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Twenty Cents

# BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

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## Do Italian Women Obey Mussolini?

*By* GAETANO SALVEMINI

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## Social Trends and Birth Control—*A Review*

*By* JOSEPH J. SPENGLER

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Articles and Book Reviews *by* E. Franklin Frazier •  
Miriam Allen de Ford • Ray Rumyanek • Maynard Shipley

# QUALITY OF POPULATION

*From Committee Findings of the Report on "Recent Social Trends"*

**O**F THE two ways of improving the inherited qualities of a people, the first, mutation, may be dismissed, since our knowledge is still too limited, the second, selection and breeding for desirable qualities, offers possibilities

But what are the practical possibilities of improving a people by conscious selection? The lack of knowledge concerning heredity and the composition of the chromosomes of prospective parents is undoubtedly an obstacle, but breeders of livestock have accomplished results without this information. The obstacles lie rather in obtaining the necessary control, in the lack of agreement as to which combination of traits is desirable, and in the difficulty in mating of combining sentimental and spiritual values with biological values. The problem is one of research from which in time higher eugenic ideals may emerge.

More immediately urgent is the need of preventing individuals with undesired inheritable traits from having offspring. Such a policy could be enforced in the more marked cases of feeblemindedness, of which there are less than 100,000 institutions, but for the large numbers outside of institutions, variously estimated in the millions, who is to decide? The abilities of individuals shade down from competency to idiocy, and it is not at all certain that all low grades of mentality are caused by heredity. So with the other objectionable types, the insane and criminals, it is not known that the factors producing them are inherited. Men often commit criminal acts because of social conditions. Crime fluctuates with the business cycle. In a similar manner, certain types of social experience conduce to insanity. For example, there was a higher percentage of rejections because of mental disorder among men drafted for the United States Army from cities than from rural areas. A few states have passed laws providing for the sterilization of certain inmates of state institutions by an operation reported to be otherwise harmless.

If conscious control of selection now seems remote, it should be remembered that selection is continually occurring nonetheless, and that a policy is demanded. Natural selection has not ceased and the modern urban environment may be quite as rigorous as that of nature in developing or suppressing physical or mental traits. Discoveries regarding birth control already represent a powerful device for implementing policies of selection, and the birth rate, itself a selective agent, is much higher among the groups with a low income than among those with a higher income. The association, however, between large incomes and desirable hereditary traits may not be very marked.

*—Recent Social Trends in the United States, page xxvii*

# Birth Control Review

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**F**AR reaching in its implications is the fact that the Report of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends, reviewed in this issue, places birth control once and for all in the category of actual events in distinction to arguable or questionable theories. Birth control is not discussed, pro and con, but is accepted as a matter of course, as a factor in population trends, particularly the trend toward smaller sized families. Though there may be a difference of opinion as to what constitutes the optimum population of the future, the necessity for some sort of population control is clearly brought out. Improvement in quality is likewise a future objective. Both numerical control and racial betterment are to be sought not by restricting birth control information, but by giving it freely and adequately to all who need it. *Recent Social Trends*, which has been hailed as an encyclopaedia of contemporary American social life, has accepted birth control as a part of the American social scheme, and as a matter of desirable public policy.

**F**ATHER WILFRED PARSONS, editor of the Catholic weekly *America* contributes an article to the February 25th issue of that magazine deploring the appearance of the two recently issued Catholic books on the so-

called safe period. He points out the scientific uncertainties of the safe period method at the present stage of knowledge and research, and writes "It is tragic to think that hopes have been falsely raised of a way around the prohibition of birth control, by a method that is advertised as certain. One shudders when one thinks of the results of disillusionment. And what of the ethics of selling a book when half the buyers of it may find that it is useless for them after they have bought it." We are happy to find ourselves in complete agreement with Father Parsons thus far. But he neglected to make clear that one of the books, *The Sterile Period in Family Life*, carries the *Imprimatur* of Patrick Cardinal Hayes, Archbishop of New York, while the other, *The Rhythm*, bears on its title page the phrase "Published with Ecclesiastical Approbation." The good Father holds that the publishing of these books is a "commercial racket," an opinion which he would doubtless find hard to reconcile with ecclesiastical approbation. With less evasion he accuses the "birth controllers" of soiling their garments in the mud of commercialism. Quoting the editorial in the February REVIEW in which we stated that the step from advocating a faulty method to permitting a scientific one may be long but, logically, will be taken at last, he writes "It was inevitable that there would be such a reaction, if for no other reason than that a lot of money will be lost if there turns out to be a method of birth control which does not require the use of costly appliances. It is true that birth controllers showed a very suspicious alarm at the ballyhoo for the new method, a very lucrative business will be ruined if the new method is quite generally adopted." Correct. Again we agree with Father Parsons. Money will be lost, but this will not trouble the "birth controllers," by which term Father Parsons presumably means lay and professional men and women interested in the birth control movement. No one even remotely conversant with the movement and with its personnel will take his accusation seriously. If and when

research gives us sufficient data to place the sterile period with certainty, "birth controllers" will be the first to welcome this method, for they know full well the difficulties of available scientific methods. We must not forget, however, that the sterile period method (granted its ultimate and hoped-for development) will be applicable at only certain very specific times. Research of all kinds must be encouraged and must go on with complete disregard to religious hairsplitting about Divine sanctions and natural versus unnatural methods.

