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Twenty Cents

# BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

A Conscious Control of the Birth Rate

## Eugenic Number

Birth Control is a logical, sane brake on the speed of civilization, and if any country ever needed it, if any country was faced with the absolute necessity of going slow and studying as it goes, we are that country as we stand today

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# PERTINENT SAYINGS

Bylitsa continued after a long silence, "I remember the time when there were no more than fifteen peasants' farms in Lipka" He moved his hand hesitatingly towards Ruch's snuff-box which the latter offered him at once, saying

"And now there are a couple of score"

"So the land must be divided again and again, whether the harvest be rich or poor Ye cannot make the land to stretch Yet a few more years and there will be too little for us to live upon"

"In truth we are straightened enough as it is now," the smith's wife observed

"Yes, and when our lads marry there will be no more than one acre apiece for their children"

—*The Peasants*, by LADISLAS REYMONT

In a letter written by Thomas Babington Macaulay in 1857, he speaks of the French Revolution as having been caused by overpopulation, and continues "You may think that your country (the United States) enjoys an exemption from these evils, I will frankly own to you that I am of a very different opinion

As long as you have a boundless extent of fertile and unoccupied land, your laboring population will be far more at ease than the laboring population of the Old World, and while that is the case the Jefferson politics may continue to exist without causing any fatal calamity

But the time will come when New England will be as thickly settled as Old England Wages will be as low and will fluctuate as much with you as with us You will have your Manchesters and Birminghams, and in those Manchesters and Birminghams hundreds of thousands of artisans will sometimes be out of work

Then your institutions will be fairly brought to the test It is quite plain that your government will never be able to restrain a distressed and discontented majority"

Without Birth Control where are the Japanese of the future to live? They cannot stay at home and starve No people as brave as the Japanese will die or suffer without a struggle

But unless the Japanese have only one baby in the future where they now have two, where will the other one go without having to fight for his place in the sun? The problem of the surplus population of Japan is the problem before the world, demanding solution RODERICK O MATHESON in *Liberty*, June 26th

Under given pressure a sponge will soak up and hold just so much water, under a given pressure from standards of living the conditions of human existence will soak up and hold just so much population

In China there are four hundred million persons and little wealth (wealth), in the United States there are but one hundred and ten million and great wealth In China a family may live an entire year on the worth of one hundred dollars, but in the United States the standard of living is higher, seventeen hundred dollars, we are told, represents for a family of five the minimum of subsistence Were the people of the United States to become content with a Chinese standard of material existence, the present annual flow of wealth (could it be converted into simpler forms—food and other fundamentals) would support a population of one billion seven hundred million If the Chinaman, on the other hand, were to raise his standard of living to our luxurious level, but twenty-two million Chinese persons would survive—unless, of course, the annually available wealth were also increased

Now we have our formula complete Let us state it in so many words

The size of a population varies directly with amelioration of the conditions of existence, and inversely with the level of the prevailing standard of living

—EZRA BOWEN in *The New Republic*

This story told in the Detroit (Mich) *Free Press* is said to come from a member of the Denver Birth Control League

Even in Theodore Roosevelt's life his race suicide theories got many a jolt Once the great man was bear-hunting in the backwoods He stopped at a backwoodsman's cabin for a snack, and while he was eating his snack he stared out of the window, so as not to miss any bears that might be passing

"My goodness me" he said to the backwoodsman "Haven't you got any better sense than to let that little child out there play with a loaded gun? Why, it's a terribly dangerous thing"

"Aw, I dunno," the backwoodsman drawled And then he bit off a chew from a plug of tobacco and added

"I got sixteen other children"

Contraception has done its worst and to move forward in the same direction would now lessen its evil consequences on future generation —LEONARD DARWIN in *The Need for Eugenic Reform*

# BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

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

VOL X

AUGUST, 1926

No 8

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## BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

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# Birth Control Review

VOL. X

AUGUST, 1926

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## EDITORIAL

THE outstanding news of this month's issue is the remarkable report of the World's Migration Congress, which convened on June 22nd in London. The attention of the Congress was largely fixed on the question of over-population, and the consequent evils of lower standards of living and war. This is not the only Congress which has tackled these problems, and has considered the alternative offered by Birth Control. But it is the first time that a congress definitely belonging to the International Labor movement has turned its attention seriously to the possibilities offered by deliberate restriction of population. The World's Migration Congress was called by two international labor organizations—the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Labor and Socialist International. The problem immediately before the Congress was that offered by the increasingly strict regulation of immigration by many great countries, especially, the United States and Australia, and the consequent narrowing of the openings for surplus populations, such as those of Italy and Japan. But the Congress took a wide view of the subject and realized that for a constructive program there must be some provision for the regulation of population increase. An account of the Congress is given in our news columns. Every advocate of Birth Control will rejoice in the new and constructive attitude of organized labor towards the population question shown at the Congress.



A REMARKABLE piece of research work has been carried through in the Laboratory of the Clinical Research Department of the American Birth Control League. The work was done by Miss B. W. Johnson, A. M., under the direction and with the aid and advice of Dr. C. C. Little,

President of the University of Maine. The subjects of the experiment were mice—pedigreed mice from the Laboratory of Dr. Little—and the object was to test the comparative value of rapid and more deliberate breeding. A report of this remarkable experiment will be presented to the readers of the *Birth Control Review* in the September issue. It is sufficient to state here that the result showed conclusively that rapid breeding is adverse to the health of the offspring, and results in an enormous infant mortality rate among the mice. As, in many respects, the same biological laws govern both mice and men, the experiment confirms the contentions of the American Birth Control League in regard to proper spacing of children and the need for deliberate control of the birthrate.



THE New York Board of Education found itself in an awkward predicament at its meeting on June 25th. On the calendar was a recommendation that the by-laws be amended to limit married teachers to two maternity leaves of absence. How the recommendation found its way on to the calendar was not explained. One teacher had recently been so bold as to ask a fourth maternity leave of absence. This was inconvenient, and the Board found that these maternity leaves of absence had been steadily increasing in numbers. In 1920-21 there were 201, in the last school year there were 342 and up to date in the current year there had been 393. But a limitation of maternity leaves of absence could be construed as a very practical encouragement of Birth Control, and already the Board of Education had turned down the application of the American Civil Liberties Union, largely because of the Union's alleged "encouragement of propaganda for Birth Control."

**T**HERE is always an easy way out of such a dilemma. The entire recommendation was withdrawn "on account of improper wording." Superintendent O'Shea explained that its withdrawal was not due to the protest of President Ryan that such a by-law would amount to an inducement to married teachers, who wished to retain their standing and their salary grade, to limit their offspring to two children. Personally, however, Superintendent O'Shea expressed himself as being emphatically opposed to such a restriction. "I regard all restrictions against motherhood," he declared, "as against public policy." The incident shows, however, the need, both as regards the welfare of the schools and the freedom of the teacher, that motherhood should be deliberate and not accidental, and should be undertaken by free choice, with just such periods of absence from outside duties as are found necessary for the health of the mother and child. In commenting on the incident, *American Medicine* in its June issue, remarks that the Board, by withdrawing the proposal made "perhaps unwittingly, one of the sanest contributions to the theory of Birth Control of recent years." "A married woman teacher" it adds, "may now feel free to raise as large a family as she and her husband see fit. It is doubtful whether any teacher, in view of her earning capacity, can afford a very large family, for the fact that she remains on the teaching staff shows that the family revenue is inadequate to feed many mouths, but the principle thus established is an excellent one." This very wide step releases a large group of intelligent women for a role which they can exercise only for the benefit of society."



**A**N item from Washington, printed in the *New York Times* of July 14th, has been going the rounds of the newspapers of the country. It was written by a young man living in Chicago, who has become unexpectedly famous from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from northernmost Maine to Florida. And all because he addressed an inquiry to the government which concerned not hogs or corn, or even oysters or rabbits, but ideals of marriage and eugenic babies. "I am a young man," read the letter to the Department of Domestic Affairs, "and am about to be married. Could you be kind enough to send me any literature in regard to ideals which the government advocates toward marriage and the size of the family the government wants one to have?" The letter created a flurry, for there

was no department whose duty it was to furnish such information. In fact the government had never thought it worth while to secure information of the kind demanded, or to formulate ideals. The Labor Department might have answered that the government had long since adopted the family of five as a standard in calculating a living wage, and that the unfortunate young man who indulged in more than three children would have to feed the fourth and fifth at the expense of the rest of the family. But beyond this rough estimate, nothing has been done to aid those modern young people who would like knowledge and forethought better than ignorance and haphazard. Nor can anything be done, so long as those in authority frown on Birth Control, and refuse to sanction responsible and deliberate parentage. And yet this young man's inquiry was eminently sane and worthy of the attention of our enlightened statesmen.



