first of all issued in pamphlet form the memorandum which had been presented to the Minister of Health, and other smaller pamphlets. It began to organize a speakers' campaign among local Labour parties, meeting everywhere with an enthusiastic response. Men and women who were parents carried its message far and wide, into mining areas, crowded towns and outlying villages. This campaign is only yet in its infancy but, wherever they go, the Group speakers find that there is an absorbing interest on the part of men and women in all problems affecting maternity, child care and physical and sex education. The scientific

\* Report to the Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference, March, 1925.

outlook **is working** remarkable changes in the view taken by even the simplest and poorest on questions which were once taboo for public discussion. And the Group does not **carry** only the message of birth control to the mothers, but of knowledge, love of life, and a scientific attitude to motherhood and care of children. It is those who love children and care most **satisfactorily** for their own, who are the strongest and most eloquent advocates of birth control. At least, such has been the **experience** of the Workers' Birth Control Group in its propaganda work.

A resolution in favor of the Group's requests went through the London Labour Party Conference **without discussion or opposition**, and several **resolutions** were down for discussion at the big Labour Party Conference in October, 1924. In consequence of the **political crisis**, (the general election took place **immediately**) that Conference was greatly **curtailed** and the birth control **resolutions** were not reached. They were referred to the party **executive** for consideration and a report **this year**

demands, and a copy of the Memorandum submitted to Mr **Wheatley**. **Sixty-four** members, of whom twenty-one are **Conservative**, four **Liberal** and forty **Labour**, have **given definite pledges** in answer to this circular. A non-party committee is **being formed**, and meets for the first time on March 4th, to discuss possible action.

Members of the Group are **tackling their own M P's** in their constituencies and also medical officers of health with a series of **printed questions** issued by the Group. Members of **Parliament** pay more **attention** to their own local voters than to **organizations**.

A very successful **meeting** was held at the Essex Hall on **Friday, February 20th**, the first **big public meeting** organized by the Group. **Clifford Allen**, **Chairman** of the Independent Labour Party, took the chair and stated **definitely** that Mr **Wheatley's attitude** to this question should not be taken as **representative** of the majority of the Independent Labour Party to which he belongs. **Miss Jewson** gave a report of the Group's work, and Mr **Thur-**

#### MESSAGE FROM BERTRAND RUSSELL

*You have my most cordial good wishes for your International Conference, which I hope will be a great success. I will let what I have to report be absorbed into my wife's paper.*

The Independent Labour Party delegates to that Conference were ready to speak and vote in favor, and it is believed that the **Miners' Federation** were similarly pledged. When a **resolution** is carried in this Important Conference, **permitting birth control** as a public policy will go down on the Labour programme.

The Secretary of the Workers' Birth Control Group was invited to speak at the Independent Labour Party Summer School on the Group's policy and secured much interest and support. A **representative** of the Group, **Bertrand Russell**, attended the **National Committee enquiring into Birth Control and Public Morals** under the **Presidency** of the **Bishop of Winchester**. The report of this Committee is not yet issued. The Group, on the formation of the **Conservative Government**, approached the present **Health Minister** with a request for a **deputation** or a change of policy. Both requests were refused. It is proposed now to urge upon the **Minister** that he should conduct the "enquiry," which Mr **Wheatley** finally **promised** after the vote at the Labour Women's Conference. **Nothing** else in the way of a **concession** can be expected, unless pressure from **Parliament** can be **applied**.

With this in view the Group has **circularized** all the present House of Commons with its minimum

tle, **George Lansbury** and Mr **Viant** pledged their help in the House of Commons. Dr **Harry Roberts**, who is in the Labour Party and has an enormous panel practice in Stepney, one of the poorest London boroughs, was unfortunately down with **influenza**, but sent a message of support, and Dr **Maurice Newfield** gave a **medical view**. The Rev **Gordon Lang**, an **enthusiastic Labour propagandist** from the mining areas of South Wales, spoke **inspiringly** on the **morality** of birth control. **Bertrand Russell** concluded with a plea for knowledge and freedom for women.

Evidence on maternity care, which will shew the evils of large families and the prevalence of **abortion** in crowded industrial areas is being submitted by the Group to the **Royal Commission** now enquiring into **National Health Insurance**. The Group is **advocating** (1) a great **extension** of ante-natal and post-natal **maternity** care to be coupled with the **giving** of birth control **information**, (2) **extensive** lectures on pregnancy, care of **babies**, even anatomy, to young **wives** and mothers, (3) an **extensive** propaganda through **Insurance societies**, **public authorities** and any possible channels **urging** the **importance** of ante-natal and post-natal care.

