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Birth Control Review

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Editorial

THE White House Conference on Child Health and Protection met in Washington from November 19th to 22nd. Characterized as "the greatest study of the child ever undertaken in the history of the world," it enlisted the efforts of over 500 of the nation's experts on child care, and finally drew 1,200 invited delegates to Washington to hear the findings and recommendations of the various committees. The purpose of the Conference, which began functioning over a year ago, was "to study the present status of the health and well-being of the children of the United States, to report what is being done for child health and protection, to recommend what ought to be done and how to do it." Its procedure was "to gather information, to compile the reports, to prepare recommendations for presentation to a general conference." The work was divided into four major sections, with sub-committees under the guidance of specially quali-

fied chairmen. The scope and detail of the study can best be realized by a consideration of the subjects.

Section I Medical Care (Physical Well-Being)

- A Growth and Development
- B Pre-natal and Maternal Care
- C Medical Care for Children

Section II Public Health Service and Administration

- A Public Health Organization
- B Communicable Disease Control
- C Milk Production and Control

Section III Education and Training

- A The Family and Parent Education
- B The Infant and Pre-school Child
- C The School Child
- D Vocational Guidance and Child Labor
- E Recreation and Physical Education
- F Special Classes

Section IV The Handicapped: Prevention, Maintenance, Protection

- A State and Local Organizations for the Handicapped
- B Physically and Mentally Handicapped
- C Socially Handicapped
 - (1) Dependency
 - (2) Delinquency

As we go to press we cannot yet say what the results of this great, elaborate and carefully worked out conference will be. But we can tell how the Birth Control movement, as represented by the League, tried in vain to introduce material pertinent to many aspects of the study. The first and most obvious connection was with the Committee on Pre-natal and Maternal Care. The following letter was sent to the Chairman, Dr. Fred L. Adair:

If the Committee on Pre-natal and Maternal Care is studying the problem of the reduction of the maternal mortality rate in this country, would it allow Dr. Ira S. Wile of our Board to appear before it and point out the correlation between a high rate of maternal mortality and ignorance of contraception?

Dr. Adair answered that he quite agreed

that if the contraceptive advice were followed out there would be no maternal mortality, an answer which showed an utter misconception of the movement for Birth Control. Feeling that there was a relation between Birth Control and maternal care, as well as other aspects of child health and protection, the League then addressed a letter to Dr Ray Lyman Wilbur, Chairman of the Conference, who answered as follows:

Our work is with the child, consequently, it starts with conception and not before. Since this is the case, you can see that your particular organization does not happen to fall within the scope of our conference.

The League made one more attempt to introduce material into a special section—The Handicapped Prevention, Maintenance, Protection. Dr C C Carstens, Chairman of this section, replied that he was not aware of the fact that the Conference was studying the problem of Birth Control, but that he would make inquiries and see if the subject fell within the scope of the four general committees. He felt, however, that as far as his own subject was concerned, it really meant the prevention of the handicap, rather than the handicapped.

Such resourcefulness in evasion merits admiration. Here is a subject admittedly so large that it takes a year of study and the best efforts of some of the best minds of the country. Is any effort made to see why it is so large? Let us, say these leaders, "prevent the handicap" (if we can) by all means, but let us never "prevent the handicapped." Analogies are all too numerous. The polluted stream, studied below the source of infections, the leaky reservoir, and the thought and labor and expense put into repairing the damage done by the water, with nothing to stop the leak. "Children," said President Hoover in the opening address of the Conference, "must be strong physically and mentally—the major problems are the protection and stimulation of the normal child, aid to the physically defective and handicapped child, and the problem of the delinquent child." The findings of the White House Conference will doubtless be valuable and constructive, but apparently they are to start with conception, and so will not

take into account the prevention of hereditary defects, the spacing of children, overcrowding and malnutrition in oversized families and many other factors which are in large measure affected by the constructive use of Birth Control.

SOME slight recognition of Birth Control as a factor in child welfare was made in asking the president of the American Birth Control League, Mrs F Robertson Jones, to attend the conference. As we go to press she brings us the reports and resolutions, which we hope to analyze for our readers in the next issue. She brings word of the emphasis on environment, on the problems of improving conditions to fit the needs of childhood, and adjusting the child to adapt to the inherent complexities of modern life, and of the almost total disregard of the role of heredity, and the scientific and preventive approach. Are social workers, who, for the most part, made up the Conference, more backward than the Churches in understanding the importance of such things as race improvement, eugenics and responsible parenthood? No social service organization has come out fearlessly and unequivocally for Birth Control and race improvement as have such organizations as the American Unitarian Association, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the various local conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Universalists. No national social service organization has given the subject even such qualified approval as was accorded by the Lambeth Conference of bishops. The social workers are, apparently, so busy propping up individual trees that they can make no general plans for the entire wood. That is not good forestry—neither is it intelligent social service.

IT is not generally considered good etiquette to make editorial mention of advertising. But a page in this issue devoted to advertisements of children's amusements points so good a moral that we make an exception. We often run into the misconception that Birth Control is *against children*, means *no children*, advocates *race suicide*. But people interested in Birth Control are people—for

the most part parents—who vision a world of happy, healthy, promising children Such advertisements as these show a gratifying understanding of the true meaning of our movement

CENSORSHIP in the customs has again come to the fore, this time in a test case over the importation of Marie Stopes' books, *Married Love*, *The First 5,000*, and *Wise Parenthood* These books were ordered from a bookseller in London by Miss Fannie Teller and Miss Ida Teller of Philadelphia, early in 1929 When they arrived in May they were seized by the Deputy Collector for the Port of Philadelphia and declared obscene The Misses Teller commendably decided to fight the case and it was brought to court on October 30, 1930, before Judge William H Kirkpatrick of the District Court of the United States for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania The Judge directed the Jury to bring in a verdict for the defendants as follows

I am going to direct a verdict for the defendant in this case

I think that under the Tariff Act under which these books are libelled the only question is whether the books are obscene I do not think the question of whether they contain birth control information is material under this act It might be under a prosecution for using the mails, but this is a question of importing So far as birth control matter goes the act prohibits only the importation of drugs, medicine, or other articles for the prevention of conception or causing unlawful abortions These books, are, of course, not drugs, medicines, or other articles for that purpose, and therefore the only question remaining is whether the books are obscene

I have read the books carefully, and I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing from which any one can find them to be obscene within the meaning of the statute They are not in my judgment books which would tend to deprave the morals of persons into whose hands they might fall by suggesting lewd thoughts or exciting sensual desires They treat the subjects with which they deal in a perfectly serious and perfectly honest manner, and I do not believe they come within the definition of obscene books Therefore I am going to direct that you find a

verdict in favor of the defendant in this case

We have here a victory for the forces of enlightenment, due to the courage and energy of the defendants and the wisdom of the judge, an example of how intelligent opinion nullifies backward laws It is to be hoped that clear-cut decisions such as this will put a stop to this particular form of censorship

UNEMPLOYMENT is perhaps the most tragic, most disastrous problem before the country, and the world, today Figures reach ever higher levels, bread lines lengthen, organized charity frankly acknowledges its inability to cope with the situation We do not share the single-mindedness of our English colleagues *The New Generation* and *The Birth Control News*, which sees a direct casual relationship between population statistics and unemployment statistics "Happy France, Unhappy England," writes *The New Generation*, listing 988 unemployed in France and 2,161,689 in England, and pointing to France's stationary birth-rate The problem is obviously not so simply and clear-cut The Birth Control movement should take care not to call down on itself the criticism so often made against reform movements—of seeing its own particular cause as a cure-all for all social problems The case for Birth Control is strong enough It can lessen the number of unemployables, of the subnormal-mentally and physically, it can lift from the normal the tremendous burden of caring for the unfit It can enable the human race, as never before, to consciously control its numbers

IN ADDITION to all the stock arguments against Birth Control, from Catholic doctrine to race suicide, we must now add that Birth Control information is being disseminated in this country by the Soviet government because the Russians wish to break down the American system by lessening the number of educated people Such is the fantastic opinion seriously expressed by Dr Edward Lyman Cornell, professor of obstetrics at the Northwestern University medical school and member of the staff of the Chicago Lyng-In Hospital

Towards a Higher Civilization

By JULIAN HUXLEY

I AM TO speak to you this afternoon* on the importance of Birth Control for a higher civilization. Let me begin on the pure science side of the question. Perhaps you may have heard that we in England have started an organization which concerns itself with the scientific study of Birth Control problems, the Birth Control Investigation Committee. Our aim is to investigate both the methods and the practical results of Birth Control, impartially, without any propagandism. We have on our Committee some people who do not believe that Birth Control is a good thing. But they feel it must be investigated because it has come to stay.

Let me give you just one example of the interest arising from the purely scientific study of the subject. One of the greatest discoveries of biology during the nineteenth century was the discovery which Professor Punnett has rather brilliantly summed up by saying that, "Whereas most people thought that the human race consisted of two sorts of individuals, namely, men and women, nineteenth century biological science made it clear that it consisted of four kinds of individuals: men and women on the one hand, and the microscopic population of the gametes or marrying cells, the eggs and the sperms, on the other, and if we are to think clearly on any biological problem whatever, we have to think of the human race and all the other higher animals as consisting of four instead of two kinds of individuals."

Dr Baker of Oxford has devised ingenious methods for keeping alive these little people, these microscopic individuals that remained unsuspected for so long, namely the male cells or sperms, and he can keep them alive and happy outside of the body for a considerable period—in order, naturally, to study the effects of various chemical substances upon them. Not only does this open up all sorts of vistas as regards Birth Control methods but it opens up for instance the whole question of sex determination because it is this class of little representatives of the human race on whom the bio-

logical duty of sex determination falls. One half of them, if they succeed in fertilizing an egg, cause it to develop into a female, the other half into a male. The two kinds are apparently slightly different in size. If you were able to separate them you would have at your command a method of controlling sex at will. And only through such technique as Dr Baker has devised shall we be able to go on with further studies on this subject.

Or, again, many of you will remember reading Mr J B S Haldane's brilliant little book *Daedalus*, in which he envisaged the future of the human race many centuries hence when eugenics would really be eugenics and all breeding of new human beings would be done entirely in incubators. That may seem fantastic, but in these researches we have at any rate the first step towards its possible realization. I mention these things because it seems to me a good example of how pure science is always opening unexpected doors.

OVERPOPULATION MEANS MISERY

But I don't want to spend my time talking about remote possibilities. I want to get down to more immediate things. We have a civilization here and now, a very remarkable civilization, but I don't imagine that any one of us feels that it is by any means perfect. I suppose there is nobody in this room who does not sympathize with one aspect of the Birth Control problem, the aspect of alleviating suffering, poverty and worry. It is often said by the opponents of Birth Control that the push behind the movement comes from pleasure-loving individuals who wish to be relieved of their responsibilities. That is historically untrue. As Malthus, that man of remarkable insight, said over a hundred years ago, "Overpopulation means misery." And by misery he meant what the French really mean by the word *misere*. We really have no word for it. It means low standards all around, of comfort, of health, of bare existence. It is this misery which has been the pressure behind the Birth Control movement, and the real force of the Birth Control movement has come from the realization by people in their own persons and by those

*Excerpts from an address delivered at a luncheon of the Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control, October 28th

who sympathize with the troubles of others, of the amount of suffering caused by unwanted and unnecessary children

I believe most liberal thinkers agree that what we need is a few children of good quality, every one of them wanted and every one of them loved, and not a great many children irrespective of quantity or quality, and not necessarily wanted at all. But not merely as alleviating immediate distress but as part of the long-range control by which man, if he wishes so to do, can become the active trustee for the cosmic process of evolution—that is the way I see the Birth Control problem. For really you cannot consider Birth Control merely from one aspect. You have to consider it as a social as well as a personal problem, as a race problem as well as a social problem.