**T**HE International Birth Control Federation, whose President is Dr C C Little, President of the University of Michigan, has waived its intention of holding the Seventh International Birth Control Conference in Geneva next year, in favor of a World Population Conference, which will be held from August 31st to September 2nd. The Conservatoire de Musique in Geneva has been secured for the Conference, which will meet under the auspices of the leading thinkers and writers on all questions connected with population. Further particulars of the Conference are given in our news columns, and our readers will be kept informed of developments in regard to the program and to the representation expected at the Conference, as the months go by.



**W**E offer our hearty thanks to those of our readers who have responded to our appeal for newspaper clippings, and also for copies of the January, 1924 issue of the *BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW*. We should be glad to receive more copies of that issue, and we are always eager for clippings from the newspapers of all parts of the United States and from foreign countries. We are also glad of quotations from books and periodicals bearing on Birth Control. It is our endeavor to keep in touch with all aspects of the movement for the regulation of population, and we are grateful to our readers who help us in this endeavor.

# Unnatural Selection and its Resulting Obligations

By C C LITTLE, D Sc

I WANT to take up a few aspects of this question which I am afraid will be more or less in the nature of platitudes to a good many of you, but they have helped me in thinking out the relationship between what should be the every-day function of an experimental biologist and what should, I think, be the effort on the part of that individual toward working for social progress as well

I am one of those who believe, of course, in the general fact of tendency of all living organisms to overproduce. Any biologist knows that to be a fact and knows that man is not an exception to that general rule. In fact, however, man does not exercise or does not allow the exercise of the principles of natural selection. Man's modern civilization has done practically all that it can to eliminate the factor of natural selection and it is quite proper I believe, from a point of view of Christian ideals, that should be so. Of course, natural selection is a cruel taskmaster. It doesn't bother about the sentimental or emotional side of life whatever. It eliminates the weak, it encourages the fit or the strong.

We all know that modern civilization doesn't do that. All of you, I am sure, have come either in direct or indirect contact with charitable organizations and the whole machinery of aid for the weak which human civilization has built up. That being the case, it seems to me desirable to think over in some degree of detail what our obligations are for upsetting a great natural law. When man upsets a natural law he must perforce take on his shoulders more than the ordinary degree of obligation. It is a dangerous proposition to start, but we have started it, we are on our way practicing that principle of interfering with natural selection. Now let us see whether we are doing it intelligently and honestly and openly and to the best of our ability.

## *The Eugenist's Demands*

The eugenist is very clear on the two facts which have been given you this morning: that the production of the unfit should be discouraged or stopped, and that the production of the fit should be encouraged and possibly forced, although I don't believe that the latter is practicable. The eugenist, however, is only human and he must realize, if he is a thinking man, that to say to one group of people, "You are not fit to reproduce," and to another, "You are," requires a good deal

of self-appreciation. You must be pretty sure of yourself before you can say who can or who cannot reproduce.

It seems to me that the efforts toward sterilization which are now fairly widespread (these efforts are more or less general) have in them a great deal of merit, but they are a rather crude implement. They are, so to speak, biological prohibition, instead of biological temperance and to an American audience that requires no further elaboration, I am quite sure. The two terms are quite familiar in all of our minds.

The proper opportunity for the dissemination of contraceptive methods is biological temperance. There is no doubt about that. It leaves it up to the individual, if he is intelligent, to exercise what his intelligence tells him to be the best use of such methods for his or her particular purpose in life. It leaves open the almost compulsory use of those methods, if it is deemed desirable by the medical authorities, and it leaves open as a last resort this sort of blunt-edged axe—sterilization—if the individual is incapable of solving his or her own problems. But to have sterilization without the finer tool of contraception seems to me to be an admission that civilization is not yet educated to a point where we can look for much real, permanent improvement.

## *Prevention or Cure?*

I have said that sterilization is a blunt method. It really is an attempt to cure an existing condition, and not to prevent. That may sound peculiar to you, but as a matter of fact you must have your defective already produced and a public charge and a public obligation, before sterilization is thought of. That is curative, not preventative, and sterilization does not reach and probably never can reach the type of individual who is a real menace to civilization, and at the same time one of its law-abiding and useful citizens. That sounds like a paradox, but the world is full of them. I refer to an individual, normal himself, a good, law-abiding, constructive member of a community, but who carries the hereditary trait in his germ cells of epilepsy or feeble-mindedness or insanity. Such an individual can't possibly be sterilized under our existing scheme of things. It is asking too much. It isn't fair to ask that individual to give up in essential all of his or her sex life by a sterilization involving the

removal of the sex glands, and it is asking too much of that individual to run the risk of over-balancing the instincts by an operation which does not involve removal but merely ligation of the ducts of the sex glands

You see, that person, although he may be normal, if he carries one of these non-eugenic traits is apt to be a person whose nervous organization and whose physiological organization cannot stand over-much strain. You cannot afford to work out an operative technique, as I see it, on an individual of that kind and run a chance of over-balancing an already too finely-drawn nervous relationship in that individual. Therefore, contraceptive methods remain as the chief instrument by which an individual of that kind can be left a constructive member of society. Recognizing as they would their own potentiality for evil in the next generation, the chances are extremely good that they would use wisely and intelligently and for the great good of civilization contraceptive methods. That type of person will never be reached, I believe, or will not be reached within hundreds of years by any method of sterilization, because he himself is normal

#### *Artificial Selection*

Artificial selection is certainly coming. It is the basis of all eugenic movements. Dr Drysdale spoke about it this morning. He said that he has realized how in England the problem at present is one chiefly of quality. I should like to draw your attention to how very true that is as applied to this country. No country has ever tried such a biological experiment, either in its domesticated plants or animals or in its population, as we are trying at the present time. We have an immense diversity of racial elements in this country, and we don't know, possibly, how they are going to mix. We don't know, possibly, what the hybrid resulting is going to be. We don't know whether some of the elements are mixable. We don't know whether we can mix them at all, or whether they will segregate like oil from water and form here and there in the great cities little ghettos, like regions which stand off from our civilization and never will mix. We don't know anything about it. It is much as though a small boy was given charge of a soda fountain and he looked at all the various apparatus which squirt out the syrups of different kinds and he saw cherry, pineapple, chocolate, coffee, vanilla, strawberry, raspberry, lemon and orange, and he said, "Aren't we a great and wonderful soda fountain? I am going to have some fun," whereupon he proceeded to mix together various combinations of these different syrups. Some of them fused and some of them didn't, some made a lovely combination and some gave a most unpleasant feeling.

#### *Birth Control*

Birth Control — contraceptive methods — says, "You shall make those mixtures as nearly as possible in controlled quantities. You shan't turn up the nozzles of all those things and squirt them all together just as hard as you can into a great Niagara-like stream of syrup of all sorts of flavors. You shall go slow. You must take your time and do this in an orderly way so that if one mixture turns out to be extremely bad it can be poured off without too much waste or suffering, it can be gotten rid of."

It is a logical, sane brake on the speed of civilization, and if any country ever needed it, if any country was faced with the absolute necessity of going slow and studying as it goes, we are that country as we stand today.

I happen to be working in a part of the country where that problem is not as acute as it is here in New York. I happen to be working in Maine where the proportion of the old New England stock is very, very high. That, as I said here the other day in discussion, I consider an anchor, one of those places in the soda fountain where the label reads, for instance, "Yankee Stock." I don't want to see that particular element in the situation mixed up, or mauled up. I want to keep it the way a chemist would prize a store of chemically pure substance that he wants to use for testing, that he wants to use for definite purposes when a certain element is needed. But it is very difficult to bring that about. The whole tendency is to grow, to grow in size, to import foreign labor to run the abandoned farms of man. The whole tendency is to consider the economic rather than the biological viewpoint.