The **attitude** of the Group throughout is to demand knowledge, **science** and research for women into all problems **affecting** them as mothers, and



recognition of their work and its Importance to the community Its members feel that their attitude on birth control, and on sex information goes hand in hand with the programme of Labour women for improved maternity care and pensions for mothers The battle will not be fought to a successful conclusion without some degree of pugnacious feminism on the part of the mothers, who were somewhat neglected in the feminist fight of the last fifty years Knowledge for women on every subject affecting their welfare and freedom for them as human beings is the sign in which we must fight this battle, and in which we shall ultimately conquer Let us cease to spill sentiment over the women who bear children for the community and give them knowledge, rights and economic help Let us have science and plain speaking and plain understanding in the place of sentiment, delicacy founded on taboos and Ignorance Let us hale deliberate creation, health, intelligence, in place of chaotic births, deformity and the stupidity born of starvation and bad conditions That way lies the road of future evolution of the human race, unless a catastrophe involves the downfall of all our knowledge and civilization

#### A CONFERENCE WHICH MARKS PROGRESS

Turn back to 1917 All through that year the press carried reports of news having to do with birth control, and all that news was news of violent argument, of law courts and of jails Mrs Sanger choosing to go to prison, the hunger-strike of Mrs Byrne, stories of forcible feeding denied and reaffirmed, Canon Chase maintaining that birth control was an affront to God, Mrs Sanger fighting to keep the police from taking her fingerprints, Billy Sunday mauling the subject in his tabernacle on Washington Heights, the whole question fought over, quarreled over, torn over, against a background of sensationalism

Four years later, in 1921, came the raid of a police force into a meeting in the Town Hall, more arrests, more violence, some clubbings, more charges and denials and fierce accusations, followed by lawsuits for false arrest

Four years more, and in 1925, an international birth-control conference opens quietly at the Hotel McAlpin It is attended by social workers and medical men from this country, from England, from Austria, India, China and a dozen other countries On the register of its delegates, not all advocates of birth control but all ready to discuss the question on its merits, are such distinguished scientists and scholars as Alice Hamilton, Raymond Pearl, Alonzo Taylor, Edward Alsworth Ross, Dr E V McCollum of Johns Hopkins, Owen R Lovejoy, Rabbi Stephen S Wise, Ellsworth Huntington of Yale University, Irving Fisher, Dr A A Brill, John Haynes Holmes and Dr M Cary Thomas, President Ementus of Bryn Mawr

Birth control, we may hope, is moving out of the range of angry thinking, raids and jails The question is coming to be accepted as falling into the domain, not of law and compulsion but of personal choice, of social policy and of morality—N Y World, March 27

#### AN APOLOGY

By Inadvertence a statement which may appear slighting to the audience which heard Mrs Sanger on March 15th was made on Page 21 of the April REVIEW The sentence which follows a note on her address before the Community Church should read "She had an audience equally intelligent but representing a different point of view when she spoke before the Freethinkers' Society of New York on March 15th"

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#### OVERPOPULATION AND MIGRATION AS CAUSES OF WAR

(Continued from page 149)

wars we will never make headway in controlling them

Absolute pressure of population on available resources, which may be measured by the difficulties a people experiences in making a living, does not necessarily lead directly to war In fact a people may be greatly crowded and yet not attempt to push into the territory of their less crowded neighbors because they lack the leadership to make a concerted movement Also they may have become so accustomed to hard living that they do not feel the pressure as would a people which had known better days In addition they may not be aware of the easier conditions existing elsewhere, and there may be certain firm traditions in their social organization which do not sanction migration in force One or more of these factors is operative today in such countries as China, India and Java So these countries, though having a high pressure of population, do not threaten the peace of the world in the immediate future These peoples will still suffer for some time the hardships to which they have been accustomed for ages How long they will do so is a question which I shall not attempt to answer In less than three-quarters of a century Japan has come out of her seclusion and is strong enough to resent, with force if need be, the way in which Europeans are ordering the world for their own benefit and are excluding other peoples from their preserves This may or may not give us some indication of what we may expect from other peoples now coming into contact with western civilization for in situations so unprecedented as this, history is a poor teacher

