

SEPTEMBER, 1925

Twenty Cents

# BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

JANE  
MARSHALL

*on*

The  
Mother  
Tie



Birth  
Control

*OR*

War?

Prof. East and  
Margaret Sanger

*ANSWER*

Count Cippico

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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*

VOL IX

SEPTEMBER, 1925

No 9

## EDITORIALS

THE fall opens with news of important developments in England, India and the United States. In England the systematic work of the Malthusian League and the Labor women is bringing pressure of numbers to bear on the Ministry of Health, and the time is not far off when the Ministry will have to yield to a bona fide public demand represented by hundreds of thousands of petitioners. In India the opposition expressed by Mahatma Gandhi in the India press to any method of preventing overpopulation except self-control has both revealed the strong and intelligent support which Birth Control has already won in that country and has brought the subject to the attention of many thousands who had never heard of it before.

In America the statement of a representative of the Italian government at the conference at Williamstown, together with Professor East's reply, which we publish in this number of the REVIEW, has circulated throughout the press of the country and has taught American doubters that there is a very real relation between war and overpopulation. Count Cippico's statement is the more menacing taken in conjunction with the press interview with Mussolini last January, when he said that the Italian birth rate was pressing, that the Italians were "too intelligent" to limit the numbers of their children and that the only answer to the problem was "to make war or to seek outlets for overpopulation." When that war breaks out of whose approach two spokesmen of the Fascists have now given us ample warning, it will show the world that the refusal of a government to tolerate and encourage the practice of Birth Control is not only a crime against the individual but a crime against international peace.

MAHATMA GANDHI, the great leader of India, has recently given public utterance, in the columns of *Young India*, to his opinion concerning "artificial" methods of Birth Control.

"There can be no two opinions about the necessity for Birth Control," writes Mahatmajī, "but the only method handed down from ages past is self-control or 'Brahmacharya.' It is an infallible sovereign remedy doing good to those who practise it. And medical men will earn the gratitude of mankind, if instead of advising artificial means of Birth Control they will find out the means of self-control. The union is not meant for pleasure but for bringing forth progeny. And union is a crime when the desire for progeny is absent." Self-control, austere unrelenting asceticism, is in brief, in the ethics of Mahatma Gandhi, "the only noble and straight method of Birth Control."

COMING as it does from the great spiritual leader of India, this expression of opinion is a welcome one. It has stimulated the liveliest discussion in the Indian press, and has brought forth a number of emphatic and clearly expressed refutations of the ascetic philosophy of life embodied in Gandhi's brief expression, as well as some spirited defences of contraception. The most vigorous opponent of Gandhi's views has been Professor R. D. Karve, whose protest is quoted by Mr. Roy, together with the able replies of other friends of Birth Control, on another page of the REVIEW.

There is little to add to these comments by Gandhi's compatriots. They are marked by brilliant, lucid reasoning. They indicate the vitality of the idea of Birth Control in the Orient and presage the advent of a new era of enlightenment in that prostrate domain. We are happy indeed that, despite his hesitation and extreme reluctance, Mahatma Gandhi was induced to express publicly his disapproval of artificial methods of contraception. But we might not impertinently ask if any method is more artificial, more contrary to the laws of human nature than a self-imposed "self-control" which instead of leading one through the threshold of life onward toward an understanding of its

meaning and beauty, would prevent the exponent of abstinence from ever understanding its deeper rhythm and condemn him to endless torment, in discord with the cosmic rhythm and in eternal conflict with the surge of his deepest desires

This thoughtless utterance—profoundly thoughtless, we are sorry to say—of India's great leader places him in the category of those traditional dogmatists and reactionary moralists for whom this world is irremediably a vale of tears and whose irresponsible "idealism" has indeed made it one. To Western minds, the influence of such leaders must be forever dysgenic. We are happy that our friends in India are so vigorously combating it.

Life, we challenge these opponents, is neither an evil, a malady, nor a disease to be avoided. Life is the supreme experience, into which we must unreservedly and joyfully plunge. Sexual expression is one of the most profoundly spiritual of all the avenues of human experience, and Birth Control the supreme *moral* instrument by which, without injury to others nor to the future destinies of mankind on this earth, each individual is enabled to progress on the road of self-development and self-realization. Human salvation is not to be attained by a steady diet of the bitter fruit of renunciation. We are all seeking for "life more abundant." Despite his world-wide renown, Gandhi's recent utterance seems to lack spiritual profundity or vision. Yet, we must express our thanks, since he has stimulated his young compatriots and ourselves as well, to a new crystalization of our spiritual values.

THE Medical Officer of the town of Hartlepool, England, does not, according to recent press reports, believe in teaching Birth Control. Yet his recent report on conditions in that town of 5 000 families, which has circulated widely, is nothing less than a sermon of which Birth Control ought to be the text. His report shows that 2 500 families—half the total population by family—have at some time in the last two or three years been on the poor rates on account of unemployment. At the same time the birth rate during the past year was 28.4 or 51 per cent higher than that for England as a whole, and infant mortality was 132 per thousand. In one month indeed it soared as high as 250 per 1000. The officer, Dr. William McKendrick, lays the high death rate directly to poverty and bad housing and mentions the prevalence of rickets and scurvy. Under conditions like these, which cry aloud not for moralizing, but for a practical remedy, to reject Birth Control and recommend self-control is like reciting an Abrocadabra.

THE application of the State Board of Charities for increased appropriation for the South Dakota School and Home for the Feeble-minded shows to what extent our present methods are meeting the problem of the breeding of the unfit.

"If the estimate of the superintendent is correct," says the application "and only fifteen percent of the feeble-minded in South Dakota are now having institutional care and the other eighty-five percent are at large in the state breeding up a still larger crop of subnormal persons for the future to deal with, the situation is desperate enough."

The impracticability of either raising money on this scale or of actually rounding up all defectives for institutional care is not recognized by the South Dakota board. It is however, recognized in a thoughtful editorial from the Summit, New Jersey *Herald and Record* reprinted in this issue, on the Birth Control and Sterilization Bills which failed to pass the Legislature last winter. This foresighted editorial writer estimates that any attempt to care for all state charges in institutions "would take almost half the revenue on which we depend to run the state in all its branches."

FROM Paris Eugene Humbert and his wife send grateful messages to the friends in America who contributed toward the payment of their fine of 30,000 francs, imposed by the postal authorities for giving out contraceptive information. The fine is not completely paid and the government simply waives its right to imprison for the balance as long as the Humberts are "on their good behavior." This means that the hands of two of the most active of French propagandists are tied for an indefinite period, until the depopulation scare in France has run its course. Until that time this family of pioneers are under surveillance and for real or imagined activities in behalf of Birth Control the Damocles sword of the unpaid balance may descend on their heads. Should this happen we hope that their fellow workers for Birth Control throughout the world will hold themselves ready to be called on again. M. Humbert's letter is published on another page of the REVIEW.

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Sincere apologies are offered for neglect of the credit line on last month's cover. The cover photograph was the gift of Mr. Hiram Myers of the Photo Publicity Studio.

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# The Fascisti on Birth Control; An Italian Problem

*At the Institute of Politics held at Williamstown, Mass., during part of July and August, Count Antonio Cippico, an Italian senator, virtually demanded for the benefit of his country's surplus population a return by the United States to its former liberal immigration policy, and in veiled terms threatened war as an inevitable consequence of a continuance of our present immigration policy. We publish below comment by Professor East and Mrs. Sanger.*

## Reply to Count Cippico

By EDWARD M. EAST

OUR distinguished visitor, Count Cippico, like the astute politician that he is, has brought with him several sugar-coated pills of Italian expediency. These medicaments he would have the American public swallow, after the rather paradoxical Chinese method, in order to cure his country of the ills which her own reckless living has brought upon her. I refer to his views on the population question. He says, in effect, we must not accept these hard, cruel laws of Malthus. They are not valid in the first place, and, even if they are, they are materialistic and un-Christian and ought to be repealed by statutory enactment. Italy, he somewhat bitterly admits, was tricked at Versailles when the spoils of war were divided, and now the least the world in general and the United States in particular can do is to allow the excess army of half a million, which the country throws off each year, to be farmed out on other lands.

The eminent Senator has our sympathy. We give it as one would give it any suffering individual whose recklessness has brought him pain, but the cure does not lie in aiding a continuance of self-indulgence.

THE first Malthusian law is a mathematical law, inexorable as such laws are. Population does tend to press with irresistible force upon the means of subsistence in any given circumscribed unit. The thesis has been proved beyond a reasonable doubt by an avalanche of quantitative evidence. Under natural conditions population increase is finally repressed and stabilized by the intensity of the struggle for existence, and Count Cippico grants this to be the fact when he says "The truth is that her (Italy's) territory is insufficient to support her population."

Such a natural law may be harsh, it may be cruel, but we must accept it for what it is, like the law of gravitation. When Christ was led to the highest pinnacles of the temple and asked to dispute the cruelty of the latter law by casting himself down, he refused. He climbed down in the regular

way and went about his business. The world asks Italy to follow his example, to extricate herself from her perilous position with respect to over-population, in a perfectly natural and reasonable way, not by denying the truth of a law of nature, not by lamenting over its harshness if its validity be granted, but by taking care not to remain in the path of its crushing force.

DOES the world make an unreasonable or unethical request? No. It asks that Italy set her house in order, that instead of spawning children on the world with haphazard recklessness when they can be given no fair chance for a life of happiness and usefulness, restrict the families in accordance with opportunity. It asks that the sons of Italy be brought into the world by choice, with some regard for the paternal income, the maternal strength and the health of the child. Italy's terrible infant mortality is directly traceable to too frequent child-bearing and over-large families. Why not reduce it? Why should man emulate the lobster in the matter of reproduction when God has given him brains? And our visitor should know when the world gives this Neo-Malthusian advice that it is not speaking of infanticide, as he stated in his third lecture at the Institute of Politics.

This advice is not incompassionate. It is the advice of a benevolent family physician who does not want to see a great career ruined by foolhardy indiscretion. It has back of it good and sufficient reasons.

The first reason is the second law of Malthus, which says that the emigration which Count Cippico recommends is no permanent relief to a land of poor people oppressed by the results of their reproductive talents. It is as sound and as inexorable as the first law. It has been proved statistically so many times that continued elaboration of figures is superfluous. Emigration relief is temporary. There is immediate birth release and the harassed people are again back in the same situation. Has not Italy been sending out her overflow for fifty

years? And is she not asking to continue this illogical process indefinitely?

THE second reason is still more important. No nation wants the dregs drained from the bottom of the vat. Those of Italy are not less welcome than those of any other nation, but they are not welcome. We know Italy's greatness, her Galileos, her Leonardos, her Michelangelos. Does she send us these, even in humble imitations? She does not. Look over 'Who's Who in America' for Italian names. They are conspicuous by their absence. Look at the army intelligence test records. They are low, so unconscionably low that they are a reproach and a shame to Italy's greatness. She is as well rid of them as an individual would be well rid of a cancerous tumor. I yield to none in my appreciation of Italian art, architecture, literature and science.

Our culture here would be immensely improved if we could import and make our own some of the creative geniuses comparable to those who built so grandly in the Renaissance. Have we the slightest chance of obtaining them? Again I say no. The Grade A men of Lombardy and Tuscany are not squeezed out by economic pressure. Such people take care of themselves. Furthermore, these northerners are men of brains, thoughtful and foresighted. They are not producing Italy's excess. The excess comes from below Rome, people of a different race, people where Grade A men are negligible in quantity, where grades D and E predominate. The incompetents from Italy's population curve are the ones the astute Senator asks us to receive. And he is so complacent in his absurd proposal. We don't need these people, that is all. We produce enough of that quality ourselves.

## The Incident at Williamstown

By MARGARET SANGER

WE are rejoicing in the incident at Williamstown. Great good will come of it. We mean the clash between Count Antonio Cippico, a typical representative of Mussolini's Fascist régime in Italy and our friend Edward M. East of Harvard, on the question of Italy's overpopulation. This duel of ideas took place at the Institute of Politics, an annual gathering of eminent authorities on problems of international importance, a conference conservative, academic, and in the opinion of the New York *Herald-Tribune* somewhat theoretical in its speculations. Its deliberations are reported in the daily press, but seldom do they awaken any intense public interest. Now—all thanks to Professor East—that is changed. He has transmuted public lethargy into burning interest. He has demonstrated how closely bound up with the great questions of international policy are the profoundly personal problems of contraception and Birth Control. Not one of the distinguished authorities gathered last month at Williamstown can return to his desk or post without feeling the influence of Professor East's stimulating and life-giving ideas.