#### *Chances of Survival*

I should like to say, in closing, that there is one general principle in this matter of Birth Control which I think we can all see together, whether we are sociologists or economists or biologists, or no matter what we are, that is somewhat as follows. The history of all forms of life and of all forms of social or economic organization shows that in event of a crisis, in event of a changing environment of any kind, that organism, or that social organization, or that economic organization persists which has to its environment, to its surroundings a simple relationship. The more complicated the relationship, the less chance of survival if the environment changes, the more specialized and the more beautifully adapted to a certain habit of life, the more difficult to subsist if there is a change in the surroundings which upsets that habit of life. Among the insects, for instance, we find lots of forms

(Continued on page 257)

# Ordinary Days in China

By HELEN W BROMFIELD

"THE poor we have with us always" It is only necessary to visit one Chinese city to form a real conception of what it means to be genuinely poor

This year there is the usual annual famine Before the snow had melted on the hillsides, it was no uncommon sight to see thousands of families tearing the bark from trees and digging in the ground for grass and herb roots, or filling their starving stomachs with "Goddess of Mercy clay"—which temporarily relieves the gnawing pain The sufferer who indulges in this edible earth soon passes into delirium and death Sometimes it is a flood that devastates the grain lands, this year it is a long drought—the most severe in seventy years

China, with its half-billion population, needs no famine to produce its quota of beggars It is estimated that one-fifth the population of Peking are professional or occasional mendicants Since the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty in 1911, revolution has followed revolution in almost ceaseless routine This state of agitation has driven thousands from their homes and villages Aimless in their peregrinations, they gravitate to the centers where food would logically ordinarily be most plentiful—the cities These impecunious refugees may or may not return to their former place of abode "We have no food" is the epitome of their wail

The bandit-soldiery of China is also responsible for increasing the poverty of these occasional alms-seekers Marauders from military organizations have over-run the impoverished farms, looting, sacking, destroying, and leaving wholesale poverty, destitution and death in their wake

## Child Beggars

Swarms of children are sent into the by-ways to solicit "cumsha" They may scatter into groups of two or more, for a lone offspring is rare among the very poor The foreign settlements have, until recently, been fairly immune from invasion by these undesirables, though the native quarters teem with them It is unnecessary to possess an extraordinary imagination to visualize the conditions that would exist were the Foreign Settlements—Shanghai for instance—to have their extra-territorial privileges withdrawn

These hordes of beggars are almost the first vivid impression a tourist receives of Peking In passages frequented by foreigners they are lined up like pickets in a fence All are dirty, some cripp-

pled, some deformed, thousands blind from birth or rendered so for the purpose of being utilized as beggars, for China still capitalizes her mendicants Women unable to support themselves and capable of reproducing only imbecile progeny, continue to fill the infantile ranks who prey upon the charitable It is quite impossible to discriminate between the filthy rags of their scant covering and the exposed portions of their bodies From the depths of a muddy rag-pile or the interior of a tattered scarecrow comes the dismal whine, "We have no food"

## Small Change

These wretches frequent every quarter of the city Exchange booths, where, for convenience, one changes money into smaller denominations, are certain to be popular rendezvous for these cringing humans For expedience in the settlement of trivial accounts, such as ricksha fares, it is imperative to have always on hand a small amount of subsidiary currency, in addition to a quantity of the large copper cents which are the bane of every foreigner At the present time a silver Mexican or Yuan Shikai dollar may be sub-divided at the money exchange shop into six twenty-cent pieces and seven or eight coppers The twenty-cent pieces re-exchanged net forty copper cents each, each cent has a value of ten cash When Peking was inflicted with a recognized "Beggars' Guild" it was customary for a delegation to visit every shop in the city once a day At least one cash was levied upon the shop-keeper, and unless this or a greater sum was forthcoming to appease the demands of the organization, the mob remained at the door of the shop importuning the owner in such vociferous tones that his trade deserted him

No temple is without this rabble who hope to participate in the generosity of the superstitious They grovel in the dust, kow-towing, chin-chinning, extending claw-like hands defiled by every known and a few indefinable species of filth and grime Food pails and wicker baskets are held out before one Not only are the inland cities infected in this manner, but steamers anchoring at river ports are surrounded by squawking, sampan people who paddle alongside and reach up on the end of a long bamboo pole a receptacle in which they hope to have food or money deposited

Some of these outcasts spring from families who have been professional mendicants for many generations They are promiscuously interbred The idea of segregation has never for one moment en-

tered the minds of officials in whose power lies the remedy for abolishing the evil, or the establishment of institutions for precluding further propagation of these undesirable masses. The majority suffer from one or more diseases. Leprosy is a prevalent ailment among them. Victims in all its hideous stages drag themselves along the road crawling and writhing under the feet of pedestrians and the wheels of vehicular traffic. Cripples there are in multitudes who haunt the thoroughfares. One wonders if in all China there is an individual sound in body and limb. Some of these cripples are genuinely disabled, others merely fakirs. A legless beggar will frequently grow these missing members and develop surprising agility in scampering away at sight of a policeman.

### *Dirt and Diseases*

Every malady enumerated in the list of human afflictions is to be found amongst this rabble, who roam about at will through Chinese cities, spreading dirt, evil and contamination. Persons having every indication of suffering from small-pox hold out their hands for alms. Children in all stages of this disease are wrapped in a red blanket and carried about by their mothers who display no concern at the condition of their offspring. Amongst the poor it is understood that exposure to small-pox is quite the procedure for infants. "S'pose small baby die, maskee, s'pose large man die, very bad, have cost plenty chow, plenty clothes, plenty money. Small baby no cost much money, maskee." In other words, the cost of rearing is the prime consideration. If the child is predestined to die of small-pox, economic pressure favors an early arrival at the inevitable.

Kidnapping is a flourishing industry in which "loafers" and others engage. The gigantic ramifications of this criminal class are becoming better known in recent years, since the native population have acquired sufficient confidence in the Municipal Police to report the kidnapping of their friends or children, who are seized and held for ransom. Although the price of redemption is paid whenever possible, there are frequent failures to produce the exorbitant sums demanded, and the victim is, as often as not, returned either mutilated or dead, or both, even after the ransom money has been paid. A common practice is to send an eye or an ear, sometimes a hand, when the first demand is not forthcoming. Wealthy members of firms are by no means immune from this form of blackmail. The compradore of a British business house—one of the oldest foreign hong's in China—was recently seized when entering his motor car to go to his office. Seldom is a kidnapper apprehended. In the foreign settlements they are severely dealt with when

brought before the courts. Sentences by the Shanghai Mixed Court admit of no appeal. Decisions are rendered by a foreign consular representative and a Chinese magistrate in unanimous agreement. Native courts are famous (or infamous) for squeeze. The outcome of a case is a foregone conclusion before it is heard by the magistrate. The best "fixer" is the best winner.

### *The Opium Menace*

Where dry America has her problem of undesirable citizens engaged in bootlegging, China is confronted with the greater and infinitely more serious menace in the importation and growth of opium. The Empress Dowager Tzu-hsi, made an attempt to suppress the use of opium in 1906. As early as 1729—nearly two hundred years before—an edict had been issued from the imperial throne prohibiting the sale of the drug and the opening of opium houses. Foreign interests eventually became aroused, and an international opium commission met in Shanghai on February 1, 1909. A conference for the discussion of the situation was held in 1911, at the Hague, in July, 1912, six months later, a second conference took place, and a third on June 15, 1914.

Vladivostok and some other foreign controlled ports along the Asiatic coast, being under the jurisdiction of other than Chinese nationality, were not affected by this restriction. A flourishing smuggling trade sprang up in consequence. Opium, heroin, and cocaine, ostensibly destined for one of these foreign ports, through connivance with the ships' crews, managed to become "lost in transit." The contraband was not to be found when the ship arrived at its destination, which means that it was unloaded from the steamer at some pre-arranged point in the vicinity of Shanghai. From time to time syndicates are unearthed, in which millions of taels are involved, and whose promoters are the despicable lower class of foreigners and Chinese, whose wealth renders them reasonably safe in native courts through their ability to bribe, but in the Mixed Court their chances are decidedly unfavorable. Rival factions ascertain the probable arrival of contraband cargo and set about to devise some means of intercepting it *en route*. This incentive to murder and banditry was little known in the days of the "Old Buddha," but today is prevalent in every corner of the republic. Shanghai in particular is suffering from an epidemic of it.

The hue and cry about child labor in foreign mills is purely propaganda to deflect trade from foreign factories to those operated by Chinese owners. Where foreign owners pay two and three copers an hour for child labor, the native mill, engag-

(Continued on page 251)

# Birth Control at the Paris Congress

(Reported by EDITH HOW-MARTYN)

**B**IRTH CONTROL was not officially mentioned at the Congress of the International Suffrage Alliance which has recently met in Paris. The laws of hospitality made any formal discussion impossible. French women not only have no votes, parliamentary or municipal, but a law passed in 1920 makes any propaganda for Birth Control illegal. In spite of this obstacle, those of us who feel that that it is ultimately the most vital of all questions not only to feminists but to the race, need not be depressed by losing such a chance as the Congress offered for a frank discussion of the problem. Such a state of affairs in the country which has led the world in the practice of Birth Control is regrettable. Surely it would be to the interest of France to encourage other countries to follow her example and to have populations with such a small increase that internally it is easy to maintain, and to improve the standard of living, while externally they are no menace to their neighbors. Enfranchised women will more easily see this and will laugh at the idea of forbidding discussion and propaganda on such a fundamental part of the feminist demand as Birth Control.