**C**ONTRACEPTIVE methods now in use are reliable, non-injurious, reasonably inexpensive and easy to use. They are good enough to go on with, but they are not ideal. Dr. Eric M. Matsner, medical director of the American Birth Control League, writes in his recently issued Outline on *The Technique of Contraception*: "There is to date no contraceptive which even approaches perfection from the point of view of the physical, emotional and practical aspects combined. Investigations and experiments are being conducted in several quarters and it is hoped that some generally applicable and very simple method will be developed. The particular need is for a method that can be used by the ignorant and the very poor and those with scant privacy and no instructors." This attitude, shared by the foremost medical authorities in the field, should be borne in mind in connection with the Catholic attitude discussed above. Dr. Matsner's Outline, issued in response to a demand for a brief summary for physicians, is available to members of the medical profession. Its favorable reception is an indication of the growing acceptance of contraception as an integral part of medical practice.

**A**S WE go to press a hearing on the Connecticut birth control bill is taking place (March 1st) before the Joint Judiciary Committee of the Connecticut Legislature. Connecticut has the distinction of being the one state in the Union which makes the *use* of contraceptives illegal. Why the mothers of the state have not long since stampeded the courts demanding arrest, and mocked the law out of existence is cause for wonder. The

present bill, proceeding in more orderly fashion, is designed to permit physicians to prescribe contraceptives for health reasons and reasons of social welfare, and to permit the use of contraceptives when so prescribed. It is sponsored by the Connecticut State Medical Society, the first instance, we believe, of a state medical body recognizing contraception and initiating legislation on the subject. The physicians of Connecticut are to be congratulated on meeting the issue. It is high time that physicians everywhere should follow the example of their Connecticut colleagues and refuse to tolerate legal interference in medical matters. For birth control is first and last a medical matter and as such should be unhampered by obsolete laws.

**M**EDICAL leadership in birth control abroad has appeared most recently in Hungary where Dr. Heinrich Derera spoke at the last meeting of the Royal Medical Society on the necessity of a change of the birth control law now in force. In the interest of the public it is necessary that the leadership in the birth control movement remain in the hands of medical institutions. Dr. Derera urged the establishing in Hungary of welfare centers, where women may be taught properly the methods of contraception.

**W**ITH the organization of the Kentucky Birth Control League at the Kentucky Birth Control Conference, held in Louisville on February 25th, the state leagues affiliated with the national league now number fifteen, almost twice as many as were in existence a year ago. This, together with the steady increase in number of clinics, may be taken as a valid measure of progress. The American Birth Control League has as its objective forty-eight state leagues. Not that their organization would complete the task of the birth control movement, it would, however, provide an adequate scaffolding which would make all other work—the establishment of clinical service, education of physicians and laymen, and research—far easier. If the ultimate aim of the movement is to make birth control information accessible to all who need it, every new league is a step forward and a matter for congratulation.