The point I would make here is that **over-population** is a **relative** matter and that whether it will lead to war depends upon many factors other than mere density. It becomes dangerous to the peace of the world only when a people feels that **it is being kept within narrower limits**, both as regards territory and resources, than are its due, because other peoples are unjustly **monopolizing** too large a part of the earth's resources. Under such **conditions**, the peoples who feel that they are crowded are at any time likely to attempt to move **into** territory already **claimed** by some other power and war is the **inevitable** result. The **migration** of peoples looking for new homes today at least, and perhaps in all ages, has been from areas in which they believed making a living was harder than it would be elsewhere. **It is** the differential pressure of population which is keenly felt by the people **with** poor or limited resources that is likely to rouse **antagonism** to peoples better off and thus lead to armed **conflict** to secure new territory or more abundant resources. The question as to who has a right to use the resources of the earth is one **which** is necessarily **going** to attract more and more attention as time goes on.

The white race everywhere is **claiming** that national sovereignty is to **determine** to whom the right to use resources belongs. The most **definite** expressions of this doctrine are the Asiatic exclusion **policies** of Australia, Canada and our own country. Already Japan has openly **questioned** this right of national sequestration and a small **section** of the population of **India** has claimed the right to move freely within the British Empire of which India is a **part**. **Italy** is about ready to raise the **question of what she shall do with her excess population since** a smaller number are to be allowed to enter the United States. Before long we may expect some of the other crowded European countries to question the right of any **nation** to hold land out of use which they feel is needed for their redundant numbers. If, in the course of a few generations, China should be nationally integrated **with** a strong central government **in** control, she, too, can be expected to oppose the exclusion policy of the white race at least as regards the holding out of use of lands her inhabitants would like to settle and till

(To be continued)

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## OUR OWN LITERARY DIGEST

(Continued from page 147)

world from over-population, the chance that poor stocks will multiply rapidly **while** good stocks will **die** out, or because of the belief that many admirable but unenlightened people are **bearing** children when **it** means unhappiness to them and to their offspring."

Equally flippant is the comment of the **Danville (Ill.) News** which maintains that not **population** pressure but man's natural delight in **killing** is the cause of war, since "it was and is the nature of the brute to fight." The Brooklyn **Standard Union** believes that overcrowding makes for peace, for "it is a **psychological** fact that the more you crowd people together the less they are inclined to fight."

There is much to be said for the **doctrine** that over-pressure of **population** makes people meek and **docile**. Look at the subway trams."

The **Newburyport (Mass.) News** believes that "**economic** causes" are already **checking** population. To this editorial writer "it seems pathetic for Margaret Sanger to persist in an effort to teach Birth Control to parents."

The **Springfield (Mass.) Evening Union** shows its caliber by attacking Owen **Lovejoy** equally for advocacy of the **child** labor amendment and Birth Control. The very **levity** of such editorial opposition as these quotations illustrate will set readers to **thinking** of the other **side** of the question.

Wholly generous and straightforward toward the conference and what it stands for is the attitude of many of the **editorials**. Says the **Pottsville (Penn.) Journal**: "Slowly but surely and **with** admirable patience and propriety, these people have sought recognition for their cause. Their **chief allies** are newspapers, **physicians** and **welfare societies** which support their claims with figure- and logic. This **International Conference** is just another step toward **informing** the people, even **against** their will. And true **information** cannot harm anybody."

Says the Brooklyn **Eagle**:

What has been made clear during the discussions at this conference is that birth control is not a simple matter of interfering with natural processes. It cuts deep into world economics, is not without political significance in the broader sense, and is closely related to that body of customs and beliefs and social purposes loosely grouped under the head of morals. Birth control propaganda that seeks to gain the support of intelligent members of the community should be as free as any other kind of propaganda. The present conference has made a dignified and intelligent appeal and the discussions have been interesting and instructive.

The New York **Times** published long and thoughtful editorials **reviewing** the first and the last day's proceedings, as well as an appreciative note on Mrs. **Sanger's** work for Birth Control.

"Mrs. Margaret Sanger," says the **Times**, "queen bee of the birth controllers that have swarmed here from twenty-two nations, is much more terrible in the imagination of the unlimited multiplicationists than she is in actual life. She is a shy, quiet, earnest little woman

who employs no sarcasm, invective, sensationalism or militancy in her arguments. She presents her opinions with all gentleness and restraint, keeps vigorously within the laws governing the publishing of biological information, and regards her subject as a quite serious science. There is said to be very little "kick" in her lectures, and much cold fact and reason, wherefore her audiences are sometimes disappointed. So wide is her fame that in one recent year she received 85,000 letters from American mothers of large families—every letter tragic.