## *Political Enfranchisement First*

When in Latin Europe and South America and Asia, women are citizens and not politically slaves, the impetus to the spread of the Birth Control movement will be immense. The women themselves who gathered from forty countries of the world, representing all the continents, to discuss some of their common problems were the best guarantee that the conscious regulation of the birth rate would in the near future become the most vital means for human welfare. They are hovering near the question, they are getting warm, as the children say when someone is near the hidden object, and before long they will see they cannot forever discuss child welfare, protection of infancy, insurance for mothers, family allowances, the age of consent, the age of marriage, the rights of the married woman, the status and care of the unmarried mother and her child, the equal moral standard, the conditions of prostitution, the need for women police and in general all the laws and customs which discriminate unfairly against women, without coming sooner or later, and the sooner the better, to the bedrock question, to the discussion of the sexual relations of human beings and to the undoubted right of the woman not only to the full control of her sex life but also to the knowledge which gives her the means to decide how, when and under what conditions she will give children to the world.

Unofficially and in private conversations it was evident that thoughtful women in many countries are pondering much over the relations of the sexes, over undesired maternity and over the prevalence of abortion. In Austria, Switzerland and Germany, laws to permit abortion in the early stages of pregnancy have been brought forward. The penalties against abortion have been mitigated in many countries. It has to be made very clear that Birth Control has nothing in common with abortion, and that the proper teaching of Birth Control is the best means of dealing with abortion by making it quite unnecessary. No penalties will deter women, rendered desperate by undesired pregnancies, from resorting to it.

## *The Need for Birth Control*

Birth Control is needed in countries where the population is small as well as where it is large, for as one woman remarked—"if a mother has more children than she can feed and rear properly the total size of the population of her country does not much affect her problem." In England and Hungary Birth Control is on the program of the societies affiliated to the International. In several other countries efforts to put it on the programs are being made.

The Congress demanded the raising of the age of consent to 18, the abolition of the regulation of prostitution, an equal moral standard, women police and world peace.

The open meetings of the Alliance were splendidly attended by the French public, and again and again enthusiasm was aroused to the highest pitch by the fine quality of the speeches and by their sincerity. To old suffrage workers, it seemed familiar enough to have meetings to show that women demanding votes are still women and not some strange kind of monsters, that there really are men holding responsible positions who support votes for women, that women really are indignant at the disabilities imposed on them by the Code Napoleon, but to have a meeting, entirely addressed by women members of Parliament drawn from four continents, was indeed a wonderful dream realized, to have a packed demonstration in favor of peace and a League of Nations, addressed by women from fifteen countries and every continent of the world, seemed indeed a happy omen for the gifts which free women will bring to civilization.

At the next meeting of the Alliance in 1929 the progress of the International movement for Birth Control should be such that its omission from the program would be impossible.



# BIRTH CONTROL THE TRUE EUGENICS

*Mothers Who Refuse to Bear Unfit Children*

*There is only one practical program of Eugenics That is Birth Control A Eugenist, who is not a Birth Controller, preaches a doctrine of despair Compulsory sterilization, compulsory celibacy, compulsory parenthood of the eugenically fit—all these are impracticable and contrary to human nature If we want to check the multiplication of the unfit, let us put the power of choice into the hands of the Mothers No woman wants to bear defective children, but so far women have been helpless in the matter Trust the Mothers, and give them the power of Birth Control These letters show how wisely it would be exercised*

## Bone Deficiency

Michigan

Here is my problem My first baby nearly developed rickets, although I took every precaution and care in regard to her feeding In two years another baby was coming So I made a point of eating all foods that I thought would make bone and avoiding all bone destroying material In spite of all my precautions, my second baby's head was not properly developed, the back bone of the head being absent altogether This may not seem possible, as the doctors at two hospitals have said they never saw anything like it before But if extreme precautions are not taken the brain may be injured before the bone develops

Because of this lack in my body, I am afraid of what might result if I became pregnant again I am afraid of the state the baby might be in I do not wish to run the risk of bearing a deformed or a still-born baby

## Drunken Father's Legacy

Tennessee

God knows, if you only knew what misery I am in and could hear my prayers you would be sorry for me I married when I was seventeen years old, and in ten months I had a baby boy He is just fifteen months old and I will soon be confined again God alone knows how I dread my time My husband is a drinking man, and I am in constant fear of having deformed children, caused by a drunken father We are very poor and I don't want any more children, as I cannot care properly for the one I have Everyone tells me that it is a sin to take anything to keep from being pregnant, but since I have read your book I know better I don't want to destroy my health or my coming baby's by taking any drugs I had rather have this one and keep from being pregnant any more For God's sake help me

## Two Girl Friends

Ohio

I am writing to you not only for myself but for a dear girl friend of mine, who is just 22 years old and has had 3 babies The first baby was born ten months after she was married, and this baby was one year old when the second baby came, and now she has lost the third baby The second baby is very weak and sickly, undernourished and has had the rickets They have spent lots of money to pull this child through The other baby is not healthy either, as both father and mother are weak and sickly The father is just 23 years old They are too young to have good, strong, healthy children Her husband is as good as he can be to her, but they cannot help having so many children as they are ignorant on this subject and don't know how to prevent it This dear girl is run down, very nervous and is simply ruined from having children so close She always has a terrible time having her babies She has been to several doctors for help and they all tell her she is built to have children close, and they also tell her there is no sure preventive to keep from having more children She is almost prostrated and threatens to kill herself if she gets that way again

Now I think it is a sin for doctors to let such a dear soul suffer They sure have no hearts or they would help her She is too young a girl to let die this way They are poor people and she cannot hire any of her work done, she has it all to do herself and works hard from morning until night, when she really is not able to work They have had lots of bad luck, lots of sickness and her husband broke his arm and was not able to work for over two months and they have been trying to live and pay rent on \$2 00 per day My husband and I try to help these young people all we can as they are very dear friends of ours and we pity them as they have a hard way of getting

along Now anything you can send me to help this poor suffering girl will certainly be appreciated by me and a God-send and blessing to her

I will now tell you a little about myself I am 25 years old and my husband 26 years We have been married two years and have no children I am a very small built person 4 feet, 8 inches tall and weigh 95 lbs My husband has taken me to specialists in several large cities here in Ohio and they all tell me I can never have a child in the right way as I am built entirely too small, that the baby would have to be taken from me and then it is likely to kill me and the baby Now these great doctors would not tell me anything to do, all they say is be real careful and not have any babies Well, how can a person, if they are left in ignorance? I really don't think this world is run right

This worries my husband and me both I have a very good husband and a nice home We both love children and would certainly love to have a baby or two, if I could have them properly and if they would be strong, healthy babies But I don't want to die so young and leave my husband I have just gotten over an operation for appendicitis and I almost died then I have always been weak, and have to doctor most all the time I know my children would not be strong, and I think it is a sin for the dear little babies to have to suffer I never thought of the danger of having children, on account of me being so small, before I was married, in fact I did not know about such dangers My husband and I love each other dearly and both of our parents are satisfied and that is why we got married We are not sorry and live very happy, only we have that one great worry

Hope you can do something for my dear girl friend and me, for it certainly is needed and will be appreciated I put her first as she needs it really worse than me We will both do all we can for your good work or anything you ask Oh! if only the doctors would see as you do, it would be a better world to live in and not so much suffering

## Epilepsy

New York

I have five children, the baby is just five months old and I have a little boy that is four years old He is helpless He has epilepsy I am not very strong myself I am afraid to have any more children

## A Daughter's Tragedy

California

I have a daughter who is married She has had two baby boys, the most awful looking things you ever saw, both of them are blind and covered with red blotches

They never could sit up, could not hold their heads up Both of them were exactly alike When they would raise their heads they would drop right down on their chests Oh dear, it is worrying the life out of me and her too He had a disease one time, but I could never find out just what, and I am sure it was an awful one, for just after they were married, my daughter's hair, eyebrows and lashes fell out, and she broke out in awful looking pimples Is there no way so that she can have no more children I feel so sorry for the babies We wanted them so much, but they are such poor little deformed things