FIRST let us trace the origin of the Williamstown duel. Senator Cippico, who is the spokesman and the astute apologist of the Mussolini policies, bravely and blandly undertook to offer the world a solution for Italy's ever-growing problem of overpopulation. The world in general, and the United States in particular, were invited by the Count to contribute land, opportunity and prosperity to Italy's swarming, spawning surplus millions. We

must open wide our doors to emigrants from Southern Italy—to all those teeming millions deprived of a foothold in their own country. These immigrants, the Count suggested, are to remain Italians in foreign climes, while Americans, for instance, are advised to move on to make room for these alien hordes. The alternative is more land, more colonies by conquest, for Italy's "explosive expansion." The threat of war, of "expansion" was thinly veiled in Count Cippico's address. Mussolini's government desired to avoid the "cruel necessity of war." In brief, we were invited to take care of the hapless fruits of Italy's reckless and uncontrolled procreative activity.

PROFESSOR EAST answered Count Cippico's extraordinary chauvinist threat—answered it promptly, courageously, forcibly, and his voice has been heard not merely by the two hundred scientists, economists and statesmen gathered at Williamstown, but by the world at large. It is of tremendous educational value. The world, asserted Professor East in effect, asks Italy to set her house in order. Instead of spawning children with reckless rapidity and haphazard irresponsibility, when there is no opportunity for these unfortunates to create a life of usefulness or happiness, Italy should encourage families to restrict their numbers in accordance with opportunity. This, as we all know, is the only safe avenue to national peace, prosperity and the progress of civilization. It is a truth, and a feasible policy of national ethics, applicable not only to overcrowded Italy, but to all enlightened nations. It is the only alternative to war, pestilence

and famine—those inevitable convoys of overpopulation

THERE was nothing in Professor East's vigorous, forceful and brilliantly expressed utterance to which any student—even a freshman—of economics or history might take offense—nothing offensive, nothing shocking, nothing impudent, nothing harsh nor crude nor impractical. It was, as Professor East subsequently suggested in an interview, the counsel of a benevolent family physician who does not want to see a great career ruined by foolhardy indiscretion. But to Count Cippico, a perfect representative of Fascist psychology, this suggestion was one of "cool impudence." Let us here recall that the Fascist mind resents criticism and cannot forgive those who puncture its own delusions of grandeur. In Rome liberal newspapers which criticize the policies of Mussolini's sinister régime are instantly suppressed. Foreign newspaper correspondents who try to cable the impartial truth have been expelled from Italy. Senator Cippico met Professor East's counter-attack in much the same official Fascist manner. He denounced the "infamous theories of Malthus." He condemned advocates of Birth Control as "apostles of infanticide." His angry, out-of-date utterances suggest that he should have gone to Dayton, Tennessee, instead of Williamstown, for to denounce the Malthusian law of population is no less absurd than to legislate against evolution, and to speak of the "infamous theories of Malthus" is as ridiculous as to condemn the law of gravitation as immoral and materialistic. Any college freshman could inform the illustrious and astute Count and Senator that Rev. Thomas Malthus offered no infamous remedies for overpopulation, and that Birth Control is not infanticide, but the only remedy for the practice of abortion and infanticide. Before undertaking to offer solutions for the problem of Italy's overpopulation, the Fascist would do well to take an elementary course in what was once known as "political economy." Before blaming the misfortunes of his country upon France, England or America, he might profitably investigate the sources of its own national ills.

But instead, like a schoolboy unused to the

weapons of mature and impartial thought, discovering in spite of himself that the balloon of his own pet delusions had been suddenly and skilfully punctured, Count Cippico could resort only to angry words, and like a spoiled child had to be appeased and quieted by those who were more interested in diplomatic politeness than in invigorating and thus often stinging truths.

BUT great good has come of this amusing and educational incident. Professor East's brilliant advocacy of Birth Control as the only sane, enlightened and peaceable avenue to international amity and equilibrium aroused national interest and comment. All of the metropolitan dailies published editorial comment, most of it sane, sober and hospitable to the idea of Birth Control. There were also a number of fine letters, some in the press and others, almost three hundred of them, addressed to Professor East. Notable among the letters is that of Elmer Davis in the *New York Times*, a splendid exposition of fundamental Malthusian truths concerning overpopulation, truths which no amount of bombastic denunciations can sweep away.

WE cannot too enthusiastically express our gratitude to Edward M. East for his splendid, courageous and clear-cut advocacy of Birth Control at the Institute of Politics. His splendid utterances have had the effect of transmuting our notorious American indifference to international problems into a warm and vivid interest. Birth Control, as an implement of enlightened national progress, thanks to his efforts, is making further headway into our national consciousness. Professor East is doing valiant pioneer work in opening new avenues of thought, and we are confident that all the distinguished authorities who listened to him at Williamstown will return to their posts conscious of a new angle of approach to the great complex problems of international relations they are seeking to solve. For the rest of us, let us give assurance to such a statesman and scholar as Edward M. East, that we appreciate his unflinching championship of the truth, which has again been brilliantly dramatized by this incident at Williamstown.

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#### MESSAGE FROM WITTER BYNNER TO THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

*It is unthinkable that you and your associates should be harassed by the laws and officials of a civilized government, particularly a government which involved its people in the devastating conflict of the great war, or the Great Murder as an Englishman has aptly called it. A better understanding among all nations of the principles you advocate and of the motives you forward, would be a fundamental contribution toward the establishment of peace. Your method is much better than the war method for the regulation of mankind. It is indeed an important factor in good will toward men which is inseparable from peace on earth.*

# The Mother Tie

By JANE MARSHALL

THE tie between the child and its mother is originally the same as the tie between a little animal and its mother. It is the tie between the great symbol of safety, rest, and shelter and the helpless young, faced with life impossible to live without that shelter to go to in time of stress.\*

The first consciousness of any young thing is the presence of its mother. From her it gets food, warmth and the feeling of being protected. What it gets is what we call "mothering." Every child alive today got that from its mother or her substitute, or it would have perished.

The tie is *not one of blood*, the same tie exists between a hen and chickens not hatched from her own eggs. It is a *psychological tie*. It must be broken before the child's psychical life can develop just as the physical tie must be broken before the child can develop physically. Were it just the tie between one child and its mother breaking it might be simple. It is the tie between one little child and a relationship millions of years old, without which there would be no human race. Mating could have gone on, young could have been hatched from eggs or brought forth alive, but without the mother's instinct to protect and the child's instinct to look to her for protection no continuation of animal life would have been possible. To the child the mother is the symbol of the instinct of self-preservation. She remains that symbol for all men, for all time.

## REST FROM THE STRUGGLE OF LIFE

The need in man, from time to time, for that rest from the struggle of life, which his unconscious always tells him can be found by "going back to mother," must be met some way in harmony with his adult self. That he has so symbolized her we see all around us. We have "Mother Earth," "The Breast of the Waves," "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," "Alma Mater," "Mother Church." We have stories from all the battle fronts of the dying boy crying out "Mother!" When his conscious mind was numbed with agony his instinct reminded him where safety lay.

May the tragedy of that unanswered cry sink into the Mother Heart of the world!

If one watches a dog and her puppies or a hen and chickens, one sees—when the little ones grow old enough to go any distance from the mother they scurry back at the slightest sign of danger. When they get tired or hungry they also go back to her,

and when they get the worst of it in a fight with the little brothers and sisters. They *know* that with their mother they will find safety and rest, from what to them are the hard things of life. In that atmosphere they grow. Without it they perish.

Their mother teaches them all that is necessary for their well-being. When they are ready to begin their adult life (which means a life of their own, a free life) she calmly walks off and leaves them or fights them off from her. She goes off to mate again and she and they become strangers. The tie is broken easily and completely. Animals do not remember. If later on the young and mother mate (which is very often done among domestic animals, whatever wild animals may do) they mate as strangers, as two independent adult animals.

## EVOLUTION OF MOTHER LOVE

In unscientific language the animal mother nurses her young to relieve the pressure in her milk glands, the hen sits on the eggs as a means of relief from a raging heat in her body. No doubt just as soon as those glands become normal the energy used by them is again transferred to the glands of procreation. Nature sees to it that the period when the mother needs the young coincides with the need of the young for the mother. Of course we occasionally see a "bad mother" who leaves them (goes off to mate) too soon for their good. Nature somehow made a mistake, which proves fatal to the young if no mother substitute is at hand. The mistake is not often made, so when the mother does leave them they are quite ready to fend for themselves, find a mate and begin all over again the progress of the generations.

At some point in the evolution of mankind a new instinct entered into the mother of the race. We don't know how, or when, or where. As with all instincts it wasn't understood, it was only felt. The thing it made her do was to keep her young by her after they ceased to be a matter of physical relief to her, and when, by the same token, they became an added burden. She kept them by instinct for their good, not her own. That instinct was *love*.

The thing has transformed animals into men, the thing that has been at work for millions of years changing the heart of man—oh, so slowly!—toward a day when Selfishness, Hate and Revenge will give place to Altruism, Love and the spirit of doing good for evil.

Now of course the mother of a million or so years

\* Book rights reserved by the author



ago didn't know *why* she kept her young with her longer than filled any need of her own. Then, as now, loving was its own reward. Nevertheless by loving (giving, not getting) she was making possible the human family as we know it to-day.

The result was that the child had a longer period of dependence before going up against life, its brain had a chance to grow, it developed a memory, its maturity was retarded. It changed from animal to man. And all this happened because *love* came into the mother heart of the world.

But for the purpose of our study an even more important thing happened. That constantly lengthening period of dependent childhood made the psychological tie between the child and mother grow stronger and stronger. Gradually the instinct, as old as the higher forms of animal life, that made the child know that with the mother was to be found safety, rest and happiness, had added to it the conscious memory of *love*. The human child is tied to its mother by the instinct of self-preservation and also gets from her the complete satisfaction of its emotional life. It seems as if the transition from infancy to adult life is the struggle to become psychologically free from one's mother, and to find complete satisfaction of one's adult emotional life in mating, or in creative work.

It seems as if the child, who down through the ages was more advanced psychologically than the level of the race—the child who as an adult would make a contribution to human progress other than the contribution of procreation—was the child who longer clung to the mother and loved her more fondly. Lying in her arms, safe, at rest and happy, it could dream dreams and see visions.

We now have this paradox. The human mother keeps the child with her so that the psychical part of it can develop. By so doing she strengthens the tie between them, making the breaking away and attaining the life of a psychically free adult the more difficult. The child must become a psychically free adult in order to translate its dreams into action.

#### ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY

The family grew from one child and its mother to what we mean by the word today, mother, father, sisters and brothers, grandparents, aunts and uncles. Where the shelter of the family life must have added strength to the tie binding the child to the symbolic mother it at the same time proved to be the thing that makes the transition from the mother to the mate less difficult.

What seems to happen is this. The child is born loving its mother, completely, and only her. The child whose emotional life is developing normally fairly soon gives part of its love to its father. It

again makes a division of its love to include sisters and brothers and servants (all those under its own roof) and then reaches out to relations outside its home. Then friends of the family who come to the house, then neighbors. An ever widening group to share that child love which must go onward and outward to where it can choose its own object.

Up to now the objects of its love have been brought to it, so to speak. Then comes a great turning point in the child's life. It goes out into the world, to school perhaps, and there makes a friend of its own. A strange child its mother never saw. No allowances are made on either side, an effort is required to be liked. A new world opens up, a strange house to go to, pride in bringing home and showing off the friend, one's very own friend. "Sticking up" for the friend if needs be. The child has taken a long step along the road that leads to freedom.

Later comes the period of hero worship. That seems for the purpose of fixing the child's emotions on some one older than itself, to make a model for it other than the parent of the same sex.

#### WIDENING THE CIRCLE OF LOVED ONES

Then comes what is called Calf Love. It should be called Holy Love, for with it the child completes the curve. It has left its mother (psychically) and gone alone on the difficult journey of readjustment.

It is now ready to choose a mate, or to use the awakened mating instinct (the desire to create) for other things than procreation.

No one knows why some children make those adjustments, some make part of them, some make none at all. The first group are the free of the earth, the second group are the partly free, the third, the completely tied.

No one not working with these unfortunate ones can have any idea of the power that mother tie has. The Symbolic Mother calling one to go back to her where there is no struggle. The Something in one saying it is too late, freedom for the soul lies ahead. It almost seems as if they were tied to the mother of us all by a psychological navel cord. The harder they pull away the more conscious they are that they are held. Tugging and pulling, using all their energy that way. Such fatigue! Always out of harmony with life. Waking exhausted after horrible dreams. Meeting adult situations with infantile reactions. The inward cry of "What's the use?"