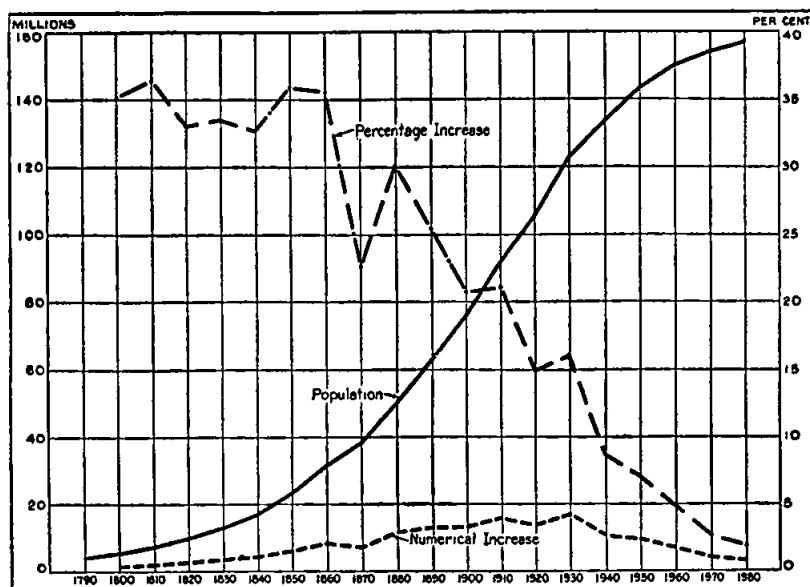
# Social Trends and Birth Control

By JOSEPH J SPENGLER

WERE the capacity of America's political and social leaders equal to that of the eminent scholars who produced this unprecedentedly valuable study, *Recent Social Trends in the United States*,<sup>1</sup> America would soon be free of unemployment and misery which now engulf her. However, as the President's Committee declares, "Men cling to ideas, ideals, institutions, blindly perhaps even when outworn." Only in view of the painful truth of this statement, can one understand why Senator Warren R. Austin, in opposing the bill to amend the existing federal birth control laws, was able to say that the findings of the President's Committee led him to conclude that "agriculture," "industry," and "the great group called 'labor'" are "damaged by the decline of the birth rate." Or why Edward F. McGrady, alleged representative of organized labor, was willing to sacrifice the interests of the latter to "the church."<sup>2</sup> For if one can derive any conclusion relative to birth control from the report on social trends, it is to the effect that population control is pre-requisite to sustained individual prosperity.

Population treatment in *Recent Social Trends* falls roughly under five heads:

1 *Recent shifts in population*, while temporarily checked by the depression, will continue. These shifts, aside from the drift to states such as Arizona, Florida, California, etc., are of two sorts: (a) from the farm and (b) to the suburbs. The shift from the farm is apparently to both the village and the city. For "incorporated villages were found to be growing." However, places of 1000 to 3000 just as places of 5000 to 10,000 have achieved a degree of specialization. Village life itself is be-



Population of United States, amount and rate of increase by decades, 1790-1980 (The charts accompanying this article are taken from Vol I of "Recent Social Trends")

coming stabilized. The nation can no longer count on rural America to supply the population of the country. The village in stabilized agricultural areas, it seems, "is beginning to reflect, even before other sections of the country, the stabilization of the national population forecasted for two or three decades hence." Urban growth continues. Between 1920 and 1930 three-quarters of the national increase took place within the orbits of cities of 100,000 or more. One half the population lives within an hour of such cities, whose growth has been facilitated by the "economic and social specialization and diversification" made feasible there. Suburbanward drift, however, is creating a *rus in urbe* in suburban territories. The earlier American city has been transmuted into a metropolitan community which requires a "sort of super-metropolitan" government not provided by the botched city officials of the day.

2 *The racial and nationality complexion* of the American population is changing somewhat. The colored and the Mexican group has increased slightly more than the white race since 1920. The foreign element now constitutes a smaller propor-

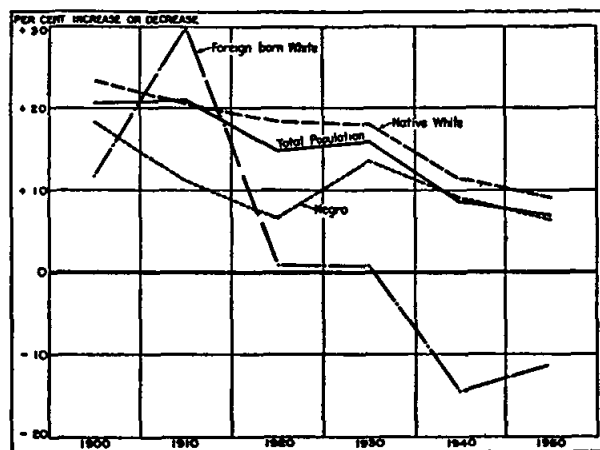
<sup>1</sup> RECENT SOCIAL TRENDS IN THE UNITED STATES. Report of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends With a Foreword by Herbert Hoover, President of the United States. 2 Vols. 1933. McGraw-Hill, New York. \$10.

<sup>2</sup> See SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT ON S 4436, January 18, 1933, pp 3, 11.

tion of the total population. Intermarriage of foreign born and natives has apparently increased. The white population is thus amalgamating into a more homogeneous group.

3 *The decline in family size* and in the birth rate, as well as the differential nature of the incidence of the decline, is reflected in various figures presented. Family size is smaller and has declined more in cities and metropolises than in rural regions and small places. The upper classes, measured by occupational status and wealth, have a lower gross fertility and a lower net fertility than have the lower classes. By occupation family size in 1930 ranged from 15 per cent below the average for professional people and the clergy, to 40 per cent above among farm laborers. Data on value of home and family size indicated that families are about 50 per cent larger among the poorest than among the well-to-do. The decline in the birth rate is not due to late marriage or relatively fewer marriages, for relatively more persons marry today than formerly and at an earlier age, in part because of the spread of contraceptive practices. The decline in the birth rate is attributed largely to birth control although the frequency of the practice of abortion among those denied birth control information is mentioned. Thompson and Whelpton indicate that a policy designed to increase the birth rate requires, not the preservation of the federal anti-birth control laws, but the adequate compensation of parents in terms of prevailing values (I, p. 55).