## A Deformed Baby

Ohio

I have been married nearly 6 years and am to be confined for the fourth time very shortly My oldest child will only be 4 years and 5 months old at the time of this confinement My first 2 children were strong and healthy and I also had good health after their birth, but the third one which would only have been 1 year old May 30th was badly deformed It had double hare-lip and cleft palate and double inguinal hernia It was in a hospital for 3 months and died there at the age of 6 months My health has been declining since its birth and it is little wonder I dread this confinement realizing the deformity of the last child and my own physical health not being very good

## Helpless at 9 Years Old

Kansas

My baby is 14 months old, and the oldest one of four is 9 and more care than a baby, has always been helpless We do not own a roof over our heads and I am so discouraged I want to die if nothing can be done Can't you help me just once and then I know I can care for myself Ignorance on this all important subject has put me where I am I don't know how to be sure of preventing conception I beg of you to help me and anything I can do to help further your wonderful work I will do, only help me this once I not only have a terrible time when I am confined, but caring for the oldest child preys on my mind so that I fear more defective children Help me please

## A Young Man's Problem

New York

I am a young man, 23 years old, married three years We have one baby girl two years old There is another on the way which I did not wish to have, as I am a habitual drunkard Please tell me what to do to stop drinking and live happy We do not want to have children who would be like me, and I am not rich and don't earn much to have a big family

## Book Reviews

THE INHERITANCE OF ACQUIRED CHARACTERISTICS, by Paul Kammerer Boni and Live-right, New York

PROFESSOR KAMMERER chose wisely when he wrote on the inheritance of acquired characteristics in a manner appealing to those untrained in science. Most people, especially idealists, wish to believe that their acquired virtues, even if accompanied by acquired vices, are passed on to posterity. The author recognizes as the strongest forces against this view the neo-Mendelian and neo-Weismannian reaction to Lamarckism, together with the reaction following the great war. There has come about an intensification of nationalistic and racial consciousness opposed to a theory which teaches "that inheritance—the passing on of proudly referred-to race and caste characteristics—is not everything."

The author groups characteristics into those that reappear generation after generation (hereditary) and those that appear for the first time (acquired). He believes that the latter may become hereditary. He is concerned therefore to prove that the newly acquired traits have never before appeared in the species. He admits that it is "frequently difficult to distinguish between inherited and acquired characteristics."

The biological part of the book (233 pages) is an account of miscellaneous observations and experiments. Exact data are not given, but this is perhaps pardonable in a work of such scope. The experimental biologist would, however, be more interested if a single experiment were planned and performed to critically test the theory under discussion. A careful review of the data would require a publication at least as extensive as the book itself. A few instances must therefore suffice to illustrate the misinterpretations upon which the theory is founded.

Miss Hoge, working on *Drosophila* (the fruit fly) found that a certain race possesses the ability to produce extra legs, if grown at low temperature. Under normal temperature conditions flies of this race develop normally. The capacity to develop extra appendages is inherited as a Mendelian unit in any environment. Low temperature does not affect the hereditary make-up in the least, it merely changes the appearance of individuals. The author distorts the facts to give the impression that any fly may develop extra legs in cold temperature and that such a fly thereafter produces abnormal progeny in any environment. Briefly, that change in temperature has changed hereditary make-up.

Matters of some theoretical interest are attached to certain evidence (?) from grafting experiments by W. Finkler. Heads from mottled specimens of the insect, *Notonecta*, were said to be grafted onto bodies of the common uncolored form. Under certain conditions the white form became subsequently mottled. In this case,

before wasting much thought on theoretical implications, the reviewer would like to see the head transplantation experiment repeated.

The author has spent many years in experimental work with the obstetric toad and the spotted salamander. Reproductive habits in both species and coloration in the salamander have been modified by subjecting the animals to different environmental conditions. The experiments are of interest since they show how environment may modify individual traits. There is also some evidence that the race has been modified in its hereditary composition but the selectionist could well argue that the author, in choosing for breeding individuals showing greater modifications, brought about genetic change by selection.

Nowhere in the book is a single experiment reported showing that hereditary composition differs before and after an individual acquires a certain characteristic. Such evidence and only such can be free from the suspicion of selection, and can establish the theory of Lamarck.

### *Human Applications*

In the eugenical part of the book, covering 106 pages, Kammerer discusses the human application of the theory. He firmly believes that with the "inheritance of acquired characteristics the proud edifice of humanity's progress stands and falls." Democratic and socialistic practices, improvement of conditions for humanity, are considered by some as contrary to Darwinism. "All measures for human welfare, such as medicine and hygiene are to be considered only as obstacles to progress." In contrast to this the author holds that the real Darwinism, like socialism, is a doctrine of "upward development" and must concern itself with masses. "In the light of such an interpretation the theory of Natural Selection is not unsocialistic, for its war-cry, 'let the best man win,' eliminates the prerogatives of birth and money."

Races are modified by environment, "whites and blacks becoming Indianized in America, Europeans in the Far East becoming Mongolized—The hair of African colonists eventually becomes curly." One wonders when reading these statements whether the chief role in racial modification has not been played by crossing rather than by the total of all the energies of nature prevailing in atmosphere and food, in climate and soil. The reviewer has not observed any extensive Indianization of the whites and blacks in America.

The author is in favor of co-operation, of mutual aid, and of child adoption which he considers of little risk since even children of inferior parentage can be greatly improved by proper environment. These factors will permanently improve the human race by developing a spirit of altruism.

As regards reproduction in old age, evil as well as good

may be transmitted. The wealth of experience and wisdom are good, but with these might also be transmitted a state of being blasé and prematurely fatigued. There is, however, held out the possibility of gaining the former while avoiding the latter by means of rejuvenation through glandular treatments. "Propagation at a mature age, after a life crowded with valuable experiences—verily, this would be an ideal realization if, in spite of the number of years lived through, youthful strength still makes this possible."

"Negative" or selective eugenics is favored but we should not stop there. "Positive" or productive eugenics means the utilization of the principle of the inheritance of acquired characteristics. Selection is but a cleansing and sifting process, while new racial acquisitions must be gained by cultivating better habits until these become instinctive.

"The heredity of acquired characteristics is a means, the application of which is left to us. It is left to us to use it for regenerative or degenerative ends." Although the reviewer does not accept the main thesis of the author, he is not to be numbered among the calamity howlers who see in amelioration of conditions for the individual the seeds of ruin for the race. A positive selective eugenics may improve upon natural selection, developing new and higher types. Sterilization, of which the author approves, is an element in the negative phase of selective eugenics. He makes no mention of Birth Control which is a very important factor in the positive program of selective eugenics.

P W WHITING

**THE REPRESSION OF CRIME**, by Harry Elmer Barnes. George H. Doran and Co., New York. \$2.50.

THE folly of a penal system which demoralizes the criminal, and at the same time exposes society to his attacks and depredations is well brought out in this volume. Professor Barnes, however, does not indulge in philippics against our methods of treating criminals. His book is a careful analysis of the whole subject. He traces the history and development of penal codes and methods of dealing with criminals in the American Colonies, with special reference to Pennsylvania, where the greatest developments of the earlier period were made. He then analyzes the present system and shows the impossibility of expecting that the treatment of prisoners of the kind usual in the United States should effect any reform. He points out that each criminal is necessarily free for shorter or longer periods, with the almost certainty that during his periods of freedom he will war upon society, and do his utmost to "get even" for the treatment that society has given him while in prison. Professor Barnes leaves the reader with the clear conviction that only by a complete change in methods of treatment, can we hope to lessen crime, to protect society, and to rehabilitate those criminals who are psychically fit to take their places again in normal social life.

A G P

**THE SCIENCE OF BIOLOGY**, by George G. Scott, Ph.D. T. Y. Crowell, New York.

THE author has tried to cram too much material into one book. He writes in all fields from paleontology, through historic biology, to details of anatomy and classification. Every known "ology" except psychology is touched upon and treated hastily.

Though it contains a tremendous quantity of material, which is illustrated in many cases with sub-freshman quality drawings, the book probably would be most interesting to persons not acquainted with any sort of biology, but who wish to cover an exhaustive resume of the subject.

This volume is a hybrid between a scientific and a popular point of view—not technical or authoritative enough to be referred to by those desiring a scientific outlook, and yet a bit too discouraging to an utter layman.

B W JOHNSON, A M

**GENETICS AND EUGENICS**, by W. E. Castle, Sc.D., Ph.D. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.

DR CASTLE'S book is a splendid type of authoritative reference book in genetics and eugenics. His long service in the field of experimental biology qualifies him to write on this subject. In his preface, Dr. Castle states that he wishes to present in simple and intelligible form, the subject of heredity in man, animals, and plants. This he has succeeded in doing in an excellent compilation of recent scientific achievements in experimental biology. The book also supplies a fairly extensive bibliography.