NOTE—Later packages of clippings received as this goes to press, raise the total to 1,500 and the number of editorials to 150. New states represented in the editorial comment are Tennessee, Iowa, Connecticut, North Carolina, California, Wisconsin, Indiana and Michigan.

## LEGISLATORS WAKE TO A VITAL PROBLEM

(Continued from page 143)

search Department of the **American Birth Control League** since it was founded and 5,000 copies of the department's report on contraceptive methods have been sold to physicians.

No testimony was listened to with greater respect by the committee than that of a local surgeon brought in by citizens of Albany. This was Dr. Arthur W. Elting of the Department of Surgery of the Albany Hospital, a convinced supporter of Birth Control. Dr. Elting held that it was absurd from the point of view of medicine that there should be any controversy on this matter. The law which now gives the physician the right to interrupt pregnancy by therapeutic abortion should make of Birth Control a respectable and reputable scientific procedure and not leave it to the drug store to sell freely if illegally expensive and often unreliable contraceptive devices. He stated that "if there was a physician who did not give contraceptive advice he would like to see him." He believed this advice to be universal in private practice among the well-to-do, it was only refused in the clinics, where physicians feared the law would be able to follow them up. And it was in the clinics, where the overburdened poor came for help that this advice should be given most freely.

The last speaker at the hearing, which lasted three hours in a room crowded to the end, was the sponsor for the bill, Assemblyman Boyle, who dwelt upon Birth Control as a means of attacking the problem of criminal abortion.

Even though this year's bill is not reported by the committee the ground is prepared for the bill

that will be introduced in 1926. There is little doubt that our legislators in the State of New York are welcoming that groundwork of knowledge that will aid them in passing "intelligence tests" on this aspect of the problem of public health and public well-being.

## PLACE OF BIRTH CONTROL IN THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT

(Continued from page 133)

being created. The child will enjoy its childhood. He will have time for play, for education. If accidents happen, if ill-health supervene, the strain is materially lessened. Woman with efficient knowledge of birth control can practically abolish poverty in the home. Collectively she will learn how to abolish poverty in the town, the city, the village, the nation.

There need be no sex-promiscuity either for men or women. Rational early marriage laws will allow for needful changes.

## STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

Of The Birth Control Review published monthly at New York, N. Y. for April 1, 1925. State of New York, County of New York.

Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Margaret Sanger, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that she is the Editor in Chief of The Birth Control Review and that the following is to the best of her knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443 of the Penal Laws and Regulations printed on the reverse of this form, to-wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher—American Birth Control League, Inc., 104 Fifth Ave., N. Y. City.  
Editor—Margaret Sanger, 104 Fifth Ave., N. Y. City.  
Managing Editor—Mary Sumner Burt, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York City.  
Business Manager—None.

2. That the owner (If the publication is published by an individual, his name and address, or if owned by more than one individual, the name and address of each, should be given below; if the publication is owned by a corporation, the name of the corporation and the names and addresses of the stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of the total amount of stock should be given.)

American Birth Control League, Inc., 104 Fifth Ave., New York City.  
Non-stock corporation.  
Margaret Sanger, President, 104 Fifth Ave., New York City.  
Anne Kennedy, Secretary, 104 Fifth Ave., New York City.  
Frances B. Ackermann, Treasurer, Bronxville, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

MARGARET SANGER

Editor

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 18th day of March, 1925.

EDITH HUSTED

[Notary]

(If commission expires March 30, 1926.)

## A GREAT SOCIOLOGICAL CONGRESS

(Continued from page 139)

flowers by the president to Mrs. Sanger, Mrs. Kennedy and Kitty **Marion**

At Mrs. Sanger's house in the **evening** an international federation was formed of which Alice Vickery **Drysdale** was chosen Honorary President, Margaiet Sanger, President. In the June Review will be published the general program of the Federation, which includes an International Conference to be held at **Geneva** in August, **1936**

In the Birth Control Review for August, **1922**, Mrs. Sanger commented on the lack of stir over the 5th International which had been held in London the preceding month

"The question," she wrote, "has not entered the arena of practical **politics**. The propaganda is as yet only as large as a man's hand. But the clouds are gathering with marvelous rapidity, rising from **the** individual homes all over the world where **wom n** and children are suffering from privations due to over-crowding and the **incoming** of too many babies."