L. K. Frank cites data to the effect that there are 6,500,000 mentally deficient children and 3,500,000 more who are blind, deaf, crippled, or diseased. Hurlin and Givens note that "unemployment seeks the marginal worker." They give no data on the family size of the marginal worker. However, M. Elderton (*Case Studies of Unemployment*, 1931) provides information which indicates, as have other surveys, that the unemployed families are much larger than the American average. Elderton's families averaged 4.74 children. Those aged 35 or more years averaged 4.44 to 5.87 children. Several pregnancies occurred during the unemployment period studied. Because of the opposition of certain religious groups, contraceptive advice is not administered to many unemployed. Since the community chest, etc., funds are used to provide these religious charitable associations with money, it ought to be required that they provide the necessary contraceptive information and



Decennial rate of population increase by race and nativity, 1900-1950

compel its use or suffer the loss of community chest and similar public aid. In the last analysis it is a problem of contraceptives versus aphrodisiacs. Had the former been administered many families on the dole would not now be on the dole and, if on the dole, would not be creating extra mouths. Thompson and Whelpton observe that, had there been no restrictions on the spread of birth control information, the birth rate of the poorer and the less educated would be more comparable to that of upper classes.

4 *After a careful study of American vitality*, Sydenstricker concludes that, while the average age at death is much greater than formerly, the span of life has not changed. The extension of the expectation of life is the result of the control of communicable diseases, chiefly, tuberculosis. Sydenstricker could find no evidence to warrant a verdict as to whether or not the reduction of mortality was preserving unfit persons and making for dysgenic selection. He states, however, that "all the evidence at present points to the conclusion that environmental factors have had a far greater influence than genetic factors in determining the rate at which the American people survive."

5 *Concerning the future* the authors make several observations:

(a) On the basis of the most likely assumptions, the American population will grow to a maximum of 146 millions in 1965-70 after which some decline in numbers will probably take place. The American population in 1950 will number about 20 millions more than in 1930, or 143 millions, of whom 116, 105, and 14 millions respectively will be native white, foreign white, and negro.

(b) In view of the changed age composition of the future population, which will consist in a

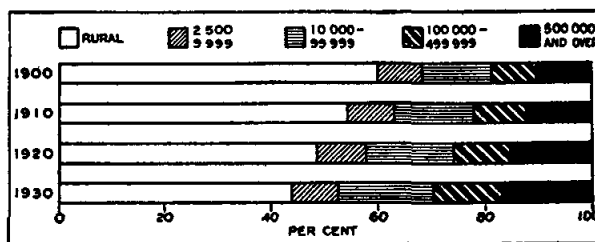
lesser degree of persons under 20 and in a greater degree of persons over 60, society will face a new situation as regards education, dependence, industry, and culture. There will be a decline in the children of elementary school age, but this decline may be offset by increased enrollment of those under 16 who at present receive inadequate schooling. Needless to say the provision of adequate schooling for all requires that those now burdened with large families reduce the size of their families to the American average. Concerning secondary and university education the slowing down of population growth raises the question as to the availability of white collar jobs for the current and anticipated output of our advanced schools. It is pertinent to ask, therefore, whether the present school curricula are not distinctly out of line with what our future society will need in the way of knowledge. It is pertinent to ask also whether adequate attention is being given to vocational and cultural education for adults.

Dependents in the future will consist more largely of persons over 64, of whom at present a large proportion are completely dependent upon charity and for whom employment possibilities are steadily declining. This situation can be met in the future only through a carefully planned policy compelling provision against old age and requiring industrial absorption of the older workers. Provided such a carefully planned policy is not carried out, it is practically certain that the burden of aged dependence will prove unbearable. There is no likelihood that the absolute amounts spent on those under 20 will decrease. Rather they are certain to increase.

(c) The slowing down of population growth will benefit society in every respect. It is a mistaken view to point to overcapacitation of any one industry, such as agriculture, for overcapacitation is the product of expanding output too much relative to demand. Accordingly, it is to unsound *entrepreneurship* that we must attribute overcapacitation, for it is found in rapidly growing as well as in slow growing countries. It is absurd, therefore, to argue as does Senator Austin, that population control is injurious to agriculture. Employment and a high per capita income depend upon two kinds of action: (a) preserving a proper balance among industries and (b) maintaining a satisfactory balance between resources and population. Only careful business leadership can preserve

a proper balance among industries. Only control of population growth can preserve a balance between numbers and resources, the lack of which balance largely explains the higher per capita wealth of the United States as compared to that of Europe.

(d) Concerning the cultural influences of an increase in the number of elders there is warrant for the conclusion of Thompson and Whelpton that there will probably be "more interest in cultural activities and increased support for the arts." It is highly questionable, however, to assume that the future population will be less progressive. Progressiveness in industry and in politics is influenced slightly, if at all, by age composition.