In reading Chapter XXVII (Are Unit-Characters [Genes] Constant or Variable?) there is just a nuance of Professor Castle's old idea of the possibility of modifiability of the gene. Inasmuch as he spent many years on the hooded rat experiment in the belief that he was getting this modification, rather than simply an effect of selection, it would be surprising if he were willing to entirely relinquish the idea without conclusive personal conviction. In spite of many startling present-day experimental results, the majority of scientists, however, still stick to the belief that the nature of the gene is entirely unchangeable.

B W J

**UNDERSTANDING OUR CHILDREN**, by Frederick Pierce. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.

THIS is a volume by a practical consulting psychologist, to whom hundreds of parents have come for scientific ideas and methods for adjusting both the normal and the difficult child to its environment. In it Frederick Pierce outlines in a lucid manner, accompanied by illuminating instances, the mental content of the child's nature from infancy through adolescence, and shows how the intelligent and informed parent can develop the child's character in a constructive manner and a progressive direction.

ALISON HASTINGS

# “The Nation’s Backbone”

By LOUIS ADAMIC

## PART I

AT the time he married Minnie, Joe was a young fisherman, among the best of them along the coast of Southern and Lower Californias. His father had come to the coast from Italy in the ‘eighties, and after settling in San Pedro, then an insignificant seaport, had gone into the fishing business. The old man was a pioneer of the now thriving fishing industry in San Pedro harbor and had started his boys, of whom Joe was the oldest, in fishing and marketing as soon as their years permitted.

Joe now had a fair-sized fishing smack and a set of good nets, not quite paid for yet, it is true, but being paid off gradually with the profits of his catches. Besides, he had a nearly paid for lot in a promising part of San Pedro and had close to a thousand dollars in the bank. Life looked good to Joe—that is, if he ever stopped to think about life, for Joe, with his youth and health, was a creature of the moment, of instincts. As to Minnie, his seventeen-year-old Italian-American bride, she shared most of Joe’s notions about things.

Joe was a hard-working boy—everybody said that. And he was a good boy—good to his mother, the dark-faced, fiery-eyed Italian woman who had brought him up in the fear of God and made him go to church every Sunday, to attend mass and hear the priest, and to confession and communion as often as she thought was necessary for the ultimate salvation of his immortal soul.

In short, Joe was one of the fellows who constitute the backbone of this matchless nation of ours. He was an up-an’-comin’ young fisherman, a faithful husband to Minnie, and a good father as children began to troop into life.

And when Joe and Minnie were wed a little over seven years, the Lord—who, in His inscrutable wisdom, is interested in young and properly married couples with the view of continuing the human race in general and this incomparable melting pot in particular—blessed them with a pair of twins, thereby boosting the number of their children, all at once, from five to seven.

On the morning following the birth of the twins Minnie lay in bed, her young-oldish face haggard and yellow, her dark eyes large, liquid and sunk deep into the sockets, her black oily hair loose and straggly, and the bare arm that lay exposed on the red quilt flabby and weary. Close by her side re-

posed the latest additions to the family, wrapped in white rags and a gray blanket with yellow borders, and alongside the bed stood a dilapidated baby carriage containing an infant thirteen months of age.

Joe stood at the foot of the bed, showing little enthusiasm for the new members. He realized, at least vaguely, that they were in no way responsible for their coming, that, indeed, he himself was in no slight measure to blame for it, but he could not feel happy about them.

“Yuh aw’right, Minnie?” he asked the woman in bed, his face drawn with concern.

“Oh, guess so,” answered Minnie, weakly. “Yuh be aw’right, Minnie. Be up an’ round soon. How’s—how’re the babies?”

“’Sleep,” said Minnie, briefly. Then “Where th’ chil’re’n, Joe?”

But before Joe could answer there was a sudden crash in the adjoining room, followed by a shriek then a wail.

“Jesus, Joe, see what happen now!” cried Minnie, terrified, half rising in her bed.

Joe hurried out, a hard unuttered oath in his breast. As he opened the door he saw the dining-room flooded. The children had overturned a portable tub full of water in which the nurse had bathed the newly-borns a few hours before and which they had neglected to empty and put away. The five-year-old Tony was fairly drenched with the unclean ill-smelling water, and now wailed in discomfort. Joey and Minnie stood around in bewildered, half-amused silence, prepared to flee instantly, but still awaiting developments on the spot, while the three-year-old Antoinette sat in the water on the floor, splashing about and shrieking delightedly.

Joe surveyed the scene for a moment from the doorway, then closed the door, and was about to begin an investigation of the calamity when Fanny entered from the kitchen.

Fanny was his sister-in-law, the wife of his youngest brother. She had come to Joe’s two days before to take care of the children and attend to the household work during Minnie’s confinement.

“What happened now?” cried Fanny. “Oh, my Lord!”—noticing the overturned tub and water on the floor.

“Who did it?” demanded Joe sternly, grabbing Tony’s wet arm.

"He did it, papa, hisself," volunteered Joey, while Tony continued to wail

"God in Heaven!" exclaimed Fanny, picking up the little girl from the floor and placing her on a chair "They're drivin' me crazy!"

"Not s' loud, Fanny," pleaded Joe in a low tone, motioning toward Minnie's room Fanny gave him a long, contemptuous stare, which upset him for a while "Aw'right, get th' hell out in th' yard!" he then ordered the children "An', Joe, watch out they don' go in th' street See th' gate's shut"

"You ain't gonna chase 'm out like that—all wet—are you?" demanded Fanny, seizing Tony's hand, and glaring at Joe with her dark indignant eyes, her lips twitching with the desire to give him a piece of her mind "He'd catch cold, sure 's he's alive! Change his clo'hes, an' Antoinette's too!"

Joe complied meekly, and after seeing the kids safely into the yard, where he told them to stay and behave, he found himself on the back porch facing Fanny, whose dark, large face was at the moment animated by an expression that threw Joe into a panic Fanny was a robust young woman, and as she stood there, her arms akimbo, she glared fiercely at him, her thick tongue searching for words with which to express her rage

"Say," she burst out at last, "you're the biggest boob I ever seen! You go an' get twins as if you didn't have a big enough family already Twins! An' poor Minnie's all in—all yella an' blue in 'er face Don' know whatsamarer with you wops Ain't got no consideration for nobody, not e'en you'self Ain't sa'isfied t' have a new baby every year, but two—maybe three, nex' time!"

Fanny would have gone on her with her speech, had not the nurse, who returned at this moment, to Joe's relief, interrupted her

## PART II

**T**HEN for days Joe was perplexed by thoughts the like of which had not disturbed his mind before Fanny continued to berate him for what she considered his inborn wop ambition to have a large family or, perhaps, his stupidity in connection with providing himself with offspring Besides, there were other people who began to irritate Joe with remarks about the twins

"Yuh kinda strong, eh, Joe?" said one of the men at Fish Harbor "Well, t'at's not'ing—my woman she one time had t'ree—treeples, but t'ey die, all t'ree t'ey die"

And other men at the Fish Harbor, Italians and Dalmatians, kidded him about his success in raising a family, at which Joe smiled, but quite mirthlessly,

resenting their talk with all the ferocity of his Latin nature, but he controlled himself, with a good deal of effort, knowing from experience that the best way to stop vexing talk was to pretend to like it

"Oh, 'lo, Joe, old boy, how's tricks? Twins aw'-right, eh? Well, maybe do still better nex' time, what yuh say, Joe?"

Or "'Lo, Joe! Say, yuh're righ' there with th' goods when it come to do a job, I tella the worl' 'Atta boy, Joe, yuh b'lieve in fixin' it up f'r fair when yuh're at it—yuh sure do! Haw-haw-haw!"