To this poignant if almost helpless demand by the mothers of the poor has been added at the 6th International **Birth Control Conference** the **compelling** organized demand of men and women **eminent** in medical, **biological** and social sciences throughout the world, as well as of a group of women who are articulate to express **their** desires and well organized to work for their attainment. It is these two groups who are bringing Birth Control into practical world politics. They are **taking it** to the doorstep of the **League of Nations** at the Seventh International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference to be held in Geneva in **August, 1926**

## MEDICINE'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE BIRTH CONTROL MOVEMENT

(Continued from page 136)

above ethical ideals, and, second, that it promotes immorality by relieving it of part of the penalties of extra-marital **intercourse**. To the first, **I** would make flat denial. **I** would maintain on the contrary that an easy, unrestrained, happy sexual marital **life** renders most probable the realization of its other ideals. As to knowledge of birth control promoting illegitimate sexual intercourse, it would undoubtedly tend to that end to a certain degree by freeing it of one of its two great hazards. **It** is the same objection that is raised to measures for preventing venereal diseases, the argument being that venereal diseases and fear of conception restrain irregular sexual intercourse, and for that reason **it is** immoral to offer any protection from these dangers. When we are brought face to face with what this attitude means, it is this. **It** is better that the world should go on being scourged with venereal diseases and **with** abortions and the agony of desperation that illegitimate conceptions produce than that it should be freed from these horrors at the expense perhaps of increasing **illicit** sexual intercourse. **I** do not **believe** this is a sound ethical position and **I** am still more strongly of the **opinion** that it is not humane, to use no stronger term. **I** do not believe any moral code in the long run **will** be benefitted by such an attitude. But aside from its ethical defects, it is not effective. The history of all time shows that fear of venereal disease and of illicit **conception** is not **sufficient** to check the **exercise** of the sexual appetite in those who have not the strength of character to control it. Nothing in fact except strength of character is effective, and **I** would like to see the efforts for the much desired control based upon that premise.

But **I** do not believe that knowledge of birth control would actually increase sexual immorality. On the contrary **I** believe the tendency in this **direction** would be vastly more than offset by the improvement in sexual morality that would result from making marriages, as a rule, more successful sexually. That of all **things** would tend most to sexual morality in civilized communities.

It is considerations like these, which **I** think from their experience are borne in more upon **physicians** than upon **most** men, **that** make me feel that adequate and satisfactory methods of birth control and widespread knowledge of them would not only conduce to human happiness and social betterment but would be invaluable influences in favor of sexual morality. They would, indeed, promote morality in its broadest and best sense.

## BOOKS OF VITAL INTEREST

ON ALL TOPICS

Sex, **Psycho-Analysis**, Psychology,  
Diet and Health

The Most Authoritative Authors  
Havelock Ellis, Robie, Long, Kraft-Ebbing, Forel, K. M.,  
Bloch, Malchow, Brill, Freud, Jung, Adler, Tridon, Lind-  
lahr, Fathcr Knirpp, Gase, Drew

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I know how **shocking** to some **minds** are the truths of sexual **life** that I am **expressing**, and I am **expressing** them, not from **desire**, but from a **conviction** that **necessity**, as well as honesty and **sincerity**, compels **their expression**. One of the most **mischievous** factors in our **handling** of sex **problems** is that we do not face the truths of **biology** and **experience**, but we try to **think** them away, to **ignore** them, to persuade ourselves that they do not **necessarily exist**, that they are not as we find them, but as a **certain** sort of unreal **sentimentality** would have them. It is not that **this attitude** is simply a false one, but, much more **important**, it is the cause of a great part of the enormous **difficulty** of the problem. In **this problem**, as in any other one, **fundamental truths**, even if **unpleasant**, must be met and **given** frank **consideration**, if any sound progress is to be made.