Percentage distribution by size of city of total population, 1900-1930

However carefully one examines the report of the President's Committee, one can find in it no grounds for opposing the free dissemination of birth control information to those desiring it. On the contrary, one finds abundant material to warrant the modification of the existing federal bars to the study and practice of contraception, for these bars but deny contraceptive information to the very groups who on economic and biological grounds need it. Careful consideration of the information contained within this report and of the principles of modern economics warrants the conclusion that average real income would be higher for any given time period, say 25 or 50 years, were it possible to stabilize our numbers at 125 instead of the predicted 146 millions. The economic difficulties attributed to slowing down in population growth are not traceable to slowing down as such but to unwillingness and failure to make the very readjustments which have been made for decades in the past and which must be made in every modern economic system. However, granted that a larger population of average or better quality is wanted, the way to produce that population, as Thompson and Whelpton clearly indicate, is not to oppose the dissemination of birth control information but to make it worth while to potential parents to reproduce their kind.

# Do Italian Women Obey Mussolini?

By GAETANO SALVEMINI

THE twenty-sixth day of May, 1927, Ascension Day, will go down in history as a memorable date, not only for Italy but for the entire world. On that day Mussolini delivered a speech, called the "Speech of the Ascension," in which he told the Italian people that the nation was rapidly approaching a terrible precipice—the decrease of population. He said:

We are wont to say that Italian population is overflowing. This is not true. The river is no longer too full, it is rapidly receding to its normal channel. From 1881 to 1885 we had our highest birthrate. During this period an average of 38 babies were born for every 1000 inhabitants. The maximum was reached in 1886, with a birthrate of 39 per 1000. Today we are down to 27. It is true that the deathrate is undergoing a parallel decline, but the ideal condition would be a maximum birthrate and a minimum deathrate. In several sections of Italy the birthrate has already fallen below 27 per 1000. If our number declines, gentlemen, we shall not found an empire, we shall be degraded to a colony. It is time to tell you these things and to destroy false and treacherous deceptions which can only lead to a dreadful awakening.

As a conclusion, Mussolini issued the following command to the women of Italy: "In order to be of importance in the world, Italy must begin the second half of the present century with at least sixty million inhabitants."

History—so Mussolini insisted a year later, in an article of July 21, 1928—teaches us its "terrible lessons." "All nations and all empires have rotted away and declined when their birthrate declined." The destruction of the Babylonian people, and the decline of Egypt and Greece were caused by this condition. In Rome the fall in the birthrate began to make itself felt about the year 164 B. C., seven centuries later, in 546 A. D., when Totila entered the city, "there were only 500 inhabitants to welcome him."

Historians—those who are worthy of the name—admit that the data on the population of the Roman empire and its fluctuations are too fragmentary to allow any definite deductions. About the birthrate of the Babylonians, the Egyptians

and the Greeks, we know nothing at all. Mussolini talks as if he had in front of him the yearly statistical abstracts of those far away centuries.

The Fascist government has tried to promote an increase in the Italian birthrate by the following provisions. Since 1926 the dissemination of contraceptive information has been considered a crime, and is punishable by law (article 113 of the law of Nov. 6, 1926), bachelors are subject to a personal tax (royal decree of Dec. 19, 1926), families are encouraged to procreate, particularly by the law of June 14, 1928, which provides exemptions from the payment of taxes and special privileges for large families.

One of the leaders of Fascism, Signor Maraviglia, asserts that "the demographic battle proves conclusively the factors of volition and spirituality in the Fascist conception, as compared with the naturalistic conception of the Liberal regimes and with the materialistic conception of Democracies" (*Tribuna*, August 31, 1928). But it is precisely in the "demographic battle" that the Fascist regime has so far suffered its most complete defeat.

Fear of the bachelor's tax caused the number of marriages to increase from 295,560 in 1926 to 302,564 in 1927, but in 1928 the number fell to 285,248. The Duce doubled the tax at the end of 1928, and the number mounted to 287,800 in 1929, and to 301,480 in 1930. But in 1931 it again fell to 270,957. During the first ten months of 1932, there were 15,782 less marriages than in the first ten months of 1931, and 38,730 less than in the first ten months of 1930 (*Corriere della Sera*, Nov. 2, 1932). Will the Duce again double the tax?

To get married is not difficult. The important thing is to procreate. In 1927 there were in Italy 1,093,772 births. In January and February, 1928, there were 2,185 births more than in the corresponding two months of 1927. But from March, 1928, on—i. e., exactly from the month in which the imperial commands issued in May, 1927, should have borne fruit—the Italian birthrate dropped disastrously. During the ten months from May to December, 1928, Italy had 23,000 less births than in the corresponding months of the preceding year. For the entire year 1929, the number of births was 34,629 less than the total for 1928. It was, in



effect, a general strike which would have been felt still more keenly if the Fascist consuls abroad had not carried out their patriotic duty by sending five or six thousand women for their confinements to Italy

The decrease in the birthrate was felt more in those parts of Italy where it had previously been the highest. One is tempted to deduce that the speeches and writings of Mussolini and other Fascist chiefs, and the noisy journalistic campaign against the "horrible crime" of birth control taught many innocent souls that one could enjoy oneself without paying the price.