These remarks tantalized Joe, for he was none too quick witted, he could seldom think of anything suitable to say, so he just smiled and bit his tongue

About this time he was beginning to realize that he was rather badly off financially Two of the children had had measles a month before the birth of the twins, which had put a hole in his pocket Now the expense of the nurse, the doctor, and the rest He needed a new net, his boat should be put on the ways, the engine needed overhauling, payments had to be made on the house, the flivver, the new gas stove, the children must have clothing, Christmas was coming, they would have to have a new baby carriage, and he would have to give something to the priest who would christen the twins

"Sure 's hell!" Joe mumbled to himself

Then suddenly one day, shortly after Minnie had got up and the babies had been properly baptized, Joe came to a decision that bewildered him even more Minnie and he would not have any more children! These twins were the last Seven was enough for any woman to have and for any man to support In fact, if one considered everything seven were too many—a burden

Joe confidently believed, indeed knew, that he and Minnie would bring no more children into the world He knew that there was a method of preventing the birth of unwanted children, though he was unfamiliar with the technique He had come sufficiently in contact with the sinful world to know that there was a safe and sure way of doing that He decided to have a talk with Minnie, for he suspected that in order to practice Birth Control successfully he would have to have her co-operation

But Joe could not bring himself to discuss with his wife this, to him, all-important matter In his mind hovered the dismaying thought that it was a sin, a mortal sin, to even think of such a thing, something monstrously immoral, wrong before God and man, and he feared that it would be enormously more wicked of him to even suggest such an evil thought to Minnie, who was a good, religious God-fearing woman

(To be continued)

## News Notes

### UNITED STATES

#### New York

FROM headquarters of the American Birth Control League in New York comes the announcement of a World Population Conference to be held in Geneva next year. The date of the Conference is August 31st-September 2, 1927. It will be held in the Conservatoire de Musique, Geneva, under the presidency of Dr C C Little, President of the University of Michigan and also President of the International Birth Control League. Other officers of the Conference are Mrs Margaret Sanger and Dr C V Drysdale of England, Honorary Secretaries, Mrs Juliet B Barrett Rublee of New York and Mr Clinton Chance of England, Honorary Treasurers, and Mrs Edith How-Martyn, Conference Secretary. The Program Committee includes Professor Raymond Pearl, of Johns Hopkins, Professor Edward M East of Harvard, President C C Little of Michigan University, Dr Whittredge Williams of Johns Hopkins, Professor Wesley C Mitchell, Professor Henry F Fairchild, and Professor Franklin H Giddings.

The Conference will meet under the auspices of leading scientists and scientific organizations of many countries. It will be, in effect, a conclave of the medical, biological, sociological, ethical and statistical authorities of the world, who have gone far in the study of the population problem, but who have never before assembled at a common meeting table to exchange their views and co-ordinate their knowledge. The attention of all those interested in the various technical phases underlying the problem as a whole is called to this international meeting and their co-operation is earnestly requested.

It is planned to have each section presided over by eminent authorities in each particular field and so to arrange the meetings that all branches of science represented will have an opportunity of contact with each other.

#### New Jersey

THE story of the Riverside Birth Control League, told in the following personal letter, is of great interest. It shows how any earnest believer in Birth Control can arouse interest in her community and set on foot a movement which, from small beginnings, will attain to large importance and usefulness. The letter is from Mrs Laura A Winkelspecht, President of the Camden League. It reads:

"It was during the summer of 1923 that a friend of mine called my attention to the advertisement

in a magazine of the book called "Woman and the New Race," by Margaret Sanger. We sent for the book and both read it. After reading it, I wrote to Mrs Sanger and, shortly after, joined the American Birth Control League. I soon realized that the Birth Control movement was the finest movement I had ever known of, and I began telling all my friends about it and got several of them to join the American Birth Control League. I wrote for free literature and gave it out.

In March 1924, I visited a friend in Camden, N J, whom I had gotten to join the American Birth Control League. There was to be a Birth Control meeting in the Y M C A that evening, so we both went to it. The subject was new to nearly all the people there, but a branch of the American Birth Control League was organized, as the Camden Branch. My friend, Mrs Shaeffer, and I joined the Branch and Mr Everett J Meves, who was elected Secretary, offered to lecture for any one who would get an audience in their home. I spoke to a few of my neighbors and friends in Riverside and got seven to promise to come, but when the evening of the lecture arrived there were seventeen in the audience. Mr Meves spoke and was favorably received. Later I again opened my home for a Birth Control meeting, and Mr Meves spoke to an audience of about 35.

In January 1925, we held a meeting at my house to organize a Riverside, N J, Branch of the American Birth Control League. We completed organization in February, 1925. I was elected President, Mrs Freda Lecony, Vice-President, Mrs Clara Carruthers, Secretary. Meetings were held at my home about once a month during the cool weather. At our last election of officers, I was again chosen President, Mrs Ely of Bridgeboro, N J, Vice-President, and Mrs Lecony, Secretary.

I made a house to house canvass in Riverside several afternoons, talking to the people about Birth Control, and getting them to sign the Birth Control petition to the Legislature. I also visited some people in Delanco, Beverly, Bridgeboro and Riverton. I succeeded in getting about 225 signatures on our petition. Among those who signed were doctors, nurses, a lawyer, a Methodist minister, some members of our Board of Education, business men and other citizens.

I visited doctors in Riverside, Delanco, Riverton, Beverly and Mt Holley and arranged for a Birth Control lecture to be given to the Medical Society of Burlington County. The lecture was given by Dr Hannah Stone in St Mary's Hall in Burling-

ton The Riverside Board of Education had given permission to use the auditorium of the Washington Street Public School for a public Birth Control meeting, but after I had made all arrangements, they changed their decision and refused the hall I then asked Mr Jacob Fox, manager of the moving pictures here to rent us the auditorium He donated us its use for an evening in May, 1925, and we held the public Birth Control meeting

More than a year ago I visited a few houses in the colored section of Riverside, and talked to the people about the Birth Control movement I learned that the colored people are seriously in need of Birth Control information I try to make use of every opportunity to speak to people about the Birth Control movement, and have made many converts, and succeeded in getting members for the American Birth Control League The *Burlington County Press* prints all the Birth Control news that I give to it

I believe that the Birth Control movement is laying a foundation for a better world

### Pennsylvania

THE Sesqui-Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia has been the center of Birth Control activity since the booth was opened at the beginning of July The Pennsylvania group has been active in its co-operation with the American Birth Control League national executive in planning and in attendance at the booth September has been undertaken by the New York group and Mrs Sanger and some of the members of the National Board will be in attendance during the month Short Birth Control addresses are made at intervals in the educational auditorium and in September these addresses will be made by Mrs Sanger and fellow workers Much interest in Birth Control is being shown by the workers in the State and an effort is being made to start a campaign among the trades unionists of Reading

### California

DR COOPER'S campaign among the medical men of California, the first part of which was reported in our July issue, was continued with diligence and success through the latter part of June and July

On June 14th, Dr Cooper addressed the San Joaquin Medical Society at Stockton It was a special meeting with a remarkably good attendance and good interest was shown in the subject of Birth Control

On June 15th, Dr Cooper reached Sacramento and addressed the Sacramento Medical Society,

with 51 doctors present Here Dr Cooper encountered opposition from one of the physicians—for the first time in California The arguments used by this opponent were the familiar ones that Birth Control is unnatural and against religion

On June 17th, Dr Cooper addressed the Solano County Medical Society at Vallejo, with Dr R S Leachman as chairman One feature of this meeting was the co-operation by the *Sacramento Independent*, which promised to run a feature article on Birth Control in the next Sunday paper At all these places, doctors are interested in discussing possibilities for a Birth Control clinic, but many of the towns are too small for such an undertaking

On June 18th, Dr Cooper addressed the Nappa County Medical Association at Nappa, with Dr George Dawson as Chairman The feature of this meeting was the large proportion of doctors who offered their co-operation in giving information to patients

On June 21st, Palo Alto was reached and Dr Cooper addressed two meetings, one a medical and the other a lay meeting The Chairman of the medical meeting was Dr Granville Wood, of the lay meeting, Mrs Mary E Thygeson Preliminaries were arranged for a meeting for Mr Percy Clark on his visit to Palo Alto

On June 24th, Dr Cooper reached Salinas, and addressed the Monterey County Medical Society, with Dr Bingamin as Chairman It was very hot weather and many doctors were away on vacation, but good interest was shown by those who attended

On June 26th, at Fresno, Dr Cooper addressed the Fresno County Medical Society, with Dr A E Anderson, the President, in the chair The *Fresno Republican* sent a reporter to the meeting and gave a full account and a special article on Birth Control the following Sunday

On June 28th, Dr Cooper addressed a group of doctors at a special meeting held in the Cottage Hospital of Santa Barbara, with Dr Alexander C Soper as chairman The interest was very good and Dr Cooper comments "California is very progressive and I have not met with much opposition"

On June 29th, at San Luis Obispo, Dr Cooper spoke to the San Luis Obispo County Medical Society, in the Sanatorium Dr P J Jackson, President, was in the chair, and there were doctors there who had driven in for the meeting from places distant 30 or 40 miles

Reaching Los Angeles, Dr Cooper spent the first days of July in planning for a return visit to that part of California, and discussing local work with Dr Biamerd and Dr Rosanoff He also visited the Los Angeles Mothers Clinic on which he made a favorable report

## Missouri

THE Mid-West Student Conference, which met in Kansas City, June 13th-15th, included Birth Control among the problems discussed. This conference, which works under the motto enunciated by Abraham Lincoln, "*The man who will not investigate both sides of a question is dishonest*," takes up such problems as Socialism, Communism, the Open Shop, Public Ownership, Prisons and Criminals, Peace and Religion. The speaker on Birth Control was Dr. E. A. Burkhardt, and an excellent place was found for it on the third morning of the Conference.