And when it is possible for the thing known as psychoanalysis to cut that psychological navel cord the struggle is over, one is free. No more meeting adult situations with infantile reactions. When the

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# Diamond Men and Men of Flesh

By BASANTA KOOMAR ROY

IT is not necessary to agree with everything that Mahatma Gandhi says or does in order to appreciate the child-like simplicity of his nature, and the saintliness of his character. He is undoubtedly one of the greatest souls that walks on earth today. *Muninanchaw matvrama* (even saints are apt to make mistakes) is an old Sanskrit proverb. Mahatma Gandhi's recent attack on conscious Birth Control in India is an illustration of this proverb.

But his attack has opened a discussion in the Indian press that was well worth while. The lucid and trenchant refutations in some of the Indian dailies, weeklies and monthlies most unequivocally prove how slowly but surely the scientific and ethical idea of Birth Control is permeating the thought currents of awakened India.

## *Thousands of Years of Self Control*

Among those who have come to the defense of Birth Control in the press is Professor R. D. Karve.

"Thousands of years," he writes, "people have been preaching the Mahatma's remedy. Self Control. Only, it is impracticable for ordinary human beings, such as are found outside the Mahatma's Utopia. And it is with these we have to deal every day. They have certainly to count with Nature, but Nature only punishes the fools who do not know how to take care of themselves. What is human intelligence meant for, if it is not for the solution of human difficulties in the most agreeable way? I say 'agreeable' and I assert that it is quite justifiable to seek pleasure if it does not involve doing harm to anybody. And scientific knowledge is now too far advanced for people to be expected to martyrize themselves for religious dogmas like that of 'self control'."

"I cannot hope to convince the mystics. But the scientific mind must have some other criterion of morality than religious dogma. Those who do not practise Birth Control in some way or other are threatened not by a theological hell, but by a hell on earth in the shape of unwieldy families. This is much more appreciable than any hell imagined by any religious prophets. People are free to practice continence and take the consequences, good or bad. They ought not to be left free to have unwieldy families and make themselves a nuisance to society."

"I have," he says in another place, "no quarrel with those who can practice self control and do it. If it is harmful to them, that is their own affair."

But let them not pretend to be *higher* than other people on that account. There is no merit in abstinence any more than fasting. Fasting is not higher than eating, and it is harmful when the body needs food. Even admitting for a moment that there are hundreds and thousands of people practising 'self control' that is a very small proportion of the population of the world."

"Another splendid refutation of Mahatmajī's advocacy of abstinence as the only 'noble and straight' method of Birth Control is found in *Welfare*, a monthly magazine published in Calcutta. The conclusion is well worth quoting: 'Knowledge should not of necessity turn men into animals. We know that all doctors could be poisoners, chemists, murderers, *sanyasis*, scoundrels, if they so desired. But human desires are so trained that few men love to be criminals or sinners. The ideals of married life are various and if all people were taught to think in the right way, there should be no apprehension of their leading a purely animal life, just because they could do so without having children. Mahatma Gandhi does not show much faith in human nature by his fears'."

## *A Mystic and the Fires of Youth*

To quote one more among many, Amritlal H. Patel of Surat writes in the *Bombay Chronicle*: "All human beings are not Mahatmajis and Janak Videhis, who in spite of all attractions and allurements of earthly life, can practise true celibacy both mental and physical. To drag the whole question of Birth Control into religion and to dictate its remedy from the old and antiquated scriptures, is nothing but sheer injustice to the modern science of social economy and eugenics. Our country is teeming with manikins having weak bodies and sunken eyes born of mothers who are almost every year passing through the dangers of annual conceptions and confinements, and in the interest of the nation we must put a stop to this human waste of life."

"Modern contraceptive methods, I admit, are not meant for Mahatmas and Yogis, but they are meant for common human beings who live in the world as worldly beings and who are prey to ordinary if not violent human weakness and frailties. It would be sheer hypocrisy on the part of our social leaders to preach only Brahmacharya as the only and the best and an easily practicable remedy for Birth Control for the masses."

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# Birth Control in England

By H JENNIE BAKER

**I**T is a cause of constant amazement to me to find the rate of progress of the Birth Control movement in England

For more than a quarter of a century I have been writing occasional articles and have been willing—even anxious—to speak on the matter, but it used to be very difficult to find a platform where such a subject was acceptable, now the difficulty is to find time to give all the lectures that are asked for. Everywhere one finds appreciative and grateful audiences, and if a little doubt is expressed at the beginning of a meeting, there is no doubt of agreement at the end.

It is hard to be sure of the cause of this change of attitude, it was beginning a little before the war, and has certainly advanced rapidly since. It has doubtless been hastened by the writings of Dr Marie Stopes, and the publicity given to her libel action, and even here we have to acknowledge a deep debt of gratitude to the work of Mrs Margaret Sanger. Of course the Neo-Malthusian League had kept the flag flying, but without attracting much public attention till it was transformed into the New Generation League, but since then, and especially since the opening of their clinic in a very poor neighborhood, they have done much to popularize the work.

## *Changed Attitude of Labor*

It used to be said that the labor world was hostile to Birth Control. As far as that was the case it was probably to be attributed to the intense individualism of its earlier advocates, and the manner in which they went out of their way to attack trade-unionism and Socialism. Now the real principles are better understood, and especially since women have taken a more active interest in politics there is no doubt that it is to the organized labor movement that Birth Controllers must look for the greatest support.

The Labor Woman's Conference spoke with no uncertain voice last year\* when a majority of about 1,000 to 8, they demanded Birth Control teaching to be given in the existing and rate-supported Maternity and Child Welfare Centres. Though this request was refused by the Labor (and Catholic) Minister of Health, there is evidence that it is widely supported by Labor bodies throughout the country, and the advocates had little doubt what the vote would have been if the question had been

discussed at the Labor Conference in October, instead of being put aside, with other resolutions, because of the critical situation in parliament.

The two chief reasons given by Mr Wheatley for refusing to consider the request of the women were that there was such division of opinion in the country that it would not be fair to spend rates on its promulgation, (or even to allow voluntary helpers to teach it at rate-supported centres), and that the matter was already so well known that there was no need for further education. He said that women already knew all that was necessary, but that they did not practise it, because they were too indifferent or careless, but he did not believe they were so ignorant as was made out.

## *Objections Mutually Destructive*

He did not seem to realize that the two reasons were mutually destructive. That if people had already learned, there could not be much objection to systematic teaching, and if they are careless and indifferent they would not ask for information, and we only asked that this should be available for any who wanted it.

As to the lack of knowledge no doubt can exist in the minds of those who are really in touch with working women. Even the more intelligent, who largely form the Women's Co-operative Guilds, and the Women's Sections of the local Labor parties, again and again lament after a lecture on Birth Control that they have not had such information earlier, and older women who have had the experience of having had large families will say, "It is too late for me, but save my daughter from going through what I have had to bear."

And still though several of us are speaking to many of these organizations, we feel that we are only touching the fringe of the problem. Those who need the knowledge most are frequently so overburdened by the demands of a large number of small children, that they cannot belong to Guilds, or go to meetings, having to take with them, perhaps, two "toddlers" as well as a baby in arms. Many of these who have had the least opportunity are only just awaking to the knowledge that there is such knowledge to be got, and are absolutely ignorant as to how they can procure it.

It is for these we are pleading when we ask that information should be available at the maternity centres, for there they usually do manage to go, as there are many inducements in the way of cheap

\* This article was written in the early summer

milk, glaxo, clothes, etc., and there the toddlers are welcomed as well as the babies. There we shall meet the mother of 17 children, (two of them deaf and dumb) and the mother of eight children living with her and a consumptive father in two tiny rooms and who is certainly not indifferent to the question of how she can keep from having any more.

We may also come across the girl who has been married three years, and who has three children, and feels that all her strength and happiness has departed, and the girl of seventeen who has already had two children, or the mother of four children, the eldest being five years old, already going to school but having to stay at home one day a week to take care of the other three babies while the mother does the washing out at the back. In short we may meet here similar cases to those which readers of your paper know so well on your side of the water.

Many of our problems are similar, but they are aggravated here by the overcrowding that exists everywhere, and the special difficulty that the parents of a large family have in finding any sort of decent accommodation. Many men who are at work have to take their wives and families to our work-houses and poor-law institutions, because no other accommodation is available. Here the family is divided, and though the father has to pay for their support, there is still a feeling of humiliation as well as much unhappiness in having to resort to this.

There is no possibility of doubting that mothers who knew would do anything possible to prevent further increase of their families under such conditions, also the low wages and the frequent unemployment make numbers of women desperately anxious to limit the number of children. This is demonstrated by the frequent resort to the dangerous practice of abortion, which destroys the health

of so many women, who feel that at all risk to themselves they must prevent another little one coming to still farther sub-divide the limited food, clothing and shelter which is already so inadequate for the existing family.

I imagine these things are worse with us than with you and though we have not to contend with your great difficulty of Birth Control teaching being illegal, we have our own difficulties even in that direction. After all we are controlled as much by public opinion as by laws, and in spite of the advance in opinion that I have already spoken of, there are still large numbers of people who think it immodest, even indecent to refer in public to the genesis of life, or the relationship of the sexes, and we can only overcome this by persistent teaching and writing regardless of the older ideas. Another difficulty is presented by some would-be sympathizers, who recognize the difficulties of the overburdened mother, and the need of "spacing" babies, but who are afraid that if young girls know anything of contraception, immorality will become more and more frequent. Without saying much about such an estimate of the character of the present generation, or the worth of morality that depends only on fear, it is well to point out that our request for the necessary teaching being given at maternity centres should minimize that dread, as generally speaking only married women who already have children attend these places.

A much stronger reason for pressing our demand is that such a large proportion of our poorer women suffer from careless treatment at the time of childbirth, or from having got up too soon and resumed their work before they were fit, and so have something the matter with the womb, which makes it advisable if not essential for them to have individual advice before using contraceptive appliances. This should be available at the centres, as many cannot afford doctor's fees, and no hospital that I know of gives such advice.

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## SHE WHO UNDERSTANDS

By ALFONSINA STORNI, of Argentina

Translated from the Spanish by ALICE STONE BLACKWELL

Her dark head fallen forward in her grief,  
The beauteous woman kneels, in suppliant fashion—  
A woman past her youth, the dying Christ  
From the stern rood looks on her with compassion

A burden of vast sadness in her eyes,  
Beneath her heart a child, a burden human,  
Before the white Christ bleeding there she prays,  
"Lord, do not let my child be born a woman!"

## THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUES

*Statement by C C LITTLE, President*

ONE of the results of the Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference was the reorganization of the international federation, which had ceased to function during the war. Dr Alice Drysdale Vickery is honorary president of the reorganized federation, the president is Dr C C Little, President of Michigan University, Mrs Margaret Sanger is secretary and Mrs Juliet Rublee, treasurer. The executive board is made up of Dr Aletta Jacobs, Holland, Dr Charlotte Steinberger, Hungary, Baroness Ishimoto, Japan, Dr C V Drysdale, England, Dr Norman Haire, England, Fru Thit Jensen, Denmark, Knut Wickel, Sweden, Dr G Hardy, France, Margaret Sanger, America, Dr James F Cooper, America, Dr O C Withrow, Canada.

All organizations which endorse the principles and objects of the federation are admitted to membership, except those which include abortion in their program. The objects of the federation are

1 To impress on the people and governments of all nations the problems and dangers of overpopulation

2 To diminish and eventually control or eliminate overpopulation by extending the knowledge of hygienic contraceptive methods as distinct from abortion

3 To oppose all repressive legislation against the proper provision of hygienic contraceptive instruction

4 To recommend to the medical profession the importance of giving such information and especially to urge its provision at all public hospitals, asylums, welfare centers, etc., for the treatment or prevention of disease

5 To promote race improvement primarily by enabling parents to restrict their families to those children whom they can bear and rear in justice to their own health and economic circumstances, and by enabling them to abstain from parenthood in all cases where hereditary disease or defect might render the offspring unlikely to become healthy and self-supporting citizens

6 To promote sexual responsibility and diminish the spread of venereal disease and promiscuity by making it known that young people can marry early without regard to their economic position or the fear of having children they cannot support, and to encourage instruction in sex questions

7 To promote international harmony by urging all governments to assist in regulating the birth

rates in their respective countries so as to avoid overpopulation, which is recognized as one of the chief causes of war

The federation plans to hold the Seventh International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference in August 1926, the place of meeting to be either Geneva, as the home of the League of Nations, or Copenhagen, where the Danish Birth Control organization would act as hostess

## THE TRUTH ABOUT DEPOPULATION

DEPOPULATION is a subject on which vast amounts of nonsense are habitually talked by excited people who clamor for quantity without regard to quality, and do not trouble to distinguish between a stationary and a declining population. But it is quite untrue that any existing state, even France, has normally a declining population, and it is likely that the ancient lamentations about depopulation were equally hysterical.