In the large cities the strike grew to scandalous proportions. The case of Bologna, "the unconquerable fortress of Italian Fascism," as the Fascists are wont to call it, is worth mentioning as typical. This city was first rebuked by the Duce in September, 1928. "Nothing is more humiliating than to read the population record of Bologna. The number of deaths is almost invariably twice the number of births." A year later the Duce was compelled to repeat the reproach. "The situation in Bologna is still a most deplorable one. There are more coffins than cradles. On December 15th, Bologna had ten deaths and one birth. The next day, two births and ten deaths."

"Dear and careless Bologna" — exclaimed the *Tribuna* on January 16, 1930, just as the Prophet Jeremiah cried over the ruins of Jerusalem—"what will become of you in a few decades, if you do not repent? You are preparing a very sad future for yourself. Remember that the precept to grow and multiply is of Divine origin. The Fascist regime, in its clairvoyant vision of the future, has transformed this precept into a social and moral law of infinite importance."

The declining birthrate provoked a storm of indignation. Signor Forges-Davanzati proclaimed in the *Tribuna* of June 26, 1929

To permit this evil of declining births to spread, means that a deplorable lack of conscience prevails and that we are deeply plunged into horrible crime and into the pacifistic and materialistic ideology of liberal and irreligious democracy. It means that we are in cold-blooded, egotistical fashion and with premeditation suffocating new life. Fascism can accept neither carelessness nor indifference. Here is the final test of Fascism, a social and moral test. Everyone must assume responsibility for the accomplishment of his duty as a father and as a mate, for the glorification of Fascism."

The Duce gave a new alarm in an article on December 28, 1929, "Is the Italian Race Dying?" "Yes. If we proceed in this direction, within ten years the number of births in Italy will only equal or be below the number of births in France." A Fascist leader, Signor Scorza pointed out in the *Lavoro Fascista* of December 31, 1929, that all the Italians were well disposed to do something "to solve this problem," but this "something" should be done by the other fellow. Everybody was applauding but the number of children was not increasing. Reproaches were insufficient and more effective measures were necessary. He suggested

It is necessary to make more stringent the law against deserters from the good battle, to make them so strict that they are unbearable, that they will compel people to marry and have children out of sheer despair. The Fascist party must be even more implacable than the State. We must act as an irresistible moral force. Society today despises deserters, pimps, homosexuals, thieves. Those who can and do not perform their duty to the nation must be put in the same category. We must despise them. We must make the bachelors and those who desert the nuptial bed ashamed of their potential power to have children. It is necessary to make them bow their foreheads into the dust.

At the very moment when the alarms and threats reached their highest paroxysm, the birthrate began to increase again. Records for 1930 show that the number of births reached 1,193,000 during that year, *i. e.*, about the same figure as for 1927.

Confronted with such a triumph, Mussolini had an attack of euphoria, and in a speech of October 28, 1930, he announced that the rest of Europe will be worn with age in 1950, whereas Italy will be the only young country. An official *communiqué*, published in the newspapers on December 25, 1930, stated that the campaign for more births undertaken by the Duce was a complete success. "The birthrate is going up," Deputy Paolucci announced triumphantly on February 25, 1931. "The birthrate is going up, which proves that the Italian people have full confidence in the future."

In 1930, however, an increase in the birthrate also took place in France, where the political and moral authority of Mussolini is not very much respected—748,000 births in 1930 as against 728,000 in 1929. Those who seek to explain such phenomena say that the harvests of 1929 were very good, and that it always happens in agricultural coun-

tries that good harvests are followed, the next year, by an increase in births

But the season of the fat cows did not last long In 1931 there were in Italy 75,273 less births than in 1930 Italy had in 1931, 1,018,000 births, with a population of 41,200,000, while thirty years earlier, in 1901, she had 1,057,000 births with a population of 32,400,000 In 1927, the year in which Mussolini started his "battle" for more births, the rate was 26.9 per thousand, in 1931 it fell to 22.4 During the first ten months of 1932 there were 38,066 less births than in the corresponding period of 1931, and 83,372 less than in the first ten months of 1930 (*Corriere della Sera*, November 22, 1932)