There is, first, the mere question of quantity of population, quantity of Americans in the world versus the quantity of Englishmen, versus the quantity of Africans, versus the quantity of Chinese. That obviously is a question of the utmost importance. If you have one race whose population is going down and another whose population is going up, there is always the possibility of race suicide. Personally I do not take that very seriously. I think our human instincts and our common-sense will prevent any race that is worth surviving from committing suicide in that way.

Then there is the whole question, within races, of the right density of population. The world in general and perhaps you in this country in particular, have been in the past rather given to considering that an increase of the population is always a good thing in itself. Fostered by the healthy rivalry between your cities you set new records in population marks. I gather now that New York has outstripped the city of London. As an Englishman, I am not sorry. London is much too big already. I am sorry for New York. But many people are very proud of quantity by itself.

But to my mind, more important is the other aspect of the population problem, namely the aspect of quality.

The birth-rate of Great Britain in the early part of the nineteenth century went steadily up, very rapidly at first and gradually began to trail off. You would naturally have expected it to go over in a smooth curve to the present phase of decrease, which we are all very glad has set in. It did not do so. In the year following the famous

Bradlaugh-Besant trial, you will find on the graph a sharp kink. It turned over sharply and began to go downhill from that moment. It was an extremely interesting example of the value of propaganda on human affairs, because without the Bradlaugh-Besant trial this knowledge of the practicability of Birth Control would not have spread nearly so rapidly. But this fall in the birth-rate was not uniform throughout the nation.

Starting apparently at about 1850, or a little later, comparing the birth-rates with the death-rates, let us say, the net birth-rate began to show a differential behavior in different classes of society. Grading society by rough and ready economic groupings, it was found that the net increase of the upper classes was the lowest, and that the increase among the least-paid classes was the highest, as was brought out very well in the British census of 1911.

That might or might not be a good thing. It would be a good thing if the best stocks were in the most rapidly increasing section. It would be a bad thing if it were the other way round. And if ability and character were distributed equally throughout the population it would not matter.

BIRTH CONTROL AND EUGENICS

We live in an age which calls itself democratic, and there is accordingly a real ladder of opportunity by which not only can ability rise, but shiftlessness and incompetence can fall. In so far as such a ladder exists, then the classes into which society is divided economically are not equal in their innate ability and there will be more of those who tumble down the ladder at the bottom, and at the top more of those who have climbed it. Therefore though there may not be a big difference, there will be a real difference between the classes, and their differential multiplication is a bad thing for the future of the race. It means that the better quality stocks are not keeping up their numbers. This is where Birth Control comes into the purview of eugenics.

Can you get rid of this undesirable trend? It has been suggested that you should get rid of it by facilitating the spread of Birth Control knowledge through all sections of the community, not as at present in Great Britain, where official regulations make it very difficult for the poor to obtain proper information.

On the other hand, I am convinced that that alone will not solve the problem. I have been

brought into contact with a good many social workers who are concerned with Birth Control clinics, and they one and all agree that there is a certain class among their possible clients whom they really cannot reach. They are either too lazy to come to the clinic at all, or when they get there they are so stupid they can't learn the methods, or they are so shiftless that they won't trouble to use them properly when they get home. In England we speak of that type of person in circles interested in Birth Control as the unteachable class, and that is the great problem from the social point of view: how to get at that unteachable class. They are unteachable just *because* they are in one way or another undesirable, because they are stupid, or lazy, or shiftless, and yet they are just the people we want most to get at.

DEFECTIVE GENES MUST BE REDUCED

What are you going to do about it? This is getting a little remote from Birth Control but to my mind it is the spear-head of the eugenic problem, and the issue is a clearcut one. I think everybody would be agreed that the great point is to prevent defective people from having children.

Most mental defects appear to be due to a defect in the hereditary constitution, which is what we call "recessive," that is to say, it can be masked by its normal partner. So two people who are perfectly normal themselves may be carrying a factor or factors for mental defect, and when they marry some of their children will be defective.

In all of these problems we have, as I said before, to look at the human race as consisting of four, not two, kinds of individuals. But when you are thinking of racial problems, you ought not to think of individuals at all. You have to think of the factors of heredity or genes, as we usually call them, whose existence, first deduced by the great Abbe Mendel, has been proved beyond any doubt by Professor Morgan who for so many years worked in New York City. And we now think of the hereditary constitution as consisting of a parcel of several hundred such units. It is they who to a large extent control our destiny from birth. You may get one assortment or you may get another, it is just like being dealt a hand of cards. In this problem, you have to think of the genes distributed through the population, to find out what the proportion of good ones is to bad ones—that is perhaps a crude way of putting it

but that will illustrate my meaning. And by preventing the breeding of defective children you would in point of fact gradually reduce the proportion of defective genes.

Can you deal with that by Birth Control? Apparently not. Can you deal with it by shutting these mental defectives up in institutions? No, you cannot. There are too many defectives. It would be too expensive. Can you deal with the problem entirely by sterilization? No, I do not think it would work. You want to combine the various methods. If Birth Control is practical, excellent! Where, as is usually the case, it is not, put the defective, whenever possible, in an institution, and release him if he is willing to submit to a sterilization operation.

You in this country have been great pioneers of sterilization. In California you have carried that out as part of your public health program and we in England are very confident that if we could get such operations legalized we would follow California's lead, feeling that it would result in nothing but good.

But the worst problem is that of the unteachable group. The unteachable group, from the point of view of Birth Control, is probably what social workers in our country refer to as the "social problem group," variously estimated at between five and ten per cent of the population, in which have settled the dregs of the genes of our race, from which spring a large proportion of our morons, our criminals, our physical and mental defectives.

MUST FACE PROBLEMS AS A WHOLE

Unless the Birth Control movement sees that this is a very real problem from the point of view of the future of the race, it must face the opprobrium of being called dysgenic, being told that its activities are reducing the level of quality in the race. Unless that problem is solved, Birth Control is going to do harm as well as good.

This whole question of sterilization, like that of Birth Control, brings up an enormous amount of opposition. You get, just as with Birth Control, misrepresentation on every hand, abuse, claims that it is unnatural and that it will lead to promiscuous vice, and so forth.

But let us remind ourselves that all big ideas are bound to bring up opposition, just because they are new and big. Though it is true that the great distinctive attribute of human as opposed to ani-

mal nature is the capacity for pure reasoning and the capacity for long-range planning, yet the bulk of the human race are content to apply that faculty within a rather limited sphere, and are pretty conservative when it comes to radical changes. And if you will think back you will note that all innovations have met with the same opposition.

We have only to think of feminism. There was a picture in the paper quite recently of a statue erected to the memory of Mrs. Pankhurst, but I remember as a young man seeing Mrs. Pankhurst being carried off screaming by a squad of police from the very spot where they have just put up her statue.

To go back further, the same thing was true of Galileo. Or again, think of the storm that has not altogether died away, especially in this country perhaps, created by Darwin!

Doubtless the same opposition came in the dawn of history when men started not merely collecting their food but growing it. I have no doubt that many of the leaders of society in about the year 5000 B.C. thought it was very impious to grow corn and I am sure that when people started drinking the milk of animals that must have been thought to be obscene.

I am sure we need not worry about its ultimate complete success and its acceptance by the social conscience, which is what we chiefly need to get our measures put through within a comparatively short time.

We shall undoubtedly win and shall see Birth Control accepted by the general conscience, but it will be a hard fight and will probably take ten or more likely twenty-five or even fifty years. And there are various dangers in connection with it. I think the stage of pouring ridicule on the movement is past, but the stage of crystallizing all the reactionary forces against it, of regarding the movement as dangerous, has just begun to gather momentum. We can counter it by two methods.

By education—and I know that you are not behindhand in that. And we have to counter it also by thinking around all the other social aspects of the Birth Control problem. If you do not do that, as I have stressed with regard to mental defectives, and to the "social problem" group, you are going to find yourself up against other groups who are also working for social improvement, who will come into opposition to you, because you have not considered the application of your problem to theirs.

In conclusion, I might sum up my whole thesis by saying that I hope I have convinced you that Birth Control, though of the greatest importance for the alleviation of human distress and the improvement of the individual social and economic position, must be considered from other aspects too. For it is linked with the fate of nations, and linked with the whole question of whether the human race is going to degenerate or whether it is going to progress.

The Perils of Success

By MACALISTER COLEMAN

THE DANGER that confronts the Birth Control movement right now is the same as that which faces nearly every heterodox movement at one time or another in its career. It is the danger of respectability. Now that the movement is carried on with benefit of clergy, it is safe to say that it will attract to its ranks a vast number of stolid, unimaginative Respectables, who will, of course, attempt to divest it of all its economic and sociological meaning, and make it as tame as a Republican politician on Fourteenth Street.

The action of the Lambeth Conference is not wholly a blessing unalloyed. If I were one of the pioneers of the movement I would regard Anglicans bearing blessings with much the same careful

scrutiny as I would Greeks. I issue this warning from the depths of my recent experience as a candidate for State Senator on the Socialist ticket in the so-called "silk-stocking" district of New York. This is the district which cast a surprisingly large vote for Norman Thomas a year ago, on the ground that he is a gentleman and a Princeton student, and regularly presses his trousers. His opponent, on the other hand, although a Republican, was not sartorially impeccable, and grave doubts were cast as to the perfectibility of his table manners. Strive as he would, Thomas was unable to convince a great number of Park Avenue residents that if he were elected Mayor of New York City it would go decidedly hard with them.

And much to his distress, the Park Avenue vote showed a decidedly Red tinge

During my campaign I earnestly tried to fend off any such calamity by insisting on my simon-pure Socialism, and still there are many who believe that because I graduated from Columbia University I cannot sincerely subscribe to the tenets of Karl Marx. What happens to a thing once it is exposed to the odor of sanctity is that it loses its ability to sweat healthily. It is in danger of perspiring politely. The heat of the battle is taken off by cleverly concealed electric fans and the surge of the charge is slowed down to the jog-trot of an afternoon's ride through the Park

MIDDLE AGE NEED NOT BE SMUG

Quite evidently, anything which has had as gloriously a militant youth as the Birth Control movement must not be allowed to slip into a smug middle age. As a matter of fact, middle age can well afford to be far more radical than youth. For while it has its stakes in the *status quo*, it has at least something to venture, and does not enter the game with nothing more than a willingness to write I O U's. And anyway, why should the word smug always be tacked on to middle age? I expect that there is some sort of psychological confusion between middle age and middle classes, or middle anything, for that matter. I find that middle age, as far as I am concerned, brings far more leftward pressures to bear upon me than ever assailed me in my smug undergraduate youth. And I can point triumphantly to the recent elections in Germany, where the "smug middle classes" marched headlong off into fascism and communism.