For when one considers the enormous potential fertility man shares with the other animals, and the rapidity with which accidental depletions can be made good, it is hard to resist the conviction that under normal conditions it is a biological certainty that there can be no *lasting* depopulation. On the contrary, the world, even though it may not be actually *over-populated*, must always be as *fully* populated as the available food and social conditions permit.

It follows (1) that in normal times, when no additions are being made to the sources of food supply, human population must be as stationary as animal life, and (2) that there must therefore always be operative in every human society checks on its potential fertility sufficient to leave its numbers stationary. These checks are very various in character, but as Professor Carr Saunders has fully shown, they always exist. History as a whole confirms these deductions, but their consequences have been masked by the fact that the human race has on the whole been progressive, and has used the best part of its intelligence to increase its food supply, thus enabling its numbers to increase, though not usually with the unprecedented rapidity conditioned by the development of science in the last century.

Conversely, if the normal equilibrium of a society is suddenly assailed by a new danger, a war, a convulsion of nature, a pestilence, the introduction of a new poison, vice, or disease, population naturally diminishes. But only for a time. For all these agencies of destruction are more or less selective, and after they have swept away the more susceptible, the survivors will grow more resistant.—F S C SCHILLER in *Eugenics Review*

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"I done had nineteen chillen mahse'f—jes had chillen like a cow havin' a calf—git down, git up, and go on"—From "Ketchin' Babies," by Samuel McCoy in the *Survey*

# THE GENESIS OF DESPAIR

*Letters Which Show How the Will to Live Can be Destroyed*

*A burden growing greater each year as new members are added to the family, an income remaining stable, not increasing as the claims on it grow greater, health growing feebler just in proportion as the need for health and strength increases, love failing as fear of pregnancy becomes an obsession—all these are the instruments by which blindly prolific nature destroys courage and makes death, in the eyes of many mothers still young, seem infinitely more desirable than life*

## Can Support No More

California

Now I am writing to personally and see if you can help me out I am a woman of 24 and have had seven children onely three are living the oldest is, 7 and he is the first one I have had twenes When I married my weight was 125 and now I wiegh 98 pound and am very weake and out of health I can't even take care of my children like I ought to When the third babey was borne the milk dried up so I can't nurse my baby with breast and just as soone as I get up frome bed I wait 45 day and after 15 day I get in family way again all together it is 60 day after confinement but it is so hard to keep away frome my husband the 45 day that we quarreled, but if the sooner I would get in family way And I was ansous to get the book because they had told me that in the book I could get some information of how to avoid so many children and another thing is my husband gets onely \$3 50 a day to support 5 in family and my confinement causes every year and this last year I have had abortion but this last one I was very sick I know my husband dead or me alive can't support mor children than we have with his salay so I have cone to you and see if you can helpe me out please excuse my writing because I am very nevos and just up frone bed

## In Constant Fear

Ohio

I am coming to you for advice Please, please help me I am a large woman I weigh 220 lbs I have four little children my last two babies are only 15 months apart, the one is 21 months, the other is 6 mos I was left with milk leg after this last baby was born and I am not able at times to be on my feet, so you know I have something on my hands And we have many little debts to pay and the debt for my last two babies, besides a couple large doctor bills when we all had the flu, and Mrs Sanger, I dont know how we would ever get through if I would get pregnant again The doctor told my mother-in-law that if I got pregnant again and with this leg of mine that I would know something I never knew before It seems as though I get pregnant so easy, and yet I think I am care-

ful, although I haven't found anything that saved me yet Wont you write and tell me your remedies I am living in constant fear every day

## Fruitless Fertility

West Virginia

I feel as if I were writing to a real friend in deed and in nead I am writing to for help as I feel that in deed yours is a great work I live in a small mining town and even in this small town there are many familys it is a tragedy to see many who would be glad to not have any more children for a few years as they have 3 and 4 so small they cannot take proper care of them and are all poor people I married in April 1921 at the age of 17 and in April 11, 1922 I had an 8 pound boy born to me at this was in labor 38 hours and had to be put to sleep and the child taken it was not developed right in side the Dr did not think it would have had any mind are ever walked it died in 24 hours after birth all due to mis-conception in May 1923 I had an 8 pound girl who has never been well and had to be weaned yound because my milk isent good in Nov 1924 I had 3½ months miscarriage and now 4½ months pregnant again and I am so uneasy I dont know what to do as I am afraid it will be like my first one I feel some times as if I would rather die than suffer again as I did then so please help me as I do not want any more children for a while after this one and always I will be your grateful friend

## A Tubercular Family

Ohio

You are right in saying that women should be informed on this subject But how is one to find out when physicians will not give out such information?

My husband is a disabled soldier who contracted tuberculosis from being gassed, and I have one child of two years who inherited the disease Last year I again became pregnant and simply did not dare to bring another delicate child into the world As a consequence, I spent a long time in the hospital and nearly lost my life I was so disappointed not to find any definite information in your book, but I do beg of you to reply to this letter

## Three Children at Seventeen

Maryland

I am coming to you for help, so please help me, a poor young woman I am a young woman of seventeen years and I have three small children, the first is 2½ the second is 1½ and the third is 3 months old, and married at only 14 years old and dont know what to do I work so hard that I am almost dead Thinking Woman and the New Race was a book that tells how to dont have children, I sent for it I read it but I dont see anything about how to don't have children, so I am coming to you for help

## A Rift Between Husband and Wife

South Dakota

I sent for a copy of your magazine and found that it was very interesting and feel that I must write you to see if you can help me in any way I am a young woman twenty-one years old and married a man thirty-one We have only been married three years and have two little babies already, they are only thirteen months apart Each time after birth I am always very nervous and sickly and can hardly get around to do my housework and care for my babies too I would like you to advise me what to do to prevent from having any more so soon, as I would rather die than have another I am trying to keep away from my husband as much as I can but it causes him to be quarrelsome with me all the time and it makes him think that I dont care for him If he sleeps with me he bothers me every night He doesn't seem to think that I cant stand it My last baby is a puny, sickly little thing all the time and doesnt seem to grow a bit The doctor says it is because it was too soon after the other one was born that I hadnt gained my strength back yet I have tried everything that other ones have told me about, but they all fail to do much good Besides my poor health we are too poor to take good care of such a large family, so please help me before I give up entirely

## Unwelcome

Maine

I have recently recovered from a second abortion within a year, because I was unsuccessful in the use of the only preventive I know about, and I am very anxious to have you help me to keep from getting pregnant I have one child, nine years of age, and I am twenty-seven, and as I am not financially able to have any more children, and as I am not in love with my husband, I will *not* have any more, so I have gone through two operations to avoid it If I ever marry again and have someone who can provide a good home and education for a child, I might consider having one more, but under the present conditions, it would be a sin to have one, and I shall refuse to have any intercourse with my husband unless I can find some safe way to prevent conception, for abortions are surely injurious

## A Father in Discouragement

Pennsylvania

Please pardon me for writing this to you, not knowing what trouble this may cause you But I realize that you are a friend of humanity If people would see with your light, the world would be healthful I am a father and husband of my wife—father of 6 children in 5 years, two of them living, and two sets of twins born prematurely The first was six months and the second, seven months, all dead These two living children, they are sick in the first year, and my wife, she is very poorly, and had to nurse the last baby on the bottle She do not have milk for it And I am foreigner and poor coal miner, and my earnings is not very good for all this expenses what come on us I feel so bad about everything what comes on us, and write to ask you to send me information for us Please do not tell me I am foreigner, not worthy help from you, but help me for God's sake to prevent having any more trouble, as we have already

## Despair

*The "Denver Post" featured the following story Mabel Ward never wrote the American Birth Control League Hers is the type of letter that is written when hope of relief is gone Hundreds of the mothers who write to Mrs Sanger for relief are on the verge of accepting Mabel's solution of their problems*

Mrs Mabel Ward, wife of George Ward, a laborer employed by a local transfer company, turned on all the gas burners in the stove of her kitchen and took her own life and the lives of her three small children

The mother's body was found in a chair in the kitchen The three tots were all dead in their beds in an adjoining room

There were two small boys, aged three and four years, and a baby, Lorraine, 16 months old

The mother's note, found lying on the kitchen table, indicated that she had chosen the "easiest way" to end her struggle against poverty and want

She was about to become a mother for the fourth time, her note indicated

Following is her note

"Well, folks, I guess you think I am not happy, but I am For a few days I have had what I wanted for the first time in my life It's awful to be poor, and worse to have children and no way to take care of them, and I made up my mind—no! There would have been another one before long Don't blame George

"He has always done the best he could, but he was up against it like me Put in the world to work—no education, no training Nothing to do but work like dogs

"I don't think I will have any worse hell in the place where I am going

MABEL"

## Working Mothers Demand Birth Control

**I**N *Equal Rights*, Crystal Eastman writes of the British Labor Women's conference at Birmingham, of the character of the assembly and of the spirit in which they made their demand for Birth Control. She answers effectively the question whether the really poor want Birth Control.

This was a genuine working-class convention, she writes. Certainly no more than 100 of the 860 present were "intellectuals," and there are no people in the world so little inhibited by respectability, so little oppressed by their own self-importance, so little burdened with hypocrisy, and therefore so laughter-loving, as the British working class. 731 were sent to Birmingham to represent women's sections of the Labor Party. Of these the vast bulk were working-class housewives, wives and mothers for whom there is no servant problem because there is no servant.

One hardly needed figures to know this. It was enough to look at them—here and there an eager pale young face and pretty home-made clothes, but then rows and rows of the beaten-looking women that make your heart ache for the poverty of England, a poverty so cruelly hard on women. Years of struggle with dirt and cold and low wages was written on their pale unhealthy faces, in their battered-looking bodies and rough misshapen hands, in their old thick, dark and dreary clothes. I heard these women dispose of Birth Control amid gusts and gales of laughter.

When the first opponent rose, an unmistakable spinster of fifty or sixty, a Catholic and Socialist of the old school, they began their laughing protest before she could speak. "What does she know about it?" "Where is her wedding ring?" were the frank but not unkind comments to be distinguished in the uproar. But the old lady won a laugh of her own when she appealed to the chairman to "please control her Birth Controllers." The delegates settled down in amused silence and listened while she denounced Birth Control as "a crime against God and humanity." But when she called it an insidious issue which would split the Labor Party, they burst out again and she had to sit down.

"I am a Catholic, too," said a stout motherly woman climbing on to her chair, "and a good Catholic. And I want to say that the Catholics better be honest. They are all practicing Birth Control if they've got the information. I am the mother of thirteen children, but I wouldn't be if I'd known what to do. The information came to me too late. Yes, thank God, it's too late—or at least I hope so." This set them off again. There was a sentimental speech about a gardener who would not stop planting roses because the water supply was cut off. This caused some amusement, as did the protest of the woman who said she was the tenth child in her family and she

couldn't help being glad that her mother didn't know anything about Birth Control. Then there were two dyed-in-the-wool Socialists who maintained that Birth Control was wholly a matter of economics, that it would not be needed in the co-operative commonwealth. This was disposed of by an earnest young mother, who said "Even in the co-operative commonwealth, if it ever comes, I think a woman will want to choose her time and decide how many." Then the debate was closed for lack of further opposition, and the resolution was carried with not more than six dissenting votes.

## More Comment on the Sixth International

**T**HANKS to the Ethical Session of the international conference, to which the clergy were asked by special invitation, many religious magazines reported and commented on the conference. Not the least among these was *America*, the Roman Catholic weekly, in whose pages David Goldstein called attention to the dangerous spread of the propaganda for Birth Control as illustrated by the list of world-wide authorities whose names appeared on the conference program. The Protestant periodicals commented equally on the high standing of Birth Control but felt none of the alarm expressed by the Catholic theologians. Among the best accounts of the proceedings are those in *Christian Work* (N. Y.), *The Continent* (N. Y.), which heads its story "Ask the Church to Work for a Better Race," *Unity* and the *Universalist Leader*.

"The conference, says *Unity*, 'proved once for all that Birth Control is neither a fad nor a fanaticism, but one of the greatest and most pressing of all movements for human welfare and happiness'."

The *Universalist Leader*, under the head "Not Race Suicide but Race Selection," gives a sympathetic account and ends, "The great hope of the future lies in the active interest which members of the medical profession have taken in the conference."

Some of the medical reviews reported the sessions, notably *American Medicine* and *The Medical World*, but the active interest which it aroused among medical men is shown best not only in the number who attended the contraceptive session, but in those who have come or written to the headquarters of the American Birth Control League since then, or who attended the meetings in many states held for Dr. Cooper as a result of the conference.

## THE CASE FOR CHANCE PARENTHOOD

### A True Dialogue

**WOMAN** "What are you selling that dirty sheet for?"

**KITTY MARION** (holding up the BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW) "So that poor women and sick women can have clinics where they can learn how to prevent conception."