In 1932, as soon as the Fascists saw that the "battle" for births was a failure, they discovered that slender women generally have fewer children than fat women They therefore started a new "battle," which might be called the battle for the fat The ideal for the Fascist is now the huge woman, weighing at least 300 pounds So far only propaganda and "moral pressure" have been used But on some nice morning the Duce will issue an order to put all slender women before a firing squad Since they are barren and since barrenness is treason against the Fatherland, it is only natural that such treason should be punished by execution We have not yet arrived at this phase of the "battle," but we may expect its inevitable coming

## A New World

By MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD

THE earliest book dealing educationally with the problems of sex that I remember reading was a translation of Michelet's *La Femme* From it I recollect chiefly his saccharine description of that delicate, almost evanescent creature, woman, who for a quarter of her life was a hopeless invalid, and whom sturdy man must shield and cherish because it lies within his power always to inflict on her the horrors and perils of maternity

To recall such a passage, and to turn from it to gaze on a photograph of healthy, laughing Russian girls driving tractors or guiding locomotives, gives me the feeling that in my own person I have lived in two worlds

Something of that same feeling comes with the reading of almost any recently printed book dealing with sex that comes from a reputable publisher Between the two worlds lies a chasm, wrought by industrial development and by war, that no imagination can bridge adequately On one side of the chasm are the swooning, parasitical female, the unregulated family, the polygamous male who seduced without compunction another's sister, but murdered the other man if he seduced his sister, Lecky's prostitute who was the guardian of the chastity of the protected lady On the other are the self-supporting, life-participating human being who happens to be feminine, the family spaced or called into being by desire alone, the approximation to the single standard of liberalism, rather than to that single standard of asceticism pro-

claimed by pioneers from the other side of the chasm Only the cultural lag represented by certain orthodox religious sects and by a few suppressed or perverted fanatics remains to remind us that the old world is not yet all dead, that we owe much of our new freedom to nullification rather than to repeal of prohibitions An old lady I met once pitied my childlessness, when I told her it was by my own wish she looked bewildered "In my time, my dear," she said, "we thought God brought the children" "Nowadays," I answered with more annoyance than kindness, "we know that science keeps them away" In the earlier books on sex, children, like earthquakes, were acts of God, in contemporary works it is taken for granted that they are scientifically controlled phenomena

The attitude on social and psychological problems of the individual author does not alter this viewpoint, which (thanks to the fighters and martyrs of earlier days) is now implicit in any discussion of the relations of men and women Here, for instance, are three books\* *The Art of Being a Woman*, by Olga Knopf, *Love and the Sex Emotions*, by William J. Fielding, and *The Sexual Side of Marriage*, by M. J. Exner Dr. Knopf is an Adlerian, a pupil of Adler's, who is now teaching at the New School for Social Research in New

\*THE ART OF BEING A WOMAN, by Olga Knopf Little Brown and Co., Boston, 1932 \$3.00

LOVE AND THE SEX EMOTIONS, by William J. Fielding Dodd, Mead and Co., New York, 1932 \$2.50

THE SEXUAL SIDE OF MARRIAGE, by M. J. Exner W. W. Norton and Co., New York 1932 \$2.50

York Her point of view is a modification of the Adlerian will to power and masculine protest, combined with an apparent though unacknowledged agreement with the sexual dominance theory of Mathilde and Mathias Vaerting Mr Fielding is a more or less orthodox Freudian, and is also much concerned with the new discoveries and guesses concerning the psychological influences of the ductless glands Dr Exner's book is more specialized and more obviously the work of a physician In many ways it echoes or abridges—quite by coincidence, of course—Millard S Everett's *The Hygiene of Marriage*, to my mind by far the best and most exhaustive non-technical work on that subject yet issued in the English language

But every one of these disparate and in some fields mutually antagonistic writers concurs in approval of contraception, more, in taking it as a matter of course without need for much argument Listen to Dr Knopf

No woman should be forced to give birth to a child if she does not wish to do so If she really does not want it she cannot be a good mother, cannot educate her child in the right spirit Since prevention is better than cure, we must say that it seems to us far better to have no children than to bring up problem children

And though she goes on from there to argue that psychological re-education will cause many women who now do not want children to desire them (evading the strongest of all motives for contraception, the economic), even in this argument she says "No one denies that a real physical illness, which would bring a woman in jeopardy of her life if she were to bear a child, is a justification for birth control" Unfortunately, even today this is not true, the official Roman Catholic attitude, for example, would be that the woman must bear children, whatever her physical condition, or else must remain continent (I know of a case of recurring puerperal insanity, in which the victim was several times incarcerated in an insane asylum, then sent home as cured but warned against further pregnancy, only to be advised by her priest that she must not deny her husband his marital rights, whatever the cost to herself The final result was hopeless and permanent insanity, with no divorce possible for the bewildered father of four worse than motherless children) But the fact that Dr Knopf *thinks* no one denies her thesis, or can carelessly say so, is an indication of how far that other world is behind us

Mr Fielding opens six pages of discussion of birth control (fitly enough in the chapter on "Marital Adjustment") by this summary