If this is indeed the middle age of the Birth Control movement in America, so much the more reason for it to walk carefully and carry the red flag. I don't mean of course the red flag of fantastic street fighting and the like, but I do mean the flag that flies over any full-blooded movement which has for its goal the making of an economic and psychological overturn in these United States. I mean that unless the Birth Control movement is definitely allied with the forces on the left, its latest allies may well prove its undoing. There is an ominous possibility that it may follow in the footsteps of the Single-Taxers, the rightness of whose theories no one questions, but who have become a little group of isolated sectarian bores, claiming that the doctrines of Henry George are alone sufficient to cure all the world's evils, from

dandruff to fallen arches

Not so long ago a noted red-baiter, hard put to it to find an excuse for existence, drew up an elaborate chart, very much after the manner of those bewildering contrivances devised by statisticians to impress the public with their omniscience, in which he showed how the various directorates of the radical movement were inextricably interlocked. The tragic thing about the chart was that he had all unconsciously hitched together those who were in reality the most bitter and venomous of opponents inside the movement. They should have been working shoulder to shoulder, even as the red-baiter showed them. There is every reason in the world why all of us who are looking towards a new cooperative way of living together should be interlocked. In any such directorate the Birth Control movement should have its place well up in the van, for in my opinion it is fundamental to any scheme of existence which contemplates a life more rich and spacious.

There was a character in Greek mythology, Antaios by name, who was impregnable to any assault so long as his feet remained upon the ground. His strength flowed from the ground up, and it was not until Heracles, discovering its sources, lifted him bodily into the air, that he was finally slain. The radical movement in America, from the extreme Liberal right to the farthest Communist left, does, it seems to me, touch the ground all too lightly today. Although I have said a kindly word about the middle classes, they cannot much longer carry on in this country a struggle for all such good things as civil liberty, industrial democracy, educational freedom and voluntary parenthood without making a firmer alliance with and penetrating more fully into the consciousness of those who work, and work hard, for a living.

LIVE DANGEROUSLY

We Socialists realize, I firmly believe, that our movement is largely an intellectual gesture unless it has the backing of a far-flung economic group. Similarly with Birth Control. It must not weary in the grinding work of propaganda, in the daily taking of chances—in short, in living dangerously—until it has reached well down into the roots of American culture. No small group of advanced and well-meaning intellectuals can make a mass movement. We must get down into the subways and grass-roots if we want to get up into the clean airs of a new day.

Marriage in the Future

By F H HANKINS

I PICK UP the Monday morning *Times* and read the report of one of yesterday's sermons denouncing divorce as the greatest evil of modern society and prophesying the decline of civilization if it is not checked. I have read similar reports a hundred times without deriving more from them than repeated amazement that in this scientific age men in responsible positions will still go on reiterating ancient dogmas and preaching sermons that would have seemed logical in the days of our fathers. Nothing is clearer to the student of social evolution than that in such matters we are faced by new conditions requiring new codes. It has been the desire of Mr. Ralph de Pomerai in *Marriage, Past, Present and Future* to understand these conditions and to formulate some new rules.¹ His book grew out of an interest in divorce, but he begins by showing his appreciation of the new marital situation by stating that a woman's relations to her spouse are as important as those to her children. Before taking up the divorce problem he devotes 148 pages to a study of the origins and evolution of matrimonial institutions, drawing upon an immense literature, and considering most of the matters that have exercised the minds of students during the past two generations.

He then devotes 200 pages to all phases of the modern situation, giving them a well-informed, liberal-minded and even-tempered treatment. He follows many by-paths, devotes too much space to the history of Christian doctrine, and enters upon certain biological excursions which do not always seem pressingly pertinent. Having developed the thesis that a full sex life is essential to the physical and mental well-being of both man and woman, he dwells on the necessity of community of interest between husband and wife and the increasing difficulties of maintaining mental and sexual compatibility amidst the complexities of modern life. He makes a strong case against the English divorce law, particularly the provision for separation from bed and board, citing some most amazing cases of persecution of husbands by wives, aided

and abetted by police and courts. He finds that the intolerableness of marriage is seldom due in the first instance to drunkenness, cruelty, crime, insanity or licentiousness—though these may result therefrom—but to sheer incompatibility. For this reason he finds no good whatever in legal separation and insists on clean-cut divorce. Moreover, he condemns in cogent terms the present legal requirement that husband or wife commit a crime or misdemeanor before a divorce is procurable.

He concludes that, since divorce is designed to remedy a situation no longer tolerable, it should be procurable without stigma, that the only persons who are able to determine whether a divorce is indicated are the married pair, that neither of these should be empowered by law to deprive the other of freedom, that provision should be made for wife and children when justice requires it, and that the law should strive at once for freedom of divorce and the preservation of the dignity of marriage. He proposes that a divorce should be procurable through a registrar for a minimal fee upon proof that either party has defaulted in conjugal relations for at least one year. He would abolish breach-of-promise suits and require three weeks notice of intention to marry and a medical health certificate. He would provide for wife and children under a definite set of rules, proportioning allowances according to the ages and number of children and the years of marriage. As means of dealing with the failures of love and matrimony, these proposals will seem cold and business-like to many, on the other hand, they prevent the wasted energy, good-will and money involved in litigation, banish the gold-digger and the shyster lawyer, and insure a dignified, quiet and decent settlement of a once glorious venture which has admittedly failed.

For the future the author envisages the further expansion of the activities of the state as superparent. He seems quite correct in holding that the home conditions now provided by the parents of probably a majority of children are not conducive to the health, morality and intellectual development of the latter to anything like the degree made possible by modern knowledge. We are sacrificing

¹ "Marriage, Past, Present and Future. An Outline of the History and Development of Human Sexual Relationships." By Ralph de Pomerai. Richard R. Smith, New York. \$4.00

thousands of children to the ignorance and stupidity of parents under the mad illusion that we thus preserve the dignity of parenthood and the sanctity of the home. But the author is far from advocating the abolition of the home, he wants it modified and the fact recognized that parents are undertaking too much. Child training and rearing have become complex sciences and arts, so that we have our choice between attempting to give all parents the knowledge, intelligence, temperament and technique for their practice or of developing a smaller group of trained experts under state supervision. Here again the author is in line with present tendencies and the dictates of dispassionate judgment. He, therefore, visualizes a time in the rather distant future when the state will provide nurseries, kindergartens and schools on a more ambitious plan, nurses and physicians and grants for food and clothing. At the same time eugenic considerations will control marriage, while motherhood, through the beneficent ministrations of Birth Control, will become voluntary and relatively infrequent.

WHERE WILL THESE IDEAS LEAD?

How will all this and much more envisaged by de Pomerai affect sex morality? "If judicious non-procreative sexual intercourse is neither harmful nor immoral among married persons, but healthy and beneficial, it inevitably follows that it cannot, of itself, be harmful or immoral when indulged in by unmarried persons." An extra-marital relation, however, is wrong "if it inflicts suffering and unhappiness, or if it results in general promiscuity, licentiousness, or the degeneration of character." He holds that it is not immoral in itself and much more often than not involves no more disloyalty to or lack of affection for the spouse than extra-marital friendships. The author thus makes war on the stifling spirit of jealous conjugal proprietorship. He abhors grossness but pleads for variety. He recognizes that beyond liberty may lie debauchery, but he sees that a freer range for sex experience, when based on affection and genuine response, may add to both that beauty and that fullness of life which the newer theologian tells us is the highest religion.

At the same time the author has no illusions as to the fitness of the average man and woman for these ideals of love and marriage. His is the view of a rational adult, while the average sex mores dates from the adolescent age of cultural evo-

lution. In the course of his discussion he deals with most of the arguments advanced by a distinguished London sociologist, Christopher Dawson, in upholding the views of Catholic orthodoxy.¹ Professor Dawson begins by explaining the downfall of the classical civilization as due to the decline of the family and the restoration of civilization by the strength of the Christian family which rendered marriage private and exclusive for both husband and wife. He restates the traditional view that Christianity elevated the status of women and flatly contradicts what we in America have always been taught was sound orthodoxy by asserting that Protestantism abandoned the ideal of virginity and accentuated the masculine element in the family. Not satisfied with these curious perversions of history, he adds that modern industrial culture arose in Puritan England "by a curious freak of historical development." To be logical he should have added also that this culture owed its existence to the fact that the Puritans had abandoned the ideal of virginity.¹ He foresees that youth will devote their fresh and creative energies to "contraceptive love," that populations will diminish and wars increase, populous countries being "singularly unaggressive," and that shortly Germany will be peopled by Slavs, France by Italians and Spaniards, England by Irish, and America by Negroes and Mexicans. All this is simply "too bad."

Nor is Professor Dawson more successful with respect to the psychological aspects of the matter. He is confused and muddy in his thinking. He sees that the romantic attitude is no longer possible, but he finds that the effort to rationalize sex deprives it of depth and mystery, "pollutes it and makes it turn rotten." Nevertheless he wants to restore to sex the mysticism which he says is no longer possible. He becomes hopelessly pessimistic because he either looks back to what he conceives to be the best of all possible worlds or has not the courage to go forward along the lines which modern developments make necessary. We certainly cannot go back to the benighted brutality of an era that is finished. A new age is upon us and its very essence is rational enlightenment. Do men and women need to love less deeply and sincerely because they understand the psycho-physical basis of their longing and do not believe it due to some mystical spiritistic pos-

¹ "Christianity and Sex" by Christopher Dawson. Faber & Faber, London. Criterion Miscellany 1s (30 cents).

session? Can we not learn how to make true love more lasting and more satisfying? How to increase its powers to freshen and revivify life and personality and to strengthen courage and purpose? Can we not learn how to solve the problems of race perpetuation and of sex gratification without the personal degradations, vices, jealousies and frustrations of the conventional mores? Dawson's idealizations, rationalizations and perversions

of fact do not help us in the least. What we need is more knowledge. As a wholesome start the little pamphlet *Harmony in Marriage* compiled by the Reverend David Davies Vaughan is of value.¹ It is a collection of wise advice from preachers and teachers, and presents the more liberal attitude toward marriage in simple, readable form.

¹ "Harmony in Marriage," compiled and published by the Reverend David Davies Vaughan. Boston. 10 cents.

Is Sex Education Being Overdone?

By M. J. EXNER, M.D.

Dr. Exner of the American Social Hygiene Association discusses two recent articles in the REVIEW, and points out that sex education is far from adequate in most of our colleges. What is needed is not segregated discussions of sex hygiene, but a complete orientation of the sex factor in education as a whole.

I HAVE noted with interest the several articles dealing with sex education and sex questionnaires in the September and October issues of the REVIEW. In justice to the growing movement for sex education, which many leaders recognize as one of the most significant of the newer educational ventures, I am impelled to comment upon the article, *The Sex Questionnaire*, and the one titled *An Unofficial Questionnaire*, because they give a misleading impression of that movement.