**WOMAN** "You make me sick. Since prohibition came in we haven't been able to find a stray child to adopt."



## Citizens and Christians of Quality

A SWEDENBORGIAN pastor is the most recent churchman to urge support of Birth Control on ethical grounds. At the convention of that sect which was held this summer at Cincinnati, on June 17th, the Rev Paul Dresser of Bath (Me) urged the general council of his church to take its stand for Birth Control. The Cincinnati *Times-Star* gives the substance of Mr Dresser's address:

"God only knows how many hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of children are born every year," the Rev Mr Dresser's paper declared, "of whom it could truthfully be said, like Judas, 'it had been good for them if they had not been born'."

"It is the manifest right of every child to be well born in this world. We deplore the fact that untold millions are denied this fundamental right, and we are bound to admit that something is wrong."

"The laws of many countries, including our own, and the laws and teachings of the Christian church, favor the production of many children. The State wants citizens as such, regardless of their individual worth, and the church everywhere works for numbers. Neither State nor church cares for quality in membership. In the scramble for numbers it has been overlooked or ignored that the worst evils, both civil and religious, acute and chronic, are due to over-production of the human kind. That a high percentage of crime is due to arrested development is manifestly evident, and that an equally high percentage of arrested development is due to bad natal and post-natal conditions should be equally evident, but neither State nor church has as yet shown a disposition to go to the bottom of the matter, however plainly the finger points."

"Procreation of children is not the only object of marriage. Marriage itself, in its purity, is the precious jewel of the Christian religion, and is heaven on earth. Husband and wife are in a love which urges to 'one flesh,' and which finds satisfaction in the corresponding expression."

An ideal race of people can be attained only by reducing the number of children that are brought into the world, the speaker declared.

"And how is the number of children to be reduced among the poor and uneducated?" he asked. "Certainly not by the repression of the sex instinct. That would be utterly impossible in the first place, and, in the second place, it would be detrimental to health and morals. Admitting that the knowledge of the scientific means of Birth Control would be abused in some cases, what solution is there which would not have its abuse? Is there any solution which would not have more abuses than Birth Control? If it comes down to a choice between evils, let us by all means choose the lesser evil."

"Let the aim of the State be not numbers, but citizens of quality—physically, mentally and morally. Let the

aim of the church be not numbers, but Christians of quality—mentally, morally and spiritually. As in the great war it was not Germany, breeding like rabbits, that won, but France, a nation practicing Birth Control. So, in the future, that nation or that people will more nearly serve the end of creation which shall think most of its children, giving them the heritage which is their right."

"Let the new church take its stand for a 'new race of well-born children' in the hope and faith that when that race shall arrive, she may be able to say, 'This is the generation of them that seek Him, that seek thy face, O Jacob'."

Though the fundamentalist group in the Council denounced Mr Dresser's point of view, there were not wanting liberals who considered that it "marked a forward step in the recognition by the church of progressive sociology."

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### "THE WAIL OF THE WELL"

Johnnie Jones has lost a leg  
 Fannie's deaf and dumb  
 Marie has epileptic fits  
 Tom's eyes are on the bum  
 Sadie stutters when she talks  
 Mabel has T B  
 Morris is a splendid case of imbecility  
 Billy Brown's a truant  
 And Harold is a thief  
 Gwendolyn is a millionaire  
 And Gerald is a fool  
 So everyone of these darn kids  
 Goes to a special school  
 They have specially nice teachers  
 And special things to wear  
 And special time to play in  
 And special kind of air  
 They've special lunches right in school  
 While I, it makes me wild,  
 I haven't any specialties,  
 I'm just a normal child

MAY AYARS in *The Training School Bulletin* (London)

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*In supplying the men for the carnage of a battlefield, women have not merely lost actually more blood, and gone through a more acute anguish and weariness, in the months of bearing and in the final agony of child-birth, than has been experienced by the men who cover it, but, in the months of rearing that follow, the women of the race go through a long, patiently endured strain which no knapsacked soldier on his longest march has ever more than equaled, while, even in the matter of death, in all civilized societies, the probability that the average woman will die in child-birth is immeasurably greater than the probability that the average male will die in battle—*  
 OLIVE SCHREINER

## Book Reviews

### *A Review by Frank S C Wicks*

POPULATION AND THE SOCIAL PROBLEM, by  
J Swinburne, F R S The Macmillan Co, New York

**J** SWINBURNE, in his "Population and the Social Problem" rightly regards the stress of population as the fundamental fact in sociology, and asserting that this fact has never been realized by sociologists, makes good the deficiency in this volume. The economist, too, comes under his condemnation for ignoring this basic fact.

He gives Malthus credit for being the first to show that no philanthropic project has any possibility of success unless it is based on appreciation of the Law of Population, but "the powers of intellectual darkness were to the front as now, the clergy teaching that the doctrine was inconsistent with the goodness of God. They said we were told to be fruitful and multiply, and used their pretended acquaintance with the wishes of the Almighty to prevent the spread of any knowledge that might be good for man."

Swinburne recognizes that not only the first cause of poverty and distress is population pressure, but regards it as the first cause of war, though "it does not follow that war causes the pressure."

If civilization is overthrown, the writer believes, it will be swept away by "ignorant, hungry people acting under the keen stress of population pressure, as has happened over and over again in the past, the difference being that the hungry masses will not be outside peoples, but our own proletariat and poorer classes inflamed by socialists and other demagogues."

Swinburne holds that it is population pressure that postpones marriage beyond the physiological age, and is almost entirely the cause of the scourge of prostitution. He is confident that public opinion would do much to bring about a reasonable amount of family limitation, condemning the "man with a large family as putting a burden on the community to satisfy his own selfishness." After all, he thinks, "any advance will be due to enlightened self-interest. Limitation of families has long been practised. It began in the middle-classes and spread both up and down, and it will gradually extend until it changes the whole of the relations of society. The limitation of offspring and the means, form the greatest discovery man has ever made."

We are continually turning the pages expecting to find a stout advocacy of Birth Control through rational methods, but though it is everywhere implied, it is not expressly stated.

The tone of the book is unpleasant, the author holds every conviction as a prejudice, he is impatient with those who differ from him, at times, he is arrogant, yet he has produced a work of very real value.

### *A Review by Nalbro Bartley*

STORIES AND ESSAYS BY MRS HAVELOCK  
ELLIS Published privately by the Free Spirit  
Press, Berkeley Heights, New Jersey

**W**ITH sympathetic prefaces and reminiscences by Charles Marriott, George Ives, Mrs Clifford Bax and F W Stella Browne, as well as notes by Havelock Ellis, these two small volumes of Mrs Havelock Ellis' stories and essays make a unique contribution to today's literature. Perhaps the presence of vision is the one quality which her friends and husband agree in ascribing to Edith Ellis, that great-hearted, dauntless, sincere woman who believed "the dangerous people are the dull, the self-satisfied, the indolent people."

Her short stories possess both charm and character analysis, but it is her personal impressions of Edward Carpenter, James Hinton, Havelock Ellis, Olive Schreiner, Oscar Wilde, Ellen Key and Frederick Van Eeden which prove Mrs Ellis' talent for appreciating and applauding the talents of others.

Sympathetically and always forcibly she shows Edward Carpenter to be the man who realizes why society is in prison—and his proposed way of escape, James Hinton as foreseeing some of the wonders of the "inevitable wedding and of purity and passion", Havelock Ellis as the "faun and the Christ in this student of woman's natures." She describes Olive Schreiner as the passionately vehement iconoclast crying out that freedom is everything and Oscar Wilde as a "fine frenzy set against average ideals and commonplace platitudes." Her interpretation of Ellen Key is as a seer of the evolution of the woman movement and in an uncompleted but pertinent sketch of the versatile Frederick Van Eeden she comprehends and praises his struggle for a better arrangement of life.

### *A Review by Anne G Porritt*

THE DISINHERITED FAMILY—A Plea for the Endowment of the Family, by Eleanor Rathbone Edward Arnold and Co, London

**P**ROBABLY no book discussing social questions has been published since the war which has caused more searchings of heart than Eleanor Rathbone's "Disinherited Family." Her clear and powerful analysis of existing evils, and her bold suggestions of remedies which would mean the overturning of long-accepted principles make the book one of the landmarks in the feminist movement. She holds as ridiculous the present demand for "a living wage" based on the requirements of a family of five—man, wife and three minor children—for the

family of five is a figment of the imagination and such a living wage, while an intolerable burden to industry in Great Britain, starves the wife and children when the family is larger and demoralizes the young unmarried man who has no one but himself to keep

She outlines, instead of the present standard wage, demanded by the trade unions, a plan under which women and children would be recognized as individuals, not mere appanages of the male workers, and she shows that, if an industry make full provision for all such individual wives and children, it would have to bear a very much lighter burden than under the man-made system of a living wage for a family of five—paid to boys just attaining their full working status, unmarried men and men with only one or two dependents, as well as to the man who has four, five or six minor children

Miss Rathbone takes careful note of the objection that might be made to a scheme of child endowment, that the birth rate would be too greatly stimulated. She points out that unless the child's portion were wrongfully appropriated by one or other parent, there would be no temptation to have children for the sake of the larger payments that would come to the family. She cites the well-known fact that it is the poor and hopeless that breed most prolifically and that with an advance in comfort and well-being, the birth-rate falls. Her general conclusion is that "direct provision paid to the mother would raise the standard of the poorer wage-earners, and that an orderly and self-respecting living is the best cure for indiscriminate and dysgenic breeding." The pages on the connection between the birth-rate and child-welfare and family comfort are well worth the careful attention of all students of these questions. They give Miss Rathbone's book a rightful place on the shelves of the Birth Control library

### *Translation of a Swedish Review*

BIRTH CONTROL, Theoretical and Practical By Eugene Alban Sweden

THE darkness with which the sex question and the love life of mankind have up to the last two generations been surrounded, is beginning to give place to the light of day. The ignorance on this question which is as great as it is destructive, must now make way for an enlightenment which is ever spreading in wider circles among the people. Among those, who in Sweden have contributed towards spreading the newest discoveries and inventions most widely among the people is Eugene Alban.

Nils Adamsson's pamphlet on Birth Control did much to overcome ancient prejudices and superstitions in respect to sex life. For its importance we can call Alban's present pamphlet "the sex-hygiene catechism." It is a fundamental, concentrated, abridged presentation of the population question, a sharp rebuke and settling of ac-

counts with those who consider the begetting of children a personal matter and who leave the regulation of their number to God's providence, as well as with those who as qualified national economists declare that the earth can nourish an unlimited number of people, and that therefore Birth Control is superfluous.

Alban shows that such theories are not tenable. The begetting of children is not only a personal, it is a social question, and a question of vital importance, and all sanguine theories of the earth's unlimited nourishing power are either criminal speculations or naive phantasies. As regards Sweden, statistics show that she has not sufficient dwellings nor can she properly nourish the present generation, and therefore the only intelligent thing to do is to prevent the unlimited increase of the population.

The enlightened ancient civilization recognized that the limitation or regulation of the number of children was necessary for the healthy development of the human family. The authorities of these states themselves took measures in that direction, whereas the states of today attempt to prevent Birth Control. Alban finds Swedish laws both harmful and ineffective, harmful because they prevent the effective regulation of population increase, and ineffective because broken by the enlightened part of the population.

The latter part of Alban's pamphlet is devoted to methods of contraception. This section will be particularly welcome to Swedish married women who suffer most through their ignorance of sex matters. The last chapters deal with the questions of sterilization and abortion, two questions which must be definitely answered. Abortion he does not condemn under all conditions. Says he "Prevention against unwanted pregnancy is better than abortion, but abortion is better than child murder."

The pamphlet is written in a dignified style, free from all that could offend decency. It was written to bring light into the darkness surrounding the dogmas and laws which govern sex life and to awake interest in Birth Control, which the author believes to be "the greatest question of our time, and of all times."

### *A Review by Anne Kennedy*

"HURRICANE," a Play By Olga Petrova Four Seas Company, Boston, Mass

IN the opening of this play the whole panorama of the slavery of motherhood is laid bare in the most vivid and convincing manner.

On a wind swept ranch in Texas, a Polish family, where women folk bear children year after year, cook, clean, feed stock, work in the fields, under the brutal domination of the father and husband, is given dramatic treatment.

The daughter's flight to the tenderloin district of Kansas City and then on to a successful career in New York is all incidental to the main issue—the slavery of women.