Another argument that is advanced **against** birth control, upon **which** the **physician** is **entitled** perhaps to say a word, is that the Earth would become depopulated, if **child-bearing** could **certainly** be prevented by easy methods **universally** known. Assuming that there could be a situation where such knowledge was **universal**, I am sure **nothing** is further from the truth. Remembering the **relative rarity** of **sterility**, it is an **impressive** fact how frequently we are called upon to see if we cannot **furnish relief** for it. One of the facts that is brought home to **physicians**, as it is to everyone else who takes **occasion** to **consider** it, is that men and women, as a rule, want children, that the **desire** for children is a strong **instinct** and that the pleasure of **their upbringing** is the most **satisfactory** one in **life**. Indeed probably all the **altruism** that man has is based upon **this instinct**. The way that men and women as a rule wish to have children, even under **conditions** of the greatest **sacrifice** of comfort and **opportunity** to themselves, and the way they **strive** to do **their duty** by them is the most **inspiring** human phenomenon. I can **think** of few more fortunate **conditions** in the world, than one in **which** the **regulation** of the number of children that a **family** might have, could be **reasonably** within the decision of the **family** itself, without the payment of such **unhappy**, dangerous, **demoralizing** penalties as are now exacted.

There is one aspect of **this problem**--obvious when it is **stated**--**which** is not commonly **recognized**, but **which** is constantly **emphasized** in the experience of **physicians**, that is that this is **peculiarly** woman's problem. Of course it is man's problem also, but men are not concerned in it in the way that women are. It is women that bear the **penalties** in **injury**, disease and death and mental torture that are involved in it. They have a **right** to know

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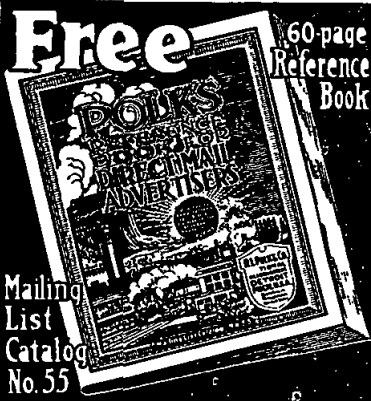
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how they can **intelligently**—not crudely and dangerously—control their sexual lives. And they are justified by the **highest considerations** in fighting vigorously and **persistently** until they have this right granted to them.

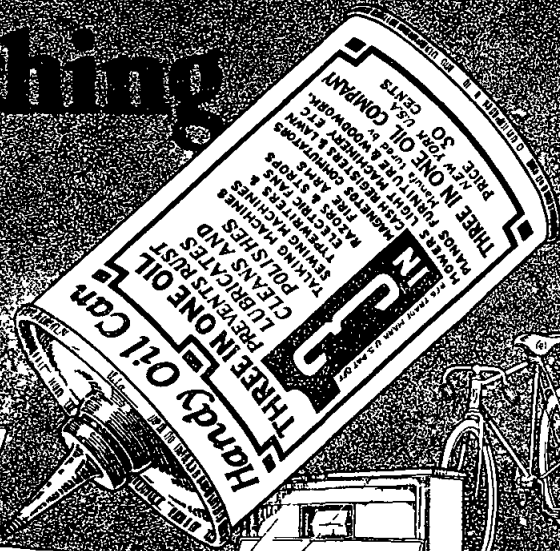
The relation of medicine to this problem is obvious. Methods of birth control have to do with the human body, and that is our province. As I have said before, medicine has not given to the problem the attention that it deserves—not because medicine is not confronted with it every day—but because the subject is taboo and the adequate exchange of scientific knowledge concerning it illegal. It is a problem that requires the technical skill of medicine. I think it must be said that its methods now are crude and unsatisfactory. There is a possibility, with our present knowledge of biological reactions and with intensive consideration of the subject, that improvements might be made that would put these methods on a plane that has hitherto been impossible and that would make them practical agencies for effectively influencing the future history and happiness of mankind. These possibilities are so large that they are worthy of the best effort that medicine has to offer.

At the present time, however, the situation could hardly be more unsatisfactory. The first prerequisite to satisfactory study of any subject is free access to knowledge of it, and that necessitates the unrestricted interchange of experience and information among scientific men. That is not allowed now upon the subject of methods of birth control. We are not even in a position where we can freely determine the merits and demerits of the subject. It is not that methods of birth control are not discussed and practiced, they are everywhere. But the facts—and the fiction—are passed from individual to individual—ignorantly, crudely, unsatisfactorily and in ways that often are vicious. It is only scientific, decent discussion of the subject that is prevented, the sort of discussion that is necessary and can only be had, when it is untrammelled, among self-respecting men, who can bring to its consideration knowledge and wisdom. This situation is medieval. From the history of similar situations in the past it cannot be doubted that it must in time give way. To see that this is brought about as quickly as possible is a thing worthy of the vigorous efforts in that direction that are now being made.

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