I am in agreement with these authors in their protest against certain of the sex questionnaires which have been circulated in some of the colleges and schools in recent years. Crude, indelicate, bungling, asinine, are adjectives none too strong to apply to some of them. Not only were they valueless, they did injury to the movement for social hygiene in that they offended good taste and violated sane and scientific procedure. It would be equal folly, however, to place all attempts at "sex questionnaires" in the same category and to contend that none are needed. However much we may dislike questionnaires in general, experience has shown that the questionnaire as a method of research has certain advantages and hence is not to be despised, especially in a search for facts in a field so complex and so much in need of enlightening data as that of sex in human life. There are to be found in the library of the American Social Hygiene Association reports on a number of questionnaire studies in the field of sex that

have demonstrated that even in an area of life so closely tied up with our deepest emotions, questionnaire studies of great value can be made with propriety and scientific method. One of the most recent of such reports, *Factors in the Sex Life of 2200 Women*, by Dr. Katharine Bement Davis, for example, speaks eloquently for the sensible and constructive type of sex questionnaire. The anonymous author who says, "The sex questionnaire is a humorous classic—and quaint in its antiquity" has effectively demonstrated in her article a type of questionnaire that cannot be justly so characterized, one sensibly formulated and wisely handled, and that helps to a realistic insight into the thoughts, opinions, attitude and desires of "modern youth," even though the data present nothing new. About the same picture has been revealed in numerous discussions with young people during recent years. The replies to this questionnaire and these discussions show that the attitudes, opinions and convictions of young people are very unstable. They indicate confusion in their groping toward a new, and probably better, sex morality. This obvious confusion, cloaked largely under a posed front of sophistication and independence, is evidence of the need of an education which may bring to the young understandingly and sympathetically the best in human experience. While recognizing the keen, intuitive insight and the idealism that so largely characterize adolescent youth, who shall say that they are gifted with wisdom beyond any

previous generation so that they may safely be left wholly to their own trial-and-error experimentation with life?

One not conversant with the facts is likely to get the following impressions from the two articles mentioned. Sex questionnaires are "overdone," they are devised and circulated altogether by prying and stupid professors and not at all by college students, there is general "over-emphasis of sex education in the colleges", students are rebelling in amusement and disgust against the sex education that prevails, students are capable of taking care of themselves in these matters and do not need or desire the help of their instructors, so far as young people need help, parents are equal to the need. Are such impressions correct?

CURRICULA DE-SEXED

It is perhaps more correct to say that some sex questionnaires have been badly done than to say that sex questionnaires have been "overdone." I am rather closely in touch with the colleges throughout the country on these matters and the number of such questionnaires that has come to my attention is comparatively insignificant. As is so often the case, a very few unwise, bungling ones have received undue publicity and have left the impression upon some that an orgy of sex prying is on. A questionnaire dealing with intimate aspects of sex life cannot wisely be undertaken in a college except under exceptionally favorable and guarded conditions including the full consent of all of the group of students involved, and with their full cooperation in the spirit of scientific research. Even under these conditions it has its dangers, for criticism and protest most frequently come from the parents of some of the students involved, leading to publicity which distorts the whole situation and causes ultimate harm.

Without having at hand any assembled data on the matter and relying only upon memory, I would say that just about as many sex questionnaires have been promoted by students as by professors. The author of one of the articles says she has never known any that have been promoted by the students. The newspaper discussion of such a questionnaire promoted by a college paper in one of New York's outstanding institutions, and the publicity occasioned by a similar questionnaire promoted by students in a prominent mid-west university, both within two years, must have escaped the author's notice.

Is there a general over-emphasis of sex education in the colleges? The American Social Hygiene Association conducted a five-year study of the problems of sex education in the colleges in cooperation with more than 200 universities and colleges in which the presidents appointed faculty committees to assist in this study. Last year, at the close of the study, a questionnaire was sent to these committees to ascertain the present status of sex education in these colleges,—methods and subject-matter used, in what connections, to what extent, reaction of students, etc. The results show that while undreamed-of progress has been made in the colleges in the past twenty years, this sector of college education still remains the weakest of all. The colleges on the whole still fail to give the student adequate help in his adjustment to himself and to his world in this area of his life. A very large proportion of institutions take virtually no account of the mating instinct in education for life. Their curricula are still almost wholly de-sexed curricula. In a considerable proportion of institutions which do with some purpose incorporate subject-matter pertinent to sex education, it is for the most part very fragmentary and inadequate to the need. The institutions which fairly recognize their educational responsibility and opportunity in respect to the mating instinct, and whose curricula are designed to give students the background for formulating a sound philosophy in relation to this aspect of life, are as yet all too few. As in other aspects of education so in this, it is to be expected that some colleges would handle the matter badly, that there may occur an "over-emphasis," a slopping over, a crude, untactful approach and method. The wonder is that there are not more. College presidents, deans, and teachers are not all gifted with wisdom, insight and the gift of teaching. But I venture to say that for every institution that thus offends, there are fifty that fail in their responsibility through neglect.

YOUTH WANTS GUIDANCE

Do college students generally react to sex education with humorous tolerance or disgusted rebellion? To some extent this is undoubtedly true. In the main, wherever it is true, the character of the instruction deserves just this kind of reaction. Adolescent youth have become tremendously realistic in these matters. They are no longer to be put off with pious platitudes and dogmatic asser-

tion of what is ethical and good, or with silence. Beneath much of outward bluster and posed sophistication, they have a real hunger for a fundamental insight that will enable them to make their own choices intelligently, and wherever there is a teacher who has the understanding and the spirit to meet them on their own ground, whose educational leadership with students helps them to clear thinking and the weighing of values, that teacher without exception is tremendously appreciated by his students. It is true that often a considerable proportion of the students has read more widely in the available literature than the teacher, for many young people are reading sex literature, good, bad and indifferent. In these cases the reaction of disappointment is not likely always to be manifested in a polite manner. The very fact that of the literature read about three-fourths is scientifically unsound and misleading, calls for the aid of that mature discrimination which it should be the function of the college teacher to furnish. There is, however, now a considerable number of college teachers, especially among the biologists, psychologists and sociologists, who are meeting admirably the needs and desires of youth in these matters, and winning the enthusiastic appreciation of the students. Wisely, these teachers are not conducting special sex courses or discussions but are incorporating the appropriate subject-matter in the broader subjects in the curriculum to which the material naturally relates itself, such as biology, sociology, psychology, physiology, hygiene, physical education, home economics and literature. They are simply ceasing to expurgate these subjects of their normal sex factors. They are coming to aim education toward a complete orientation in the whole of life.

Is the implication that sex discussion arises mainly out of excessive sex consciousness on the part of college teachers and that the young people generally are not greatly concerned about the subject, correct? The dominant undercurrent of interest among youth today and their most outspoken challenge to the adult world is in the realm of the relationships of men and women, particularly concerning the sex factor in life. This is no mere guess. Youth voices this interest on every hand. Leaders of youth tell us that wherever groups of young people are given choice between various life interests for discussion, almost invariably topics relating to the mating instinct are the first choice. Only a few months ago a rep-

resentative group of leaders among young people from many states met in conference. They listed eleven areas of life for possible discussion. Then by vote the group selected by overwhelming majority the sex area of life as the first subject for discussion, and the two-day conference concerned itself primarily with this subject. This is but typical of a common experience with youth in

PARENTS NOT YET EQUIPPED

One author quotes the Rollins College paper as follows: "Having been educated at home, in prep school, and in Freshman Hygiene, why not let well enough alone?" I fear that in this statement the wish is father to the thought. Unfortunately the cold, hard fact is that neither the home, the "prep" school nor Freshman Hygiene are functioning in such a way that with their combined aid young people are well enough equipped for life to be safely left alone. While great strides are being made toward equipping the young for life in these matters as a part of normal home training, mostly among the younger parents, this is still by all odds the most inadequately functioning feature of home training. Many believe that one generation at least of parents will have to pass before the home will come anywhere near to fulfilling its responsibility in this respect. It is in this department of life that the widest gulf exists between modern youth and modern parents. It is suggested that if the Freshman Hygiene course fails "they can always write home to mother." With all the advance that has been made in homes in this matter in the past ten years, it is safe to say that the great majority of students today will turn for counsel in these matters to anyone rather than mother or father.

As for Freshman Hygiene in the colleges, it is in a majority of institutions in which it is taught a dreary joke, largely unrelated to the realities of life. There are, however, here a larger number of notable exceptions in which the teaching commands a vital interest and becomes of guiding value, and where the sex aspect of life is well taken care of, at least so far as its hygienic bearings are concerned. But sex hygiene is the least important aspect of sex education, the psychological, sociological and ethical bearings of which cannot be consistently embraced in any course strictly limited to personal hygiene.

One author says, "Sex education should be given anyway between the ages of five and ten years

By the time they are fourteen they should literally know everything about everything. Then let them work out their problems." Is this to say that all character education is to be comprised in these years?—for sex education is but an aspect of character education as a whole. Is it possible between the ages of five and ten to equip the individual for the most difficult and most vital adjustments in all life—love, marriage, parenthood and family life? It is true that these early plastic years are of primary and strategic importance, for the ideas, attitudes, tastes and habits acquired will have profound influence upon the more difficult years to follow. For that matter the years from birth to five are of even greater importance. But education in these years can be but preparatory to that needed in the years of adolescence when sex becomes a conscious and powerful drive, when choices must be made which will have a profound influence upon the development, the happiness and the social reactions of the individual. It is from the ages of thirteen and fourteen on, that home and school and church need especially to cooperate in giving the youth such an understanding and appreciation of the mating drive of life as will enable him to make intelligent and wise personal choices, in harmony with a sound philosophy based upon that understanding and appreciation, to the end that his sex nature may make its richest contribu-

tion to his self-development and happiness and to social welfare.

It is not the business of sex education to lay down for youth a preconceived code of ethics. Its business is to interpret correctly the meaning and significance of these creative forces, to give understanding that will bring true appreciation and evaluation as a basis for personal choices and a working philosophy, for, as I have said elsewhere, character is built only when behavior springs from convinced personal choice.

Quite obviously there is at this time an excessive and somewhat offensive public flaunting of sex. But we adults must not lose our perspective. These manifestations are but the excrescence of a serious and vital social movement. Youth have dragged sex out of the dark, slimy cellar into the open air and sunlight along with the rest of the vital interests of life. Youth are moving gropingly toward a new sex morality. It is the business of our vaunted scheme of education to help give this movement wholesome direction in the light of the best in human experience. Is education measuring up to its task? We must not let the excesses of exploiters and authors of foolish questionnaires blind us to the need for, and the values of the movement for bringing the sex factor of life into its proportionate place (and no more) in education, from the home to the university.