Olga Petrova has dedicated this play in book form to

Margaret Sanger because it is filled with the tragic misery of woman's ignorance

The story of the rebellious and ambitious spirit of Illyena grips the imagination and thrills the reader, until the last act when Illyena has to pay. She pays as women so often pay with their fondest dreams unfulfilled

As a play "Hurricane" is a great dramatic success. In book form it should have even a wider influence

### BOOKS RECEIVED

From Lippincott (Philadelphia) *POPULATION PROBLEMS*, by Edward Byron Reuter

From A & C Boni *YOUNG MISCHIEF AND THE PERFECT PAIR*, by Hugh de Selincourt \$2 00

From the Hogarth Press (London) *COLLECTED PAPERS*, by Sigmund Freud, Vol I 21 Sh

From E P Dutton and Co, New York *QUO VADIMUS*, by E E Fourmier d'Albe \$1 00

From Harvard University Press *GENETICS AND EUGENICS*, by W E Castle

From E P Dutton and Co, New York *SEX AND CIVILIZATION*, by Paul Bousfield

From University of North Carolina Press *ROADS TO SOCIAL PEACE*, by E A Ross

From Macmillan Company, New York *SOCIAL ORIGINS AND SOCIAL COMMUNITIES*, by Alfred Marston Tozzer

From Charles Scribners Sons, New York *WHAT AILS OUR YOUTH*, by Geo A Coe

From T Y Crowell *THE SCIENCE OF BIOLOGY*, by George G Scott

From Fisher Unwin (London) *THE LAW OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS*, by Charles Edward Pell

From U S House of Representatives, Washington, D C *THE NARCOTIC PERIL*, by the Hon Walter F Ainebayer

From A & C Boni, New York *THE CRAZY FOOL*, by Donald Ogden Stewart

From Oxford University Press *POPULATION*, by A M Carr Saunders

From Minton Balch & Co, New York *THE DECLINE OF MAN*, by Stanton A Coblenz

From World Book Co, Chicago *CIVIC SOCIOLOGY*, by Edward Alsworth Ross \$1 80

From Macmillan Company, New York *A YEAR OF PROPHECYING*, by H G Wells

From H Jenkins (London) *WOMAN IN WORLD HISTORY*, by E M White

From Macmillan Company, New York *MODERN MARRIAGE*, by Paul Popenau

From the Author (Padua, Italy) *IL CONTROLLO DELLE NASCITE*, by Corrado Gini

From American Sociological Society, Chicago *THE TREND OF POPULATION* Volume XVIII of Publications

From B W Huebsch, New York *INDIA IN WORLD POLITICS*, by Taraknath Das

From the Author *A NATURE MYSTIC'S CLUE*, by Dwight Goddard

From American-English Literature Society, New York *THE MARRIAGE OF TWO NATIONS*, by Saxby Vouler Penfold

From E P Dutton, New York *WHAT I BELIEVE*, by Bertrand Russell \$1 00

From Little, Brown and Company, Boston *SOUNDINGS*, by A Hamilton Gibbs \$2 00

## Civilization and Straight Thinking

CIVILIZATION to continue, needs some very straight thinking on the part of its "addicts"

Look at the facts before us in this State

Two bills have been presented to the present Legislature, but not passed, which, even if we do not approve of them, do arouse new considerations as to the control of population and the character of our civilization to come

Just what are we running into in the generations ahead?

If the institutions in this State were built up to a capacity to fully care for those who have become State charges, for reasons mental, physical or moral, we are assured it would take almost half the entire revenue on which we depend to run the State in all its branches'

This irresponsible class, of those who do not fit into our civilization for one reason or another, is increasing far more rapidly than the class of sane, industrious, self-supporting and self-respecting citizens

Is it illogical to foresee a time when the burden will become top-heavy—when the unfit will exceed the fit in the race and their burden upon society become intolerable

Looking at it in this way, are not some measures for control not only logical but a necessity?

Very recently a student of sociology has sent out a call for brains to marry young—that in some way this startling excess of the sub-mental, sub-moral type shall be met

Without thought, without care, without vision the sub-normal are reproducing themselves upon the State while the educated, the thoughtful, the responsible in type is waiting to assume family cares until able to carry them independently and well

The situation is one which statecraft cannot much longer ignore. The State is carrying thousands of wards who at large would be a menace to society and yet who if guarded against reproduction could live their useful, helpful, self-supporting lives outside the walls of State institutions

We are not discussing bills now we are discussing facts, such facts as our leading medical psychiatrists have put before us time and again

The conditions are rapidly becoming so complex, economically and socially, that we will be compelled to do the straight thinking which civilization needs—Summit, (N J) *Herald and Record*

## PERIODICAL NOTES

In August *Scribner's*, Professor E M East writes of Sex and Heredity, a clear and interesting article on the biological facts on which eugenics is based

In 1923 we were losing more mothers in child-birth than in 1915 After seven years progress in local public health work and at least two year's educational work under the federal act for the protection of maternity, our maternal mortality rate has not gone down, but has steadily and substantially increased In the Birth Registration Area of the United States as a whole, according to the figures of the Children's Bureau, the rate of 1915 was 61, of 1923 it was 67 What was true of the area and the period as a whole is true of almost every year and of each of the 31 states in the area Almost every year in every one of these states shows a rise The exceptions for individual years in individual states are only a handful The trend is steadily upward Instead of making motherhood safe, it is growing more dangerous, and yet we allow our mothers to endanger their lives in this way not once or twice or three times in a life-time, but again and again by innumerable pregnancies year after year

"Stump speakers for Birth Control," says the *Camden Post*, "might make considerable capital out of the case of Wilham Cavaher, who, when fourteen years of age, deliberately murdered his grandmother with whom he lived, and now, at fifteen, is awaiting sentence of death for murder in the first degree" This editorial writer does not believe in Birth Control He recommends instead "marriage control" That marriage control would mean in this family "illegitimacy release" is indicated by his own description of Wilham's family tree The grandmother whom Wilham Killed, was a "hard drinking" woman Nothing is said of his mother and father, but three children are very evidently deficient, a fourth is "brighter" and the other is too young to make definite statements about

In the High Cost of Babies (*Atlantic* for June), Ida L Albright answers the question why the middle class family is shrinking From ten dollars apiece as the cost of bringing herself and her six brothers and sisters into the world the price had risen, by the time she was a mother for the first time, to \$135 00 Her later confinements doubled and trebled this amount until after the third she says "Though we had never a case of prolonged or serious illness in the house our savings still fell far below what we had expended for doctors' fees"

What if the specialist is the reason that the cost of babies is so high? This is only another sign of the greater

value we set on life and the better start in the world we try to offer those children we do have

*American Medicine* (New York) for June has an editorial on the program of the Commonwealth Fund for attacking juvenile delinquency The program includes psychiatric study of difficult and delinquent children in school and court, and increased use of the visiting teacher in the homes of such children It proposes to attack the disease,—not to prevent its major cause, the large and poverty-stricken family in the tenement home

In the *Journal of Social Hygiene* (New York) for May, George E Worthington discusses compulsory sterilization At the end of the 1925 legislative sessions 18 states had enacted laws, of which one was imperfectly framed and six had been declared unconstitutional as violating the state Bill of Rights In only one state had the law been extensively used, and there, mainly for the insane and never without the relatives' consent Mr Worthington discusses the reasons for this situation and the conflict of opinion on this type of legislation and suggests a program of research and education that should precede future legislation

Girl babies are frequently smothered at birth, according to press reports of an interview with Knud Rasmussen, recently returned from Greenland Infanticide of superabundant girls is regarded as no more important than the drowning of puppies

In the *Country Gentleman* (Philadelphia) Richard T Ely, Director of Research in Land Economics and Public Utilities, discusses probable increases in population and in food production in the United States Professor Ely is not seriously alarmed for the future, but trusts to the fact that our birth rate has slowed up as our national standard of living has risen He makes no reference to the relation of Birth Control to the lowered birth rate

Sir A Daniel Hall, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* (Boston), is less confident that things are adjusting themselves so easily From his expert knowledge as Chief Scientific Adviser to the Canadian Minister of Agriculture he discusses the problem of "Feeding the World" "We have," says he, "to face the fact that food is becoming scarce in relation to the increasing population of the world" And he points out that such sources of world supply as Russia are beginning to find that they must keep their crops for their own people He believes that

the salvation of the future lies in the fact that long before actual famine threatens the western peoples, at least, will voluntarily limit their numbers to avoid being reduced to an eastern standard of living

The National Bureau of Economic Research estimates that the population increase of the United States during 1924 represents a slight slowing up on the rate of the previous five-year period. The estimate for 1924 shows 114,311,000 people in the United States—a tidy number one would think. Meanwhile the death rate is going down faster than the birth rate. To put it graphically—two babies were born last year in the United States for one person who died and in 1925 “probably ten babies will be born every two minutes and five persons will die”

If the present rate of population increase had been maintained throughout the Christian era the whole population of the earth today could in the judgment of a writer in the *Sociological Review* (London) be descended from one couple living near the end of the first century A D. If this rate is maintained for another thousand years the earth will contain considerably more than one person to each square yard of land. But in the past famine and pestilence kept the rate down. Today these cures of “a plethora of people” have yielded to science, which has also lengthened the average length of the individual life. The death rate is no longer the factor that it was and the hope of the future lies in the slowing up of the birth rate, otherwise through war or some other means nature will have to call again on the death rate to help. “Mankind is now able to decide which of these two checks shall be applied, one of them must be”

From the Richmond (Va.) *Times-Dispatch* comes the following from a sermon on Heredity by the Rev. Frank Pratt, minister of the Unitarian Church:

“There is still much to learn about heredity, but there are certain things we do know. We know that the feeble-minded, insane and chronic criminals produce their kind and cause a stream of misery and suffering to enter into the world. The first important step, in order to lessen the growing evil and misery, is the prevention of the birth of these unfortunates by means of methods of isolation and sterilization of those who would become fathers and mothers of these wards of the State. The increased happiness of the world depends upon the wise use of the laws of heredity. The increased sorrow and misery of the world will result from our disregard of these laws”

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An English scientist says the average span of life can be extended easily to 150 years at a cost of 12 cents a head, and doubtless there are some cases in which the outlay would be warranted.—*Detroit News*

## Birth Control a Protection to the State

IN a considerable number of cases, families which, if small, would be self-supporting, become burdens upon society because too many children are produced. Increased expense of greater numbers is not the only difficulty. Associated sickness and death, and bad living conditions are more potent causes of hopeless poverty. Only parents of exceptional physical, mental and moral qualities can keep themselves and a large family of children healthy and the home decent, especially in cities. All others with a small income and many children must receive public help or rear children who will be even less likely than their parents to found successful families.

The remedy in this case lies not so much in new laws as in the repeal of freak legislation which makes it a crime to inform the heads of families how the birth of children may be controlled so that there shall not be so many as to overtax the financial and physical resources of the family, and so that they shall come at the time when they can best be cared for. There are perfectly harmless methods of preventing conception. Some of these, not always the most harmless or effective, are familiar to a large number of parents but are not known to many of those who most need it. Cæsar, the people of this democracy, can only have his due when this silly and unjust law is repealed and when, before granting a marriage license, the applicants are fully instructed as to how birth can be effectively and healthfully controlled, thus making it possible for the family to increase in numbers as health and means permit, without danger of insolvency.