## ENGLAND

ON Tuesday, June 22, the World Migration Congress opened its sessions in London. It had been called by the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Labor and Socialist International to discuss and formulate a Labor policy towards migration—both emigration and immigration. Its sessions lasted over four days, there were delegates present from 27 countries. There was a consensus of opinion that migration must be regulated, both nationally and internationally, and that the interests of labor must be protected in such regulation, that emigrants *en route* must be protected, and that there should be an ample service of information for immigrants, newly arrived in any country.

It was made clear in the report laid before the Congress, that Labor did not consider migration as a remedy for over-population and unemployment. It could be of use "to a very limited extent only, or for a limited period of time." Sooner or later "Labor will have to determine what shall be its considered and reasoned policy in the face of the alternatives

- 1 Overpopulation, with its accompaniment of a general fall in the standard of living
- 2 Mass emigration which will prejudice the workers of the country of immigration, and drive down their standards of living
- 3 War in order to compel such immigration in the face of opposition, or to make possible the further industrialization of an over-populated country
- 4 Restriction of population "

How fully and clearly the problem was envisaged by the leaders of the Congress may be seen by the recommendation made by Mr. J. W. Brown, one of the secretaries of the I. F. T. U., who drew up the report. It is hoped, he stated, "that Labor will see the inescapable logic of the situation, and will

play its part in saving the world from the horrors of over-population while there is still time, and while migration can still serve as a useful means of distributing world population "

Birth Control was definitely recommended to the Congress by Mr. Brown in a speech made on the second day of the Congress. "It was difficult," he asserted, "not to see in the present tendency to restrict immigration a dim and half-realized consciousness that a time must come when the population of the world would outrun its food supplies, and that it was inadvisable for those countries which still had ample elbow room to be too hospitable to their poorer neighbors. If that time came all dreams of a steady growth in the well-being of the human race under a better economic system than that of today would obviously be futile, unless they were made possible by the general spread of the restriction of population by Birth Control "

The return of the Registrar General of England and Wales for the first quarter of 1926, aroused great interest and was widely commented upon in the press. It showed that not only had the birth-rate decreased but that the births had fallen in actual numbers.

The following table shows how the birth rate has fallen in England and Wales during the past half-century

|      |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1871 | 35.3 | 1919 | 18.5 |
| 1895 | 30.3 | 1920 | 25.5 |
| 1913 | 24.1 | 1921 | 22.4 |
| 1915 | 21.9 | 1922 | 20.4 |
| 1916 | 20.9 | 1923 | 19.7 |
| 1917 | 17.8 | 1924 | 18.8 |
| 1918 | 17.7 | 1925 | 18.3 |

Sir J. Marchant, Director of the National Council of Race Regeneration, and Secretary of the National Birth-rate Commission was asked for his opinion on the decline by the *London Daily News*.

"The subject of the persistent decline of the birth rate," he declared, "is necessarily a complex one. There can be no doubt that the primary cause is the deliberate restriction of families, and in view of the grave industrial unrest in the country, that restriction will not only continue but will increase.

"It will be felt in the mining industry, which hitherto has been little affected, and the miners, under economic pressure, will reduce their birth rate as other sections of the community are doing.

"The undesirable aspect of this is that the birth rate is falling amongst skilled workmen and the better educated classes, and the population is being maintained out of proportion by the less educated and unskilled classes "

"The lower birth rate is excellent," was the verdict of Sir Arbuthnot Lane, the president of the New Health Society

"It is a godsend," he added, "as it shows that the thoughtfulness and intelligence displayed by the educated classes in the rearing of families is spreading to the poorer sections of the community

"They are evidently awakening to the fact that it is no use bringing into the world families larger than they can support or maintain under decent living conditions

"The lowered birth rate means lower mortality rate among children under one year of age"



## UNNATURAL SELECTION

(Continued from page 244)

beautifully adjusted to a wonderful relationship with their food plant or food animal, so that they depend upon it and it to some degree upon them for propagation. If anything should happen in the nature of disease which decreased the numbers or wiped out one of those species, the other would go like a flash, because it had put all its eggs in that one basket, and it was a very highly specialized basket

Birth Control, the use of contraceptive methods, the slowing down of production as a temporary means, if nothing else, is a simplifier in the relationship of modern civilization to its environment. It makes the situation simpler, it magnifies the chance of survival of this civilization, it provides a means of simplification which other civilizations have lacked and largely in default of which they have perished. It is an obvious chance to make simple one factor, namely, the rate at which civilization moves, the rate at which the fodder is fed into the machine, and that is a factor which economists, sociologists, biologists can all agree upon. It makes the situation simpler and more stable

Therefore that alone, if no other point is to be harped upon, I should say, might be the keynote which this Conference could agree upon—that simplification must precede solution of problems. We all have those problems, no matter what we are, whether we are working in the biological laboratory, whether we are in settlement work, whether we are medical men dealing with the problems of Birth Control, no matter what we are, we have the problems. Let us not be stupid enough to allow minor details or personal prejudices to prevent our wholehearted adoption of an obvious method of simplification

(Part of an address given at the Sixth International Birth Control Conference. See Proceedings, Vol. III, page 235.)

## ORDINARY DAYS IN CHINA

(Continued from page 246)

ing the same workers, divides the compensation by two and resorts to intimidation for the service. Mothers take their infants to work in the mills, and until they are five and six years of age they clean cotton, unravel rags, sort tobacco, separate straws, or perform any auxiliary work to the mothers' occupation that may be assigned them. They receive their rice, but no wage. Later they become an asset and receive several coppers a week in addition to the food ration. The mill worker possessing a large family is considered fortunate. None are too small to contribute to the family budget

A tiny shed or room houses the lot of them. In addition, there may be a lodger or two, who sleep while the family are at the mill. The beds in a house occupied by a Chinese family of the poorer class, are seldom without tenants. During the day and far into the night the streets and alley-ways are busy workshops. Amahs assemble to sew and gossip, the barber performs his duties, jostled and shoved by the passer-by, the wood-carvers' shavings and chips strew the narrow paths, food-sellers fill the air with the penetrating odors of mysterious concoctions, a cage of canaries or love-birds is offered for a trifle to would-be purchasers, and there are the inevitable, irrepressible beggars whose wail pre-dates the Chinese walls and will continue so long as the walls remain—unless by some miracle China's young womanhood is able to instil into the minds of her cringing sisters a budding thought of freedom from the eternal drudgery of son-bearing

When sons come, daughters also must arrive. An ancient Manchu law prohibited the murder of infants—girl infants—after they reached the age of three years. Girls required dowries when they were claimed by marriage. They could not perform ritual at ancestral tombs. They had one place in the recognized custom of the country—and concubines were easy to obtain. Few men were without one or more

The National University in Peking has opened its doors to women. The Tsing Hua University, established by the refunded Boxer Indemnity, has a constant enrollment of four hundred, qualifying by competitive examinations and preparing for American colleges. What this foreign influence will bring about is problematical. The erudite are so pitifully few, the ignorant so numerous and the degree of ignorance so appalling, in an age of science and advancement! It is to the foreign-educated Chinese women that China must look for an amelioration of her national disgrace—her swarms of useless beggars who cause the finger of scorn to be pointed at the ancestral tablets around which they grovel and cry "We have no food"

# The American Birth Control League

Inc

MARGARET SANGER, *President*

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—H E WELLS

"The only practical instrument by which eugenics can work is Birth Control"

—HAVELOCK ELLIS

"There could be no greater contribution to the morality of the world and to marital happiness than Birth Control"

—WILLIAM ALLEN PUSEY, M D, *President of the American Medical Association, 1924-25*

"It is not a question of introducing among the poor an effort to prevent excessive child-bearing. Such efforts are made all the time now. It is a question of introducing safe and sane methods, and of spreading among them the knowledge that such a limitation of the number of children is possible without the risk of death or invalidism. It is a question of offering to the poor who need it most, the knowledge and the power which has long been the possession of those who need it least"

—ALICE HAMILTON, M D, *Harvard Medical School*

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—Epitaph, by ROBERT HERRICK, Esq (1591-1674)

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