PREGNANCY

By CLIFFORD GESSLER

SEEING you round and full with ripening
fruit of your body, in the sweet old way,
the brave old way of women, I must sing
and leap, and shout,—and I must kneel and pray,
knowing you more than woman in this day
of new creation, in this flowering Spring
of human fruitfulness. The gift you bring
mocks the iron centuries that blast and slay

You are the Race, you are the seeded Earth,
you are the Torch that carries on the flame,
and you are God made woman for a space
Now, as that inward glory lights your face,
I, man, abase myself before your name
and envy you the power of giving birth

*Winner of Pregnancy Poem Contest—
"Contemporary Vision"—Autumn issue*

POPULATION SECTION

Edited by Guy Irving Burch

Immigration and Population Problems*

By HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD

IN THE naive view, the view which anyone takes when he first approaches consideration of this problem, emigration and immigration seem to be simply matters of arithmetic. If there is an emigration of five hundred thousand people from one country to another, a total of five hundred thousand has been subtracted from the population of the first country and added to the population of the second country. That has been the interpretation of emigration as a social expedient in overcrowded lands from times immemorial. Yet, the whole teaching of social science is that under the conditions which have underlain the great migration movements of the past hundred and fifty years, emigration has been no relief for overpopulation, and immigration has not tended to increase the population but has simply had the result of substituting foreign population for native.

Homo sapiens is one of the slowest breeding animals on earth. Yet, the extent of potential multiplication of the human species is virtually unlimited. Dr. Kuczynski has spoken of the retarding rate of human increase in the world today, and very truly. But if we allow the population of this country to increase at the rate that prevailed in the early years of this century, which was not a phenomenal rate, the United States would be much more seriously overcrowded by the end of this century than China is today. Now, I agree with Dr. Kuczynski that this is not going to happen. I simply cite it to illustrate the tremendous expansive power of human population which is always present, always ready to assert itself, and held in check only by the barriers of the other factors in the situation.

In view of these facts, what is the effect of emigration on a country which is experiencing the pressure of population upon the supporting power of the soil? Obviously, the immediate effect of

emigration is to relieve population by the departure of a certain number of individuals. Yet, that population is under extreme pressure and is trying to force itself to wider limits. If the exodus is a moderate and gradual one, as most of the emigration currents of the past hundred years have been, the effect is simply to relax the tension upon population and to give it an opportunity for expansion which it has not had. Population surges forward and fills up the gaps left by the emigrants, and as the emigration stream flows on, the population remains just as large as it was before, and according to some students, becomes even larger.

The same principle prevails in the immigrating country. If it is an old country where the balance has been struck between the desire for population and the desire for standard of living, the immigrants intensify the pressure of the population upon the existing economic situation, forcing a reduction in the increase of native population, and resulting in no greater growth in the total population than would have taken place without any immigration.

I will not take up time to enter into an elaborate, detailed, theoretical exposition of the foregoing principles. I will simply say that so far as my studies have gone, these principles are accepted by practically every scientific student of the population problem, and, so far as this country is concerned, the theory is usually stated by saying that we have in 1930 no larger population in the United States than we would have had if not one immigrant had come to our shores since the year 1820.

That doctrine is so well supported, so thoroughly documented by all the best scientific literature on the subject, that it stands as one of the most unassailable conclusions of economic and social theory. That being the case, the conclusion naturally follows that under prevailing conditions in Europe, to say nothing of the more overcrowded countries of the Orient, emigration is no relief

*Excerpts from an article in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, July, 1930.

for overpopulation. It is a false and illusive expedient which rather aggravates the evils that it is sought to remedy. Yet, it is really pathetic to see the confidence with which statesmen and leaders of public thought cling to the fond hope that emigration can be used as a cure for overpopulation.

I say it is pathetic, because it is like a sufferer from some insidious disease who takes a patent medicine year after year and dose after dose and lives on, cherishing the fond hope that one more dose will produce results. It is really extraordinary to think that at the close of a century of the heaviest emigration that the world has ever known, a century terminated by the worst war that the world has ever known, largely caused by overpopulation, there should still be leading students of social problems who would continue to say that the only relief for the situation in Europe is more emigration.

A NEW ATTITUDE

However, a new day is dawning. New factors are being introduced into the situation, and new factors alter the significance of scientific conclusions. There is a new attitude towards population, the world over. It has not yet been fully accepted, particularly in this country. Most of our favorite slogans still remain, "Bigger and better something or other," all the way from battleships to babies. We still cherish the ideal of bigness. Mere size is still a fetish to us.

But now we have the introduction of a new factor in social evolution, of an importance which Warren Thompson, in his recent *Danger Spots in World Population*, considers comparable to that of the invention of the printing press and the discovery of fire. When you have a new influence of that kind entering into the situation, the whole series of conclusions must be revised. And that is exactly what we see going on in the world around us today.

Birth Control is gaining headway and will very soon be established as a general if not a universal factor in the life of Western countries, and is, strange as it may seem, beginning to penetrate the countries of the Orient. People are becoming interested in it. In fact, I have heard it said that there are just three things in which the American people really are interested—eugenics, Birth Control, and girth control. And with the introduction of Birth Control into the emigration problem, everything takes on a new color. If a country has

the power to control its growth of population by internal methods, then perhaps a wisely directed and cautiously controlled emigration may prove of some value.

I would say most emphatically, as a prerequisite to the application of migration as a relief for overpopulation, let any particular country demonstrate that it can introduce and apply Birth Control to the extent of holding its population stationary say for a decade, or even better, for a generation. When a country has shown that ability, there will be some reason to consider its rights to use emigration to draw off its surplus population.

We have been trained to look upon war as one of the great expedients of Nature to dispose of her surplus population. In my tour over Europe only a few years after the close of the world war, with its terrible holocaust of human life, I found practically every country in Europe more overpopulated, or at least more conscious of its excess population, than it was before the war started.

A war completely shatters the fabric of international relationships and to a large extent destroys even the internal organization of a nation, so that when the war is over, a country finds itself far less able to support its smaller population on its disorganized economic basis than it was to support a larger population with better economic foundations before the war. By the time those economic foundations have been restored, the population has again shot forward, so that the condition is not better than before the war took place. I think this throws a new light upon international problems. We must stop thinking of war as any remedy for excess population.

We are coming to think of population as one of the great concrete, tangible, objective factors in human welfare, to be directed just as we direct any of the other great institutions of human life. On that basis, I am confident that we are moving forward into a new and better era, both economic and social, because of our better grasp of this great human capacity.

Birth Control is not a selfish practice for ladies with lap dogs but a crying need for the overburdened poor, who cannot support large families with their small wages and have to send their overabundant offspring to various charitable organizations and foster homes.

—*N Y Evening Post*, Nov 6th.

Book Reviews

THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN MARRIAGE, by F Muller-Lyer *Knopf, New York* \$4 00

AT a time when all modern thought in the social sciences has turned definitely away from the construction of imaginary sequences of evolutionary series which place ourselves or our ideal state at the top and arrange all other peoples in a graded descending scale, it is very strange that this book should have been published at all. The work of a layman, strewn with the traditional references to the classics and the equally traditional misinformation and bizarre imaginings about primitive man, it proposes the theory that marriage has passed through three stages, the Clanal, the Familial, and the Personal epochs. If one were to judge the book upon its merits it could simply be dismissed as negligible, without sound scholarship or philosophy. But the fact that such works are still being published by reputable publishers and are presumably still being read, makes the nature of the book, if not its matter, a challenge to stringent criticism.

There have been recurrent periods in the history of thought when primitive man was hustled to the foreground of social discussion and his supposed characteristics made to prove all manner of points—that man was naturally promiscuous, naturally polygamous or naturally monogamous, according to the fancy of the individual social theorist. Conspicuous examples of these furors were those which followed the discovery of America and the resulting cult of Natural Man, and the Utopian constructions which resulted from the early explorers' records of life in the South Seas. Recent scientific research among primitive peoples, such as that of Professor Malinowski, has produced a fresh amount of theorizing and again primitive man is being invoked by the layman to prove each and every fanciful theory.

So when books such as this appear and continue to appear, blandly asserting that such a thing as a Clanal stage of marriage existed, it seems pertinent to insist that there is no such thing as "primitive marriage," but only many diversified marital arrangements among many different varieties of primitive people, marriage by payment, by capture, by exchange, by agreement of parents

or by agreement between prospective bride and groom, trial marriage, companionate marriage, polygamous marriage, marriage in which the strictest monogamy is enjoined upon one or both sexes. There is nothing in the history of the human race to suggest any definite evolution of attitudes towards marriage. There are many primitive societies where women are economically independent, where marriage is not socially controlled until a child is conceived, where forms of Birth Control are practiced. There are even primitive societies—e.g. the inhabitants of the islands of Aua, the Territory of New Guinea, and Mentawai in the East Indies, where the very modern experiment of separate residences for husband and wife, has been in effect for some centuries. History suggests, not evolution, not even very definite trends, but constant rearrangements of a few marital patterns at different times and in different places, with old patterns continually reasserting themselves.

MARGARET MEAD

CULTURAL CHANGE, by F Stuart Chapin
The Century Co., New York \$2 50

THE TWILIGHT OF CHRISTIANITY, by
Harry Elmer Barnes *Vanguard Press, New York* \$3 00

PROFESSOR CHAPIN'S book is an analysis of the general processes of invention, accumulation and selection by which cultural change comes about. The author wields the historical and statistical methods and from him we learn of culture in general and of culture processes presumably at work not only in "Middletown" but in Timbuctoo and Leningrad. The content is not altogether new to those who know Professor Chapin's *Introduction to Social Evolution*, his *Introduction to Social Economy* and his numerous articles attempting to apply quantitative methods to social phenomena. His work is in no sense a compilation, however, but is bound together around his central theme of cultural change.

We are first introduced to a brief sketch of cultural origins and realize that man as a culture building animal has a venerable antiquity. It is pointed out that language is the most important means of accumulating culture, and an analysis is made of linguistic development which closely fol-

lows that of Allport. Social institutions are described as the product of human needs and as composed of attitudes, symbolic culture traits, utilitarian culture traits, and oral or written specifications. With the recognition that accumulation is the central fact in cultural change there follows a survey of classical and medieval culture with the suggestion that certain rhythms are in evidence. Following out this idea there is presented a theory of synchronous culture cycles according to which larger cycles are resolved in terms of growth, maturity, and decay of minor cycles. There is also presented the conception of a societal reaction pattern, which if valid would mean that Middletown in a process of transition first tries to enforce its older customs, then attempts special legislation and finally integrates its social experiments into a general principle embodied in legislation. Science and machinery have changed Middletown and Professor Chapin traces the rise of power machinery which has remoulded Western Civilization. The discrepancy in rates of change of various aspects of culture so clearly brought out in *Middletown* has been aptly termed by Ogburn cultural lag. Chapin analyzes this concept and illustrates it by the present situation in family life, showing that unequal changes in different aspects of family life give rise to strain and tension.

Professor Chapin's attempt to further our scientific consciousness of culture by the application of quantitative methods is noteworthy but as he himself realizes, cultural units are ill defined so that the meaning of similar growth curves is as yet not quite certain. The book is cautiously and temperately written with full awareness that it is blazing a trail rather than laying an unchangeable foundation for the future. There are numerous diagrams which are ingenious and often exceedingly illuminating, although certain of them are based on analogies so complicated that the clarifying instrument of the diagram is not much easier to see through than the phenomenon itself. In general the book is a lucid and valuable contribution to scientific sociology.