But many people believe that it is not right to use contraceptive means. To such it can only be said as to others, “Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s and unto God the things that are God’s.” It is Cæsar’s due that those persons to whom he grants a license to produce children shall take adequate care of all the children they produce. Whatever one’s religious beliefs, he owes a duty to society of properly caring for the children he brings into the world. If children are coming in such numbers or so quickly one after the other that he cannot maintain proper home conditions, it is his due to Cæsar that their coming shall be limited. If he thinks his duty to his God does not permit him to use contraceptive measures, then he should make use of other measures such as his conscience will allow to limit the numbers. Others who do not believe it is due to God to refrain from such methods should not be forbidden full information as to the best means.—E. A. Kirkpatrick in *Journal of Social Hygiene*

## OUR CORRESPONDENTS' COLUMN

### EUGENE HUMBERT TO FRIENDS IN AMERICA

Paris, June 15, 1925

*President of the American Birth Control League*

Through our eminent friend, Dr W J Robinson, I have received the sum of 5,581 francs from the subscription which you so generously took up among our eugenic and Neo-Malthusian friends in the United States I want to express my most cordial gratitude and to ask you to transmit my thanks to the contributors who have aided and encouraged me in the struggle I am putting up against the fiscal authorities

Harshly condemned to fine and imprisonment for having taught the poor the practice of that procreative prudence which is now employed by the cultivated, leisure classes, ruined by a class judgment without a parallel, victims of the hypocrisy of those who rule, I have had the sorrow of seeing our humanitarian cause stifled by the blind reaction of our bourgeois government

Thanks to a scoundrelly law worthy of the period of the Holy Inquisition, it is not permitted us any longer to instruct the poor unfortunates as to the possible regrettable results of their procreative faculties A silence of death hovers over the whole question of sexual emancipation, of contraceptive measures, of bad heredity and of eugenics These subjects are left to be dealt with by abortion, infanticide, still births, not to speak of celibacy, prostitution and unnatural vices Shall we return to reason? It is possible, but how much time lost, how many maimed lives? I hope with all my heart that the torch of progress in human regeneration, which our pioneer hands have held more than twenty years, will be kept alight by our friends in all nations and will be brought back before long and relighted on the soil of our darkened land

EUGENE HUMBERT

### A NEWSPAPER MAN ON BIRTH CONTROL

Poughkeepsie, N Y

*Editor, BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW*

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking you for the noble work which you are doing in the cause of humanity If the human race is in sore need of anything today that one thing is a better and fuller understanding of just what Birth Control really means and what it seeks to accomplish

I am engaged in newspaper work and during more than thirteen years spent in this field I have been brought face to face with hundreds of women who would not have been placed as they were had they but possessed a practical knowledge of this science

During the earlier years of my journalistic apprenticeship it was a part of my daily routine to report police and court matters I cannot understand how any person can become in any degree familiar with the happenings in police circles and still claim to oppose the properly

regulated distribution of Birth Control information Our police courts are continually filled with cases growing out of the promiscuous and uncontrolled bearing of children No one has a better opportunity of seeing and knowing this than the newspaper man who frequents the courts

In the name of these countless unfortunates who are driven into the courts because a practical knowledge of Birth Control has been denied them I urge you to push forward with this wonderful work which you have so nobly and unselfishly started for the betterment of posterity

You are at liberty to use my name in connection with this letter if you care to do it

Sincerely yours,

W L DEAN

### ABORTION OR BIRTH CONTROL?

Washington

*Editor of the BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW*

Four months ago I came to this Mission, and never dreamed of finding so much trouble among women of my flock through clumsy abortions, hair pins, wires, nails, some horrible catheters, some medicines, etc Recently two women have been taken in an unconscious condition to the hospital to be revived They (the women) performed the "operation" on themselves

Some openly beg me for contraceptive measures They mistrust doctors The MD's cannot do a thing, they scare the women with horrible consequences of death, asylum, etc

After reading "Some Plain Facts" about Birth Control in *Physical Culture* for August, I appealed to its Department of Information for addresses where I could learn the truth about the grave enigma Through their kindness I am able to write you this letter

Please help me to help these unfortunates I don't see any sin in helping these women who cannot help themselves, by delivering them from their miseries due to horrible prudery, repression and ignorance We are not living in an age of Inquisitors, Puritans, or Crusaders Poor people are entitled to know what is known to others more fortunate I must find the salvation so greatly needed

Yours in brotherly helpfulness,

(Signed)

*Minister of the Gospel*

### "RUMINATIN"

Onc't I was inside my mother and didn't know nothin' My mother didn't tell me that, she said she found me in the cabbage patch, but Maggie told me I believe Maggie 'cause I don't seem to look nothin' like a cabbage My mother must have some secret 'bout it 'cause people don't mind tellin' things 'less they want to keep 'em secrets She don't act like we ever was one neither though she loves me a lot I wonder if dirt minds that flowers starts growing in it!—From *Mental Health* (Baltimore)

## News Notes

### UNITED STATES

#### New York

THE Clinical Research Department of the American Birth Control League has issued its report for the first quarter of 1925. During this time 400 women were taken care of, 38 per cent of them Protestant, 27 per cent Catholic, 33 per cent Jewish and 2 per cent other religions.

"The greatest difficulty that our department has met," says the report, "is getting its source of supplies. This not only affects our immediate work but also affects the work of the physicians throughout the country. We hope to make some progress in getting the law changed to cover this great need. Another great difficulty which is trying is the refusal of economic cases, especially those young women about to enter marriage, whose economic problem is fully as great as the health problem might be. They desire to marry and keep employed for a year or two before having children. These cases we are unable to accept, much to our regret."

Dr. Hannah Stone, who has charge of the Clinical work of the Department, has had a broad training and experience which amply equips her for the work, involving as it does general medical examination of all patients as well as gynaecology and contraception. She has been bacteriologist with the New York City Health Department, Serologist (chiefly Wasserman) at the Bellevue Hospital. She is a licensed pharmacist, was interne at Metropolitan Hospital for two years, doing chiefly gynaecological work, was clinician at the Lying-in-Hospital for five years and for two years at St. Marks. She is a lecturer for the New York Tuberculosis Association and the American Social Hygiene Association. Her title is Clinical Director.

Dr. James F. Cooper, who has the title of Medical Director of the Department, is a graduate of Boston University Medical School, where he afterwards lectured on gynaecology and obstetrics. He was later Clinical Instructor in these subjects in Foochow Union College in Foochow, China, returning, after medical service in the war, to practice in Boston. He has specialized for many years in contraception.

In last month's and this month's *REVIEW*, we have given an account of Dr. Cooper's lecture tour in the west, the middle west and the south. His dates for August and September have been postponed till later in the fall, an opportunity having been offered him to make a trip abroad and visit the clinics now in operation in England, Holland and other European countries.

#### California

"Birth Control is a proper procedure, which is, perhaps, able to create a balance between the fit and the unfit. Its practice would go far toward a solution of the crime problem of today."

This is the statement of Dr. George W. Kirchwey, former warden of Sing Sing, who spoke to an audience of 150 before the Alameda County Birth Control League on July 30th. Dr. Harry Torrey, Professor of Zoology at the University of Oregon, spoke at the same meeting on the medical and biological aspects of Birth Control. Mrs. John B. Buwalda, vice-president of the Alameda County League and wife of the dean of the summer session at the University of California, introduced the speakers, both of whom were lecturers at the summer session.

#### Illinois

FROM July 4th to 6th Dr. Cooper was in Chicago, no meeting was held on account of the heat, but he visited the Birth Control Clinic and held conferences with several local gynaecologists and other specialists. On July 7th he was in DeKalb where he addressed an audience of 53 doctors and nurses, who listened with the greatest interest and made a financial contribution toward the work of the League.

#### Indiana

IN this state Dr. Cooper visited Indianapolis, where the final steps were taken toward arranging for a meeting in the fall, Louisville, Kendallville and Warsaw. At Louisville, which plans also to have a medical meeting in the fall, Miss Ingram of Neighborhood House arranged two meetings of social workers. Executives of various social agencies met for luncheon on July 20th at Salvation Army headquarters and other social and civic workers met at the public library to hear Dr. Cooper. A group are planning to form a league and work toward a clinic. On July 21st a meeting was held at City Hospital. Though announced by telephone only a few hours before, this meeting was attended by 39 doctors.

#### Kentucky

MOREHEAD and Frankfort were visited by Dr. Cooper and at the latter place he addressed on July 18th a keenly interested audience of physicians belonging to the Franklin County Medical Society.



## Michigan

IN Detroit Dr Cooper addressed a lunch meeting of the Penguin Club, arranged by Mrs R Louis Gomon, and the same evening (July 8th) he spoke at a meeting of physicians at the Hotel Statler. Though the evening was intensely hot and an audience of 50, at the most, was expected, the actual attendance was 150. A meeting of nurses was held the same evening. The next day a public meeting was held at Star of Bethlehem Hall. This hall, writes Dr Cooper, was "a small affair seating 200. On account of short notice and hot weather it was felt that there would be small response. However, the hall was filled, all standing room taken. The corridor and standing crowded as far as the voice would reach. Probably 300 or 400 people were standing and many were turned away. They were sorry they did not have a bigger hall."

Of his work in Detroit, Mrs Gomon writes "Dr Cooper's visit to Detroit is, and certainly should be much appreciated by the Detroit Branch. His personality, training and knowledge had a most gratifying effect on the doctors. He has aroused their interest in a direct professional way. The preliminary work for his visit was, as I realized, wholly inadequate. In spite of this fact we had 150 doctors at the medical meeting on one of the hottest nights we have had in Detroit. And a public meeting of three or four hundred."

## Ohio

OF his work in Newark, July 15th, Dr Cooper writes "A medical meeting was held in the local hotel—38 members present, very fine group of men, open-minded and cordial. Mostly favorable. They were very outspoken in their appreciation of my message and they passed the Atlantic City resolution unanimously. Many inquired about supplies and will give information."

By the time Dr Cooper reached Cincinnati the heat had settled down and the vacation season was on. For this reason no medical meeting was attempted, but a group of nurses and social workers brought together by Miss Ruth Neely listened to Dr Cooper's message, and three of the city newspapers featured both the address and interviews with Dr Cooper.

## Wisconsin

THE early days of June Dr Cooper spent in Milwaukee, where he spoke before a group of social workers and later, on contraceptive methods, before a group of physicians. On July 4th he addressed

a combined meeting of the Washington and Ozaukee County Medical Societies at Cedarburg, where he describes his audience as "a splendid group of men, alive to new things."

## ENGLAND

MRS ANNIE G PORRITT, former managing editor of the BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW, who is travelling in England, writes of the general situation

The Birth Control Movement is bound to make progress in England, for statesmen and taxpayers as well as harassed fathers and mothers are all preoccupied with the question of overpopulation. The first cry was for emigration to the colonies as a remedy for unemployment. But the expense of this policy as it now faces the nation is appalling. Not only does the taxpayer have to defray the cost of the education of the young men and women who are chosen for emigrants, during all their school life, not only does he also frequently have to support them in England for several years out of the dole, not only does he have to pay the heavy cost of government help to send them out to Canada, Australia or New Zealand and to aid them in establishing themselves there, but after all this has been done, the unlucky taxpayer finds that he has lost the most capable and valuable of his compatriots and has saddled himself with the burden of all the derelicts and dependents left behind. The eugenicist looks with despair at the careful sifting out of the best breeding stock of the English race and the highly dysgenic selection for a poorer race which is constantly going on.

Yet it is difficult to get open encouragement of the movement from the government. A short time ago I had a long talk with Harold Cox. He assured me that the Conservative Government was more favorable to Birth Control than the Labor Ministry had showed itself to be. Mr Wheatley has been succeeded at the Ministry of Health by Mr Neville Chamberlain and the obstruction which Mr Wheatley interposed has vanished. Local health officers are encouraging and recommending Birth Control, and in London are sending patients to the two clinics—Walworth and North Kensington—which are under the auspices of the New Generation League. But as yet there is no Birth Control Clinic or department conducted by the public authorities as a part of their health and welfare work, and until such departments are established in every part of the country the work of the Birth Control leagues and organizations will not be completed.

The most active propaganda to this end is now being conducted by the "Workers' Birth Control Group, whose active head is Mrs Bertrand Russell, the Secretary. Miss Jewson, one of the two women members of Parliament is President of this group, and meetings are being held all over the country for the purpose of bringing pressure

to bear on the Ministry of Health and the local health authorities

The policy of the New Generation League, like that of our American League, is to lay the responsibility of methods exclusively on the medical profession. When this policy is followed, they lend aid and countenance to efforts to establish Birth Control Clinics in any part of the country. A little group headed by Mrs. Ella Gordon has just opened a clinic at Wolverhampton, a great manufacturing town in the Midlands, and Mrs. Sargeant Florence is starting another with the help of a local committee at Cambridge. Other clinics have been opened at various places, but as their promoters have not adhered to the medical policy of the New Generation League these clinics have not received the recognition or assistance of the League.

As in America the demand in England is now for the hundred per cent safe and perfect preventive, on which scientists are now at work. When this is perfected a very great impetus will be given to the Birth Control movement, and it is hoped that this preventive, when perfected will be easily applicable to the unintelligent and feeble-minded who are now the serious concern of both Eugenicists and Birth Controllers.

Since Mrs. Porritt's letter was written the important action described in last month's REVIEW was taken by three great organizations. Since her letter was written the number of Birth Control clinics has increased. Since then also the New Generation League, under its old name, the Malthusian League, has begun its distribution of leaflets for sending with the recipient's signature to the Ministry of Health. Of clinics in operation at the present time, Dr. C. V. Drysdale writes

"Two new clinics have been opened by our original society, one in Wolverhampton near Birmingham and another in Aberdillary, Wales. So there are now four clinics under medical auspices to our League, Walworth, Kensington, Wolverhampton and Miss Daniels has started two others in Brighton and Southampton in addition to her original ones in London and Birmingham, making a total of nine with Marie Stopes one."

The clinic at Cambridge spoken of by Mrs. Porritt and Rose Witcop's clinic at Fulham Cross, raise Dr. Drysdale's total to 11.