The preceding work has shown an awareness not only of culture but of cultural lag. *The Twilight of Christianity* is devoted to an outstanding example of contemporary cultural lag, namely the lag of orthodox religion behind modern science and the changes that it has engendered. It is a truly brilliant piece of controversial writing by one possessed of an encyclopaedic knowledge of history and

social science. The main argument is a simple one, that many features of orthodox religion in themselves are bad and that the old religious culture pattern is hopelessly inconsistent with modern science and with a progressively secularized culture. Crush the infamous thing and away with the rubbish. This thesis is pursued with relentless and impeccable logic through most of the book, with a wealth of facts and illustrations that must bring anguish to pious souls who have not the gift of mental compartmentalization nor the anaesthetic of righteous indignation.

Professor Barnes states his problem, points out the contrasts in modern culture, presents his credentials as one fit to discuss the subject and then squashes the argument that the situation either does not exist or is old stuff. This he does by adding up the cost of religion through its evil effects on intellectual life, political institutions, business, sex relations, education, journalism and art. An analysis of religion in general and the Christian Epic in particular is followed by a devastating discussion of the Bible as a guide to modern problems with the claim that it is worse than useless. Having kicked the props out from under orthodoxy by showing the impossibility of any supernatural sanction for the Scriptures, he demonstrates that orthodoxy is a collection of cultural fossils which are crumbling with the advance of science. The readjustment necessary for consistency with the facts of science varies from Catholicism to Modernism but discrepancies, each and all, are dragged forth for exhibition. The unkindest cut of all is perhaps, the demolition of the Jesus stereotype, a term aptly applied to the cherished faith that Jesus even as a man, stripped of supernaturalism, could serve as a source of inspiration and guidance in the modern world.

The book is not wholly destructive for the reader is finally offered the humanistic religion of John Dietrich which Barnes heartily endorses. It might be claimed that the discussion of religion, past and future, might be clarified by a more rigid definition of terms, and many will feel that Barnes has under-estimated the personal solace of religion in an uncertain and often cruel world, and will find the religion expurgated by science an empty thing which leaves basic cravings still unsatisfied. Nevertheless, if this book should be thoroughly absorbed by the present generation and a complete consciousness of culture and of culture lag be thus aroused, the next generation will find the way clear.

to follow science and enjoy opportunity for reverence in the expanded world revealed by scientists

CLIFFORD KIRKPATRICK

THE MAGNIFICENT ILLUSION, by E Boyd Barrett *Ives Washburn, New York* \$3 00

READERS of the BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW will be interested in Dr E Boyd Barrett's autobiography. It is fascinating to know the life intimacies of one who as a priest of the Catholic Church still stands so courageously for Birth Control. It is true that in *The Magnificent Illusion*, one misses an account of his training in sex matters. This does not matter, since the reader breathlessly follows the evolution of a mind that refused to be kept from realistic thinking and adjustment to the realities of life.

First comes a childhood spent in an idyllic Catholic home of beautiful sweetness in Ireland with a young widowed mother at once an older sister and parent to her three boys. Then we see developing a very normal young man, who through contact with the famous H Crichton Miller had his attention called to psycho-analysis.

Of course his views brought him into conflict with his Church. How, with much individual kindness and otherwise the authorities tried to find a place for this thorn in their ecclesiastical flesh, where it would hurt least, is all told with that rare simplicity, straightforwardness and scintillating style, for which Doctor Barrett has rightly become famous. Sent finally to America, his lectures on psychology at Fordham University attracted large hearings until orders came to omit all reference to sex. As well ask Niagara to cease her flow as to ask a psychologist to omit sex. The inevitable happened and—but you must read the book and see what happened in Greenwich Village on that memorable night.

GEORGE MAYCHIN STOCKDALE

THE PASSING OF THE PHANTOMS A Study of Evolutionary Psychology and Morals, by C J Patten *E P Dutton & Co, N Y. (Today and Tomorrow Series)* \$1 00

PROFESSOR PATTEN, who holds the chair of anatomy in the University of Sheffield, has attempted a rather ambitious task in this booklet. Confronted in his own field with most convincing structural evidence of man's evolutionary origin and physical kinship with the lower animals, he

seeks to demonstrate that there is also a continuity of mental and even moral qualities throughout the entire organic world. To this end he recounts a number of his observations on the behavior of various animals, which he interprets in the light of his thesis.

The book begins logically with a chapter on the reality of evolution, which is followed by others on the evolution of mental powers, the evolution of moral sense, and the evolution of human morality. As one might expect, the first is the most convincing, since here the author is dealing with facts of anatomy. His later chapters, involving incursions into the fields of anthropology and animal psychology, do not carry the same measure of conviction. This is perhaps inevitable from the nature of the subjects with which he is dealing. Nevertheless, even the reader who is prepared to grant the general premise of Professor Patten's argument will be inclined to question the validity of some of his interpretations. Alternative explanations are not lacking. It hardly seems necessary, for example, to attribute a belief in spirits to dogs which howl at dim objects in the moonlight, or horses which take fright at swaying sunflowers, nor does it seem altogether reasonable to speak of a "moral sense" in connection with ants or birds, even though the author evidently does not give the term exactly the same meaning it has in the case of human beings. On the other hand it can hardly be doubted that such qualities as imagination and memory exist in many animals, and Professor Patten's illustrative examples are instructive.

The last chapter discusses the relation of superstition and religion and the emergence of the modern non-superstitious or rational man, who is described as "standing aloof from the dictates of external authority when it asserts without evidence." Such a man "neither asserts nor denies questions concerning phenomena which lie outside the range of experience."

The general adoption of this point of view would undoubtedly usher in a new and better era of human understanding, but we doubt that Professor Patten's book will win many converts to it. It may be questioned whether so broad a field as he has attempted to cover can be adequately summarized in a small booklet, and those who are not yet ready to reject external authority unsupported by evidence will hardly be convinced by his necessarily sketchy discussion.

MALCOLM H BISSELL

SOCIETY AND ITS PROBLEMS, by Grove Samuel Dow Revised Edition Thomas Y Crowell, New York \$3 00

IN contrast with such books as Margaret Sanger's *Motherhood in Bondage*, and Robert Kelso's *Poverty*, how antiquated and unscientific seems the work of Professor Grove Samuel Dow in his volume on *Society and Its Problems*. Although in some passages this book seems to suggest progressive measures, how little the author really knows or cares to teach about the problems of population, over-crowding, and large families may be observed in the following quotation "As people become educated they acquire a more accurate knowledge of the laws of reproduction, and as a result fewer children are born. Whether for the best interests of our country or not," continues this author, "we can expect this tendency to increase as our country continues to grow in prosperity and enlightenment." It must be, indeed, an unenlightened portion of our Commonwealth in which a book on Social Problems, in order to circulate, needs to concede the possibility that this reduced birth-rate may not be for the best interests of our country.

Professor Dow gives as the first-named cause of poverty "Insufficient Natural Resources." "This cause of poverty," he explains, "the ingenuity of man is continually conquering either by compelling nature to produce against its will, or by changing the character of local industry, such as the supplanting of agriculture in New England by manufacturing and commerce." Indeed, as Dr Kelso so wisely remarks overpopulation is an unpopular subject. Put the blame on nature, for the insufficiency of her resources, not on the crowding in life! But it is hopeless for man to continue to overlook the real controllable cause of poverty. Like Kelso, East, Ross, Mrs Sanger, and the increasing hosts of Birth Control, we must face the facts and conditions as they really are, and attack from a point which offers a real possibility of success, saving women, children, and all mankind from this perennial, self-perpetuating disaster of poverty, by what Ross calls "an adaptive fertility." In the winged words of Kelso "The greatest need of mankind in his war against poverty is for such control and regulation of his propagation as will result in a selective birth-rate."

HERBERT A STURGES

OUT-GUESSING THE STORK, by Galen Starr Ross *Straight-Stuff Publishing Co*, New York \$1 00

IN HIS book *Out-Guessing the Stork*, Mr Ross expresses with emphasis the ideas of a liberal thinker on the subjects of Birth Control, marriage, sexual freedom and marital happiness. The book voices the natural revolt that stirs every thinking person against the prudishness of all those who cannot view sex with a feeling of beautiful adoration and prayer. The never too vehement attacks that Mr Ross vents upon the bigotry of the Church and the hypocritical modesty of the prude are in the reviewer's opinion entirely justified. One who has thought and lived these questions, often feels the same pent-up intolerance for those who are still groping in darkness and ignorance that the author feels.

It is regrettable that the author is not a scientist as well as a public lecturer. This would permit him to add a wider viewpoint to one which is estimably sincere and vigorous.

MORRIS H KAHN, M D

BOOKS RECEIVED

CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND MODERN PROBLEMS, by The Very Rev William Randolph Inge *Putnam*, New York \$5 00

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF HEREDITY, by Paul Popenoe *Williams and Wilkins*, Baltimore \$1 00

ILLUSTRATIONS AND PROOFS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF POPULATION, by Francis Place Edited by Norman E Himes *Houghton Mifflin*, New York \$4 50

MIXED MARRIAGE Anonymous *Harpers*, New York \$2 00

CHRONOS, OR THE FUTURE OF THE FAMILY, by Eden Paul, M D *Kegan Paul*, London 2s 6d

THE PROMISE OF YOUTH, (Genetic Studies of Genius, Volume III) by Barbara S Burks, Dortha W Jensen, Lewis M Terman, and others *Stanford University Press*, California, \$6 00

MUTUAL SERVICE AND COOPERATION, by Charles T Sprading *The Libertarian Publishing Co*, Los Angeles, California \$1 00

PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH, by Clair E Turner *C V Mosby Co*, St Louis \$2 75

THE CONQUEST OF HAPPINESS, by Bertrand Russell *Horace Liveright*, New York \$3 00

News Notes

UNITED STATES

The American Birth Control has sent this letter to all its members

An unfortunate misunderstanding seems to have arisen among the supporters of the Birth Control movement regarding the American Birth Control League and the recently organized Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control, under the chairmanship of Mrs Margaret Sanger. The directors of the League are sending this letter to all members to make clear that the American Birth Control League has no connection whatever with the above mentioned Committee. Contributions to the League should be sent as usual to the American Birth Control League, 152 Madison Avenue, New York, N Y.

The policy of the League is unchanged. At the present time it is concentrating on the practical, constructive work of bringing reliable contraceptive advice within reach of women who because of poverty, ill health, or incompetence should, both for their own good and that of society, limit the number of their children. Contrary to the prevalent understanding, the federal law does not actually interfere with this program, as it leaves physicians free to give contraceptive advice orally, both in their private practice and in clinics.

Never has the need for our work been so great as this winter, when thousands are out of work and can hardly support the children they already have. We are receiving appeals from many parts of the country to help in organizing Birth Control clinics. But we cannot respond to these appeals unless we have funds to engage more field workers.

In view of this special need, we beg each member to send the League a contribution this week.