At last advices 150,000 leaflets had been distributed by the Malthusian League, the distributing unit being a party of four travelling in a Ford. Only the north country has been covered as yet. Birmingham was visited June 29th, after that, Sheffield, Leeds, Darlington, Newcastle, with all the large towns near these centres. The distribution is made on the street, in some cases house to house in factories, and through the local Co-operative and Labor groups. The distributors have met in most

places an enthusiastic welcome. Physicians, the press and the police have aided and a big steady stream of letters asking for more leaflets pours into the league's office every day.

Of the campaign Dr. Drysdale writes

"It really looks as if I was not too sanguine in prophesying that the Ministry of Health would grant permission within a year. In fact we have been told by one of the Labor organizations that the Minister of Health has already granted permission to two Medical Officers of Health who have applied to give information to women, though not yet at the Welfare Centres themselves. If the people who have received the leaflets only write up well, something ought to happen soon."

While this campaign develops, Mr. Thurtle, Socialist-Labor member for Shoreditch is keeping the subject before the government. On the floor of the House of Commons he asked the Minister of Health whether he was prepared to accede to the Labor women's demand. To this the minister replied in terms which show that the Labor women's work is cut out for them. Said he "I am in agreement with the views of my predecessors that institutions provided at the cost of public funds should not be used for so controversial a purpose without express directions from Parliament. In the case of women attending maternity or infant welfare centres who, on medical grounds, appear to need such information as is mentioned in the question, my view is that these cases should be referred to a private doctor or a hospital."

Mr. Chamberlain added that "he was prepared to receive a deputation of honorable members on the subject." Not daunted, Mr. Thurtle who says of this issue that together with unemployment "it is the crying question of the hour," addressed the Prime Minister directly but received an inconclusive reply. At this point Lady Astor interposed her objection to discussion of "a most controversial subject."

This is the same peeress who said recently in the House "I hate the assumption that the working mother is different from any other mother. It really is most irritating. A mother is the same in all walks of life." To her F. W. Stella Browne replied in the *New Generation* "Birth Control does not need your support, though you would honor yourself by giving it. But at least you do not pretend that the working mother is as free, as secure, as happy in her bonds, as your own friends and acquaintances, to whom knowledge gives power over their own bodies. That really is nauseating humbug."

Nauseating also is the attitude of that colossal egotist of our day, the Countess of Oxford

and Asquith, who ends a sentimental statement about the joy of having children with—what was uppermost in her mind all the time—the cheap reference to self. Says she “I speak feelingly—for as my brother, Harold John Tennant, and I were the last of twelve children, it is more than probable we should never have existed had the fashion of Birth Control been prevalent.”

The press is still commenting on the great events in the first week in June and the *Nation* and the *Atheneum* is publishing an important series of articles on population. The Birth Rate Commission's report, inconclusive as it was, seems to have created an impression of modified support for Birth Control, for the *Universe* and *Catholic Weekly* criticize it as too tolerant toward the practice. This is the church which boasts, not confesses, that the crowded slum is the home of Catholicism. “Nowhere,” says the *Universe and Catholic Weekly* “are there more dreadful slums than Glasgow and nowhere is there greater religious devotion than among the Catholic occupants of those slums.” Another district where this church is probably strong is the slums of Norwich, where the medical officer has recently shown an infant death rate of 157.9 per 1000 as against 71.1 for the city as a whole.

Judge Cluer of Shoreditch court still loses no opportunity of keeping Birth Control before the general public, more important still he brings it before the very poor who come to his court. Two of his recent cases are much quoted. To a woman sued for arrears in rent, he is quoted as saying “That is one of the causes of your arrears, in your arms.” The woman “And I have six little ones at home.” Judge Cluer “Then I am sorry you have. I am sorry you are not taught not to have them. It is ruining you and ruining the country. Even bishops are now agreeing that it is an unwise thing.”

A father was another who learned of Birth Control. This was a debtor and the father of 12 children, to whom the judge is reported to have said “It's an injury to the country for a man in your circumstances to have such a family.”

## AUSTRIA

FROM Johann Ferch on his return to Vienna, after the Conference comes the following comment on work here and in Austria:

“I recognize that your method to work for Birth Control with the help of the citizens is not the correct one for Europe, but by all means for America. I recognize my error when I thought that everywhere the same method is applicable. In Europe

the large mass is wanting which can be whipped up to enthusiasm on account of the conditions, which are essentially different. Across the seas in Europe the weight of science and the liberal element of citizens must be won over and I think in the English-speaking population this has already been accomplished.

My successes here were on the whole made possible through one newspaper which placed itself at my disposal. Slowly the others came along. I can refer to my articles for our propaganda in the press.

I wish you would send me the motions which were adopted during the two meetings in your home referring to international leagues. I shall work for this in Europe and shall try to establish leagues in all European countries.

It is a great problem which I have placed before myself, but I have obtained a good deal so far through my connections with the social democratic party, to which I belong as a party journalist. I can look with hope into the future. In the same way, I shall try to make use of the Congress in the press of the German tongue and also of the Italian and Czecho-Slavic languages. I shall give you eventful information about my results.

And now I want to thank you once more for the wonderful hospitality that you have shown to my wife and myself. I am returning home with a series of stimulating impressions which I shall use for our work.

They are already working here in Vienna at my report about the Congress. Meetings will be held in the four largest halls of Vienna, with a seating capacity of about 3,000, immediately after my arrival. I shall speak there. In the same way thirty Austrian and three German dailies will furnish articles about the Congress.”

## FRANCE

THE following story from *The Servant of Calcutta* shows to what extent the depopulation hysteria has taken possession of the minds of some Frenchmen.

“A terrible remedy for depopulation in France was suggested by Dr. Paul Carnot in *Paris Medical*. He points out that the French race will be swept out of existence within twenty years unless French women make what he calls a ‘super-human effort of maternity.’ There are now in France 2,000,000 unmarried women capable of becoming mothers, but for whom it will be impossible to find husbands owing to the slaughter of men during the war, there are in all Europe now 15,000,000 more women than men.

“Dr. Carnot rejects both the solutions that have been offered, (1) to marry French women to

foreigners, (2) to permit polygamy for a certain period, his reason against the latter being that men under existing circumstances find it difficult enough to support one wife, let alone several

"What Dr Carnot suggests is the abolition of marriage in favor of the matriarchal family supported by the State, in which there would be no husband, but which would consist of mother and children only. The supreme law of a race, he argues, is not to perish and socially speaking, every woman ought to become a mother. Motherhood, he argues, should be an honorable and highly recompensed career, and the mother should be well paid by the State for every child she contributes to it"

### DENMARK

FROM Dr Leunbach, in charge of a Birth Control clinic in a poor district of Copenhagen, comes the following report in a letter to Mrs Thit Jensen

"Concerning our joint cause, it has, as you know, been discussed through several months in the physicians' review. The result has been, that surely most of the Danish physicians are willing to give anti-conceptional information to their patients, and physicians and students in the future will get courses in Birth Control

"After New Year, I had to move from the clinic in Odensegade, as I was notified to quit instantly by order of the court of house-rent. But I have just made a contract for some rooms in Linnegade. Every day, I can give information there, sometimes in the afternoon, and other times in the evening. The board of health as well as the organization of physicians have promised me their support and state that they feel that physicians who will not give information themselves, should send their patients to me. About the same time I open my new clinic I expect to publish a booklet, "Woman and Population". I think the movement is now on the right way and will develop quietly"

A recent issue of *Ugeskrift for Læger* (Copenhagen), a medical review, has an editorial by Dr Kuhn on the responsibility of the medical profession in the Birth Control Movement. He urges physicians to give scientific guidance to the movement and "not sidestep it, as in the past," leaving women to quacks and commercial agencies for the sale of contraceptives that may be useless or even injurious. This is a clear recognition of the fact that Birth Control in some form or other is becoming an imperative public demand in Denmark

### JAPAN

AT the fourth mass meeting of the All Japanese Farmers held in Tokio recently, a woman delegate, Mrs Kimi Yamagami, introduced a proposal to push legislation for "legal recognition of the methods and propaganda of Birth Control"

### INDIA

WHILE Indian mystics still split hairs over the ethics of Birth Control, a student of Economics in the *Indian Social Reformer* shows that Indian population is still increasing at a startling rate. The student analyzes the census figures of 1921, which record an increase in the last fifty years from 206 million to 319 million souls, of which part is due to better enumeration, but 53.8 million represents a real increase. Meanwhile, as might be expected, the mortality rate is enormous, the average length of life no higher in any province than 25.2 years (our rate is 58 years) and the infant mortality rate reaches the startling figure for males, 27.4, for females, 26. On these figures the student quotes the Census Report as follows: "The Indian figures are the result of factors which differ essentially from those in western countries—a higher birth rate, tempered by a higher infant mortality, a lower expectation of life and greater fluctuation in the adult age categories owing to famine and epidemics." To those whose morality is not based on an age-old ideal taught for thousands of years, but never practiced by humanity at large it would seem that the truly ethical solution of India's problem is Birth Control

### CHINA

THE *Birth Control News* (England) quotes the following from the *Glasgow Herald* of May 9th: "There is no Birth Control in China, and no occasion for celibate clergymen to lament over

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empty cradles But there are more ways than one of committing race-suicide, and China's is a particularly painful way Reckless increase of population, without any compensating advance in the total economic efficiency of the nation, results in periodic famines like the one that is reported to be raging at present in the province of Kweichow Over-population and recurrent famines are taken for granted by China's rulers It is said that a European firm of engineers once approached Li Hung Chang with proposals for damming the lower reaches of the Yellow River and thus preventing the floods that cause great destruction in that part of China Li Hung Chang dismissed the proposals without consideration, saying that the Chinese Government regarded the floods as a providential method of solving, for one district at least, the problem of over-population "

### A COMING EVENT

**T**HIS year again the American Birth Control League has a booth at the exhibit of women's activities, whose name has been changed to the Seventh Annual Exposition of Women's Arts and Industries It will be held as last year at the Hotel Commodore, New York City, for the week of September 21st to 26th

### THE MOTHER TIE

(Continued from page 249)

wound heals one finds happiness and peace and a more abundant life

Always remember that the neurotic, the "tied to mother" person, is the fine soul Such souls are struggling for the higher thing They need help to reach it When they do they give to the world, because of their suffering, something of great value

### DIAMOND MEN AND MEN OF FLESH

(Continued from page 250)

Many years ago Mahatma Gandhi wrote a book entitled "A Guide to Health" In this book the Mahatma of today makes a few confessions and statements worth quoting now in connection with his stand on Birth Control In this book, as today, Mahatma Gandhi condemned Birth Control most virulently "The race of true Brahmacharies (continent persons) is by no means extinct, but if they were to be had for the asking, of what value would Brahmacharya be? Thousands of hardy laborers have to go and dig deep into the bowels of the earth in search of diamonds, and at length they get perhaps merely a handful of them out of heaps and

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heaps of rock. How much greater, then, should be the labor involved in the discovery of the infinitely more precious diamond of a Brahmacharin?

"Alas, how rare are those men and women who yield to the sexual craving merely for the sake of an offspring! The vast majority who may be numbered in thousands, turn to sexual enjoyment merely to satisfy their carnal passion, with the result that children are born to them quite against their will. In the madness of sexual passion, we give no thought to the consequences of our acts. In this respect, men are even more to blame than women. The man is blinded so much by his lust that he never cares to remember that his wife is weak and incapable of rearing a child. We do not shrink from imposing the heavy burden of maternity on our women, and we are not concerned even to find that our children are weak, impotent and imbecile. Every time we get children, we bless Providence, and so seek to hide from ourselves the wickedness of our acts. Should we not rather deem it a sign of God's anger to have children who are weak, sensual, crippled and impotent? Is it a matter for joy that mere boys and girls should have children? Is it not rather a curse of God? Do we think that the world is going to be saved by the countless swarms of such impotent children endlessly multiplying in India or elsewhere in the world.

"I have myself been guilty of lapses even after having fully understood the value of Brahmacharya, and have, of course, paid dearly for it. I was married early in life and had become the father of children as a mere youth. When, at length, I awoke to the reality of my situation, I found myself sunk in the lowest depths of degradation."

Mahatma Gandhi here admits that he himself had to struggle for years to conquer himself, even after he knew of the blessings of continence. How much more difficult it must be for a healthy man or woman of flesh and blood who does not at all believe either in the ethics or in the beneficence of "self-control" to be an absolute Brahmacharin?

As there are heaps and heaps of rocks in the bowels of the earth, and but a few diamonds, similarly there are millions upon millions of men and women in India with normal human passions and emotions, and but a few diamond men and women of absolute continence, on the verge of Nirvana. Mahatmajī knows that all men in India are not like him, and that all women are not like his saintly wife Kasturibai. Crying in the wilderness of fanatical idealism gets us nowhere. We have to take facts as they are. We have to deal with human nature as it is.



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