ELEANOR DWIGHT JONES, *President*

CONNECTICUT The first of a series of educational forums organized by the Naugatuck Birth Control Committee was held at the Congregational Parish House on October 28th. Reverend Charles W Legge, Pastor of the Congregational Church at Wilton, Conn, spoke. The Committee, which is affiliated with the state and national organizations, includes Mrs Philip Rice, chairman, Mrs Edward Williams,

Mr and Mrs E D Hull, Mrs C E Fenniman, Mrs Harold Brown, Mrs F B Rollinson, Mrs Howard Tuttle, Mrs Thomas Bull, Mrs P H Watkins, Mrs Lutze-Edwards, Dr A C Wentworth, Harris Whittemore, Jr, Rev Edward Hance, and Rev Joseph R Swain.

Rabbi Sidney Goldstein of New York, speaking recently at the First Methodist Church of New Haven, summed up the legal situation as follows: "Laws against Birth Control were placed on the statute books over forty years ago by Anthony Comstock, and do not represent the needs or rights of the people today."

MASSACHUSETTS The Women's City Club of Boston held a luncheon meeting on Birth Control on November 20th. Mrs F Robertson Jones was the principal speaker.

Several lectures have been held under the auspices of the Birth Control League of Massachusetts. Dr Elizabeth Kleinman spoke in St James Parish House, Boston, on October 22nd, and in the parish house of the Second Congregational Church, Holyoke, on November 25th. Reverend Clarence R Skinner addressed the congregation of Church of the Unity of Springfield on November 24th.

MICHIGAN Mrs Sanger spoke at the Fountain Street Baptist Church of Grand Rapids on November 19th, under the auspices of the local social workers and ministers.

NEBRASKA Word comes from Trenton that a young couple have recently received the congratulations of Mr Calvin Coolidge on the birth of their fourteenth child. A local newspaper comments: "If they are poor they will need something more than blessings to get them through the next few years."

NEW JERSEY Dr Albert Edward Wiggam, speaking at the Community Forum of the Church of the Redeemer in Newark, N J in November, urged that if information on Birth Control were more widely distributed and simpler,

it would lead to race improvement. He said

The time has come to teach our young people the laws of heredity, and to advocate the study of eugenics. More than 300 colleges are teaching eugenics in this country today, and one learns that if man does not live biologically and pay attention to the laws of nature he cannot remain civilized.

NEW YORK The New York City Congregational Association, comprising the churches of New York, Nassau and Westchester, was divided in its opinion on a resolution presented at an executive session of the Association on November 6th. The resolution stated that

Whereas, the best interests of humanity demand that the children of the future should be born into those families which can give them an adequate heritage of physical strength and an adequate opportunity for education and high environment, and

Whereas, we believe that motherhood has the right to the protestation against the bearing of children which constitute a danger to the health and vitality of mothers, and

Whereas, we believe that an unscientific overpopulation of the world may lead to poverty, famine and war

We, therefore, ask that scientific Birth Control information under the proper medical auspices be made available to the American people, and that necessary legislation be enacted which would enable the New York Health Department to establish free Birth Control clinics

The resolution was lost. The division of opinion was between the younger and older element, and the younger men announced that they would present the resolution again.

Under the auspices of the Junior Committee of the American Birth Control League, the November 20th performance of *Art and Mrs. Bottle* was given to raise funds for the League. The Junior Committee is focussing this winter on financing new clinics in New York.

Several meetings and addresses on Birth Control were held during the past month. Mrs. F. Robertson Jones spoke at a symposium at the Riverside Church on November 8th. Mrs. Walter Timme addressed the Congress of States Societies on *The General Aspects and Progress of the Birth Control Question*, and Dr. George I. Setlow, head

of the Juvenile Delinquency Clinic of the Long Island College Hospital, discussed Birth Control in a series of lectures on medico-legal jurisprudence at the Brooklyn Law School.

PENNSYLVANIA Continued activity is reported from the newly formed Birth Control League of Allegheny County. An educational campaign is under way, and plans include the establishment of maternal health centers, and the development of widespread interest and knowledge of Birth Control.

Professor Roswell Johnson, speaking at a recent meeting, emphasized the fact that the League believes that all married couples should bear their share of children. He said

Conception regulation will promote a better distribution of births. There will be fewer children from inferiors.

We should also diligently seek to help cure any undesired sterility of normal or superior persons. We should aim to cause a larger proportion of children to be born in a better environment as well as with better heredity.

Birth Control is not synonymous with birth prevention.

It means that the number of births should be regulated in accordance with some principle rather than to let it be a mere by-product of the sexual life and hence often in maladjustment to need. Conception control would be a more exact term, for we do not include abortions, but seek to reduce their number.

The number of children should be so spaced that the welfare and health of the mother will be conserved. The average family of the human species, as we may know by going back into prehistory, would be something like 18 children, born at relatively close intervals.

ENGLAND

FIGURES for 1929 from the office of the Registrar General show a net increase in population in England and Wales of 125,000, or 1.32 per cent over 1928, and a decrease of 18 per cent in Scotland, and 20 per cent in Ireland. It should be noted that despite the falling birth-rate, which has decreased from 5 to 2.9 per thousand, the population is increasing.

At the Church Congress held last month in Newport, Wales, Dr. A. F. Tredgold, member of

the council of the Eugenics Society, and leading authority in England on Mental Deficiency, said that the bulk of physical and mental unfitness was transmitted by heredity. He concluded

The prevention of propagation by the mentally and physically unfit would improve the race and considerably diminish social inefficiency. For some time breeding from the dregs rather than from the cream of the people has been going on. Increased medical knowledge and facilities for treatment, humanitarian sentiment, and the trend of social legislation combine to encourage the survival and propagation of the unfit and to make life easier for them than for the fit.

HAWAII

A STRONG plea for Birth Control was made by Dr C A Prosser of Honolulu, who has been carrying on a survey of conditions for the Governor's Advisory Committee on Education, in recent address before the Honolulu Ad Club and the League of Women Voters. Dr Prosser said

I may shock some of you. If so, I am sorry, but when I look at the situation in the Philippines, Shanghai, Canton, and Japan, and listen to the appeal from Governor Roosevelt for Porto Rico with 25 per cent of its population unemployed, I feel that increasing populations is one of the biggest problems before the United States.

There is no escape from the question. We may hide our heads in the sand and say "The Lord will provide," but there is no nation in the world with excessive population which can solve the problem with compulsory colonization.

Hawaii is confronted by the same perplexing question, only it is more acute due to the fact that the islands are isolated. Its resources are known. From 1920 to 1930 the population of Hawaii increased as much as it did in the two preceding decades.

What are you going to do about it?

This is the first time that Japan has permitted open discussion of Birth Control. This is the only way in the world by which the country can survive increased population.

ITALY

ACCORDING to the report of the Bureau of Statistics, mortality rose from 15.59 in 1928 to 15.98 in 1929, and the birth-rate dropped from 26.08 per thousand to 25.09 per thousand.

Nullification and Repeal

THREE MORE OPINIONS

STATUTES, LAWS AND CUSTOMS

LAW, or so-called law, is now one of the great obstacles to the enlightening spread of the Birth Control movement. But what is a law? An admirable answer is to be found in Brand Whitlock's article *The Law of the Land*, which appeared in the August Atlantic Monthly, for, although the author seems to have Prohibition particularly in mind, his discussion is equally applicable to laws regarding Birth Control.

Mr Whitlock hammers home the point that a law is one thing but that a statute is another. A law is never a law unless the people of the land will back it up. Statutes enacted by legislative bodies are only statutes if they do not express a custom of the people. Mr Whitlock's article raises the question in the mind of the reader: Is Prohibition a law, or only a statute? If the people will back up Prohibition, it is a law, otherwise, it is only one of our many statutes.

We can ask the same question of the Comstock Obscenity Law. Is it a law, or only a statute? If it is a law, a codification of the custom of the people, then all the amendments which the Birth Control League can bring about in the statute books will not change it. On the other hand, if the Obscenity Law is now, in 1930, only a statute, then it can be virtually ignored, for no jury will send to prison a person guilty of breaking a statute that is not a law. I say a statute can be *virtually* ignored, for of course it is a nuisance to have to prove in the courts that you have only been guilty of breaking a statute. Witness Mrs Mary Ware Dennett. The censorious element among the people will do all in their power to enforce their pet statutes. The task before the Birth Control League is to prove, uncover, bring up to light the will of the people, the custom, the *law of the land*. The people must be made to stop and think, and then to express their opinion. Is the use of contraception among married people a *custom*?

In answering this question let us get a clearer light on the point from Mr Whitlock's article. He opens with a statement regarding the many laws which are passed by Congress and the forty-eight state legislatures. And then he says, "All of which moved a critic to say that America has

more law and more lawlessness than any other nation in the world "Are we really more lawless than any other people? One would think that we were about the most tractable and organizable people in the world We will do almost anything anyone tells us to

"There are certain acts which the conscience of mankind, the collective opinion of all civilized nations, condemn as wrong These acts fall into certain easily defined categories Everyone knows what they are, and doesn't have to look into the statute books to find out, all he has to do is to look into his own heart, for he knows the difference between right and wrong

"As an old parliamentarian said, whenever the Commons have nothing else to do they can always make a new crime The people do not respect these enactments because they know that the deeds the enactments declare to be wrong are not wrong, and it is impossible by the use of force, however strong or violent, to impose upon the moral sense of the people a feeling that a given act is wrong just because those whose prejudices it offends have been able to induce a legislature to enact it into what is called a 'law' Custom is the supreme law in all communities, civilized or savage, and unless the statute conforms to custom it is no law—that is, it is no law of the land "

This point raises the question in my own mind whether the Birth Control League will not do better to change the custom first, or, if the desired custom is with us, to bring that fact to light, make it known, make the people conscious of the fact that the Obscenity Law is not really a law at all but only a statute

So, if Mr Whitlock is right in his point which it seems to me he has made convincing enough to any intelligent persons, the custom regarding Birth Control is the important thing to consider and to work on In looking into our hearts to see what is right and what is wrong, do we as a people find that it is right to limit by contraception the number of children we shall bring into our homes? Is it right that we should have a child every one or two years? If the number of children should be limited, is it right that we should bring about this limitation by abstinence, by continence, by throttling our natural love life? And, further, if any portion of our population believe it wrong to use scientific contraception, is it right that this portion of the population should dictate to others how they should manage their private lives? If ten

people in the United States are alone in their desire to have two children rather than a dozen and to effect this control by contraception, have all the other millions of people any right or cause to interfere with the private lives of the ten? These are some of the questions which the public should answer before a decision can be made as to the validity of the Obscenity Law

I believe that the crux of the situation lies in the fact that the custom of the last generations has changed, but that the public has not yet become conscious of it Almost every married couple in America is forced to turn to conception control, and few believe in abstinence as the right method Science has produced adequate contraception The people are anxious for it When *each* couple in the land realizes that *every* couple is faced by the same need, the present statutes regarding contraception will peel off like dead skin

FRANCIS S URIDGE

Bronxville, N Y

FIRST INSTRUCT THE PUBLIC

THE fact of nullification in Governmental process and social practice is known and relied upon by lawyers and judges as soundly as any affirmative rule of law It cannot, however, receive express recognition from the courts without having a weakening effect upon the whole legal structure The efforts of those interested in Birth Control should be towards instructing and assisting the public who almost unanimously either practice or desire the necessary knowledge to practice Birth Control Efforts to have the statutes changed should await a time when there is a chance of success or should be made only as a fulcrum from which to enlist the interest of the public

WALTER M NELSON

Detroit, Michigan

DEAD-LETTERIZATION

IN THE October, 1930, number of the BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW, Miss Dorothy Kenyon raises the question whether the Birth Control movement should make the effort to repeal the statutes against Birth Control or whether it should try to go forward by nullifying the existing laws

Two apparently inconsistent answers can be given which paradoxically are both correct One is that the movement as a movement cannot use

the process. The other is that the movement is bound to be the beneficiary of it.

The process called nullification and for which I will coin the barbarous word, dead-letterization, is a process necessarily independent of an organized movement. The statute requiring a man to walk on foot in front of a machine moving on a highway was not outlawed and could not have been outlawed by a group of people who considered it a bad law. It was not deliberately nullified, it simply became out-of-date. It reflects the change in the customs of the people. When there is the same unanimity of opinion about Birth Control laws as there is about that traffic law, it, too, will be a dead letter.

That the process of dead-letterization of Birth Control laws is going on at present does not admit of doubt, a larger and larger number of people are disregarding both the letter and the spirit of the laws. I use the word disregard in the literal sense to refer not so much to those who knowingly violate a law as to those who do what they consider right without regard to the law and often in ignorance of it. The spirit of the Birth Control laws is to minimize the practice of Birth Control by prohibiting the dissemination of knowledge and the sale of devices. We all know that Birth Control is being more and more widely practised in this country, that knowledge concerning it is being more and more freely passed from mouth to ear and that devices are more and more easily purchasable. These devices may be purchased readily by almost anyone at almost any drug store. The process is perhaps most strikingly illustrated by the reduction in price of these articles which has taken place in the last few years.

Can this process be speeded up by organized effort? It seems to me very doubtful that it can be. The process is not only difficult but dangerous. People who *organize* to violate the law are guilty of conspiracy and will find themselves sooner or later in the clutches of the law. When prosecuted for the violation of the law, they may be confronted with a prosecuting attorney, a judge, or jurors, who regard the Birth Control statute as embodying a great moral law. As martyrs they will serve the cause effectively, but they should not count on the impunity with which one can violate a dead letter statute which no longer reflects the views of any part of the community.

Organized effort to disobey the Birth Control

laws will thus tend to nullify them, but at a grievous cost to the nullifiers.

It would seem to me that the process of dead-letterization can best be hastened by the indirect process of changing public opinion. To recur to the analogy of the traffic law above mentioned, the members of the Association for the Abolition of that traffic law should busy themselves not with violating the law, but with the improvement of highways and of automobiles. When the hands of millions of people are at the steering wheels of fast automobiles driving over concrete roads, that particular traffic law will have dropped out of existence. Let the Birth Control movement study and improve the technique of Birth Control. When Birth Control is sure and easy and cheap, the process of nullification will take care of itself. Soon after the practice of Birth Control is safe as against the laws of nature, it will be safe as against the laws of man.

ALLEN S. OLMSTED, 2nd

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Letters from Readers

We urge our readers to express their opinions for publication on this page. Comments, criticisms, ideas, suggestions, for the REVIEW and for the Birth Control movement, are welcome

PLANS OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LEGISLATION FOR BIRTH CONTROL

TO THE EDITOR

The National Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control, Margaret Sanger, Chairman, is strengthening its forces and feels greatly encouraged at the willingness of men and women to co-operate, especially in the readiness to give liberally of time and effort. Financial aid at this time is unfortunately not so liberal as heretofore, but the work goes on nevertheless as it must until success has come.

The National Committee on Federal Legislation is divided into four sections, Eastern Region with eleven states and the District of Columbia, Mrs. Walter Timme, Chairman, Western Region, eleven states, Mrs. Vernon Z. Reed, Chairman, Middle Western Region, 17 States, Dr. John H. J. Upham, Chairman, and Southern Region, nine states, each state in the region is organized in congressional districts, and each congressional district has at its head a chairman, key woman, in that particular district. Work in the south is not yet in hand. The West and Middle-West are well under way and doing excellent work. The Eastern Region has completed the state organization, and the state chairmen at the present time are working on the congressional districts. A survey of the Senators and Congressmen of all the regions is under way, and when the amendment, or the Bill, is introduced in 1931, a well organized body of men and women from all sections of the country will be ready to give the strength of their prestige and the power of their lists of influential people, scientists, medical men, churchmen, to pushing on to victory.

The National Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control, offices at 17 West 16th Street, New York City, invites the readers of the Birth Control Review to send in questions regarding the proposed amendment, or about the present laws, both state and federal, regarding Birth Control.

IDA W. TIMME,
Chairman, Eastern Region

PREVENTION NOT ALLEVIATION

TO THE EDITOR

I have long been in sympathy with the purposes of the Birth Control League. They are based on common sense, on humanity, and on the economy of life, which is also the economy of national life. They look to prevention of misery as well as to its alleviation.

ROBERT UNDERWOOD JOHNSON
New York *Director, Hall of Fame*

DOES YOUTH REALLY KNOW

TO THE EDITOR

As one who has but recently graduated from the "younger generation" I wish to express my astonishment at the opinions set forth in *An Official Questionnaire*, which appeared in the October issue. Not because they are immoral, but rather because of the astounding ignorance shown of anything more than the biological aspects of sex. If one accepts the author's assurance that these answers, obtained from but seventy girls, are a true representation of the average opinion of the girls in her daughter's college, one can only conclude that sex education in "one of the best colleges in the country" is woefully inadequate. Perhaps that is why the girls laugh at their instruction. Surely they are not so completely concerned as to think—as their friend, the author, does—that all the sex experience that they may have packed into their adolescent years could teach them more than is to be acquired from "books, charts, and classrooms." Or are they perhaps ignorant of the fact that man lived for ages in the fullness of experience without learning very much about even the biological aspects of sex?

Why is it so often assumed by otherwise educated people that the sexual side of life is one in which experience is not only a necessary, but the all-sufficient road to learning? Has it never been suggested to these girls that there is such a thing as the art of love, and that no art is to be learned

by mere experience? Do the forty girls who "felt it a distinct advantage to marry a man who had previous experience with women" really prefer such a man even if ignorant of books, to a virgin youth who had absorbed the art and psychology of love from writers as varied as, say, Shakespeare and Havelock Ellis

But let us unwrap one of the gems of wisdom from its packing in the sentimental liberalism of the writer of the article "Of the thirty-one girls willing to try a companionate marriage with a man they loved, none felt that, in case the association did not lead to marriage, it would handicap them in making a happy marriage with someone else" Obviously this pronouncement so glibly contradicting the experience of man as recorded in literature, is not based on any experience of the girls themselves, as their reporter would apparently have us think. On the contrary it is an excellent specimen of sophomoric wisdom, based on an unbalanced diet of Judge Lindsey and Bertrand Russell

Why does the BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW present us with this? If the questionnaire has any claim to be representative it should no doubt have been published verbatim in *School and Society*, for the benefit of educators

How can the appearance of such an article (and several others in the same number of the REVIEW) help the cause for which the Birth Control League is working? No doubt many of your regular subscribers—including the writer of this letter—find such articles highly interesting, but is it the function of the REVIEW merely to interest those who are already supporting the cause? We all know many reasonable but more delicately-minded people who might be persuaded to join us, but who certainly would be driven away by such article. You have raised your flag and carry it on your front page, why not follow it?

Minneapolis, Minn

RICHARD HARTSHORNE

PRESENT A BILL WORTH FIGHTING FOR

TO THE EDITOR

I noted with interest in your last issue the letter of Miss Nelson, of the Northern California Birth Control Committee of One Hundred, in regard to the "doctor's bill"

It would seem to me that those who are favoring the "doctor's bill" in preference to unrestricted

Birth Control are taking a backward step. In view of the lack of interest, and in many cases outright opposition, of the majority of the medical profession it would be most unwise to entrust them with the sole custody of contraceptive information. We have no assurance that they would spread the knowledge as widely as we might desire, and at any rate their whole attitude does not give confidence that they are socially minded in this respect

Those who are to encounter the state legislatures this winter should present a bill worth fighting for. They will find that the opposition to a "doctor's bill" will be no less keen than to a more thoroughgoing measure, on the part of religious and other narrow-minded interests

Birth Control propaganda has impressed itself on the community as meaning just what it says. The majority of the public is for it, even if legislators are not. Advocates and propagandists should continue to keep faith with the public by demanding no less than the repeal of all restrictive laws

West Hartford, Conn

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THE ANSWER BOX

Does any religious organization endorse Birth Control?

Yes, several religious organizations definitely endorse and support Birth Control, believing that it is a means of social betterment. Among these are the American Unitarian Association, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, various sectional conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Universalist General Convention. Many forward-looking churchmen have declared themselves in favor of a better understanding and wider dissemination of Birth Control information. We have recently issued a leaflet on *The Churches and Birth Control*, giving statements from prominent clergymen, and shall be glad to send free copies on request.

I believe in Birth Control for the married mother, but I can't help worrying about the effect on morality of wide-spread knowledge of contraception. Isn't there some way to insure that only married people will get information?

It is impossible to prevent Birth Control knowledge from spreading. Even now, in spite of restrictive laws, almost everyone is aware of some technique of contraception. This knowledge is probably more widely distributed in the circles of commercialized vice than in any other class. If people want Birth Control information for "immoral" purposes they can get it.

But our ideas on the subject are changing. It is no longer considered moral to punish children for the sexual indiscretions of their parents. The child of a prostitute is not usually to be envied, and we should not try to withhold the knowledge which would prevent its conception. It is out of keeping with the feeling of "Children of choice, not of chance" to use the threat of the unwanted child as a means of preserving morality.

What is the stand of the American Birth Control League on abortion?

The American Birth Control League is absolutely and unequivocally opposed to any but therapeutic abortion. Abortion is dangerous, physically and psychically. Universal knowledge of Birth Control would reduce it to a minimum.

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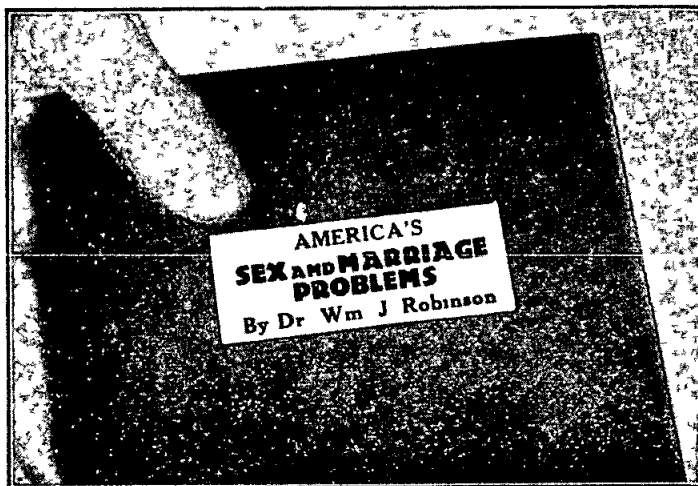
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