Aside from the matter of expediency, there is a growing feeling among those who have reached a well considered understanding of the subject that birth control is in harmony with the great law of biologic evolution, and is therefore to that extent *natural*, that it is socially desirable, even necessary, and therefore *moral*, that it is conducive to greater individual happiness in the family relations and a boon to domestic tranquility and the institution of marriage, and therefore *ethically* impregnable

Later on he remarks "The ignorant notion of leaving procreation to chance is an anachronism far removed from twentieth century marriage ideals" He could not better sum up in a sentence the whole conclusion of our modern world

As for Dr Exner, his words almost repeat Mr Fielding's

Those who still insist upon animal analogy as a guide for human conduct, holding that sex union is justifiable only for the purpose of procreation, are in fundamental error In human beings sex serves the ends of love, *independent of procreation*

And he, too, speaking of fear of pregnancy as a "factor in maladjustment" in marriage, says

For reasoning human beings in an age of supposed advanced culture every aspect of life that is not beyond volitional control should be brought under intelligent direction and control and not left to the play of haphazard influences

The truth seems to be that common sense leads most couples sooner or later to resort to contraceptives in order to make child-bearing fit into an ordered family scheme even while they may retain mental uncertainty or reservations about the propriety or ethics of doing so Such mental uncertainty is unfortunate for it necessarily partakes of the nature of fear and tends to inhibit sexual response and foster disharmony

The truth of Dr Exner's statement may be found in the statistics of birth control clinics, which reveal that adherents of anti-birth control religious sects apply for information and assistance in just about the same proportion as their proportion of the general population The pity is that their intolerant and short-sighted religious leaders force them to do so under the penalty of "mental uncertainty," of regarding a wise action

at once self-preservative and altruistic, as a "sin," thereby inevitably frustrating one of the chief inducements—the establishment of marital happiness—which has impelled them to it

Yes, we have come a long way from that old world, from that abyss across which we can see dimly the pathetic figure of the young girl who entered marriage knowing nothing whatever of sex, taking it sorrowfully for granted that within a month she would be pregnant, and that thereafter children would follow every year or so and die for the most part before the next little brother or sister arrived. But our footsteps as we travel away

from the chasm are still clogged by hands clutching at us from that other side. It is still impossible, for example, for exact and scientific instruction on the best methods of contraception to be published for the lay reader, it is still dangerous in some states to teach such methods by word of mouth, in a few states even if one is a physician, contraception is still classed with obscenity by the malodorous Comstock law of 1873, and the majority of our constituent-eyeing Congressmen are still afraid to repeal that law. There is plenty of work for us to do yet, heartening as is the evidence given by such works as these of how far we have already gone

## The Negro and Birth Control

By E. FRANKLIN FRAZIER

LAST year the June issue of the BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW was devoted to the Negro. The comprehensive discussion in that number was followed in November by an article from the point of view of the Negro doctor. It was rightly assumed by all the contributors that a rational control of Negro fertility in the interest of a more efficient and healthy race was a desirable goal. Moreover, it was recognized that birth control was already practiced by some classes of Negroes and that a knowledge of contraception was spreading throughout the Negro population. The receptive attitude of Negroes was indicated by the statistics on the populations of birth control clinics in Baltimore, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Detroit, where the Negro rate of attendance was, with the exception of Baltimore, about three times the proportion of Negroes in the population of these cities.

In several of the papers it was either asserted or implied that birth control in the Negro group so far had been dysgenic. It had been practiced solely by the higher economic and social classes that were better prepared for parenthood, while the lower and less efficient classes of the Negro population were distinguished by their large families. Dr. Garvin went so far as to declare "Show me a large Negro family and I will reveal to you a family overcome with indigence and destitution and shackled by insurmountable financial obligations." The Negro upper classes, he assures us, have risen from the slums by not allowing indiscriminate

childbearing to fetter them. As the knowledge of contraception spreads, so runs the argument, the process will become eugenic, the economically incompetent and the mentally deficient will have fewer or no children and the race will be improved.

While we might admit that many Negro families of low economic status have more children than they can support adequately, we are not prepared to say that differential birth and survival rates have been favorable to the less desirable elements in the Negro population. Moreover, when we go into the question of a policy of rational control of fertility, we find that there are important factors in the present rapid urbanization of the Negro population that must be considered.

Available statistics on the number of children in upper class Negro families lend support to the belief that control over reproduction has been dysgenic. For example, Kelly Miller found that twenty-two married persons, among fifty-five teachers at Howard University who came from families averaging 6.3 children, had on the average only 1.6 children. At Fisk University seventeen colored teachers who have been married over three years have on the average 1.5 children. A comparison, by the writer, of the size of the families from which 327 persons listed in *Who's Who in Colored America* (1928-1929) sprang, with the number of children of 174 of them who were 45 years of age and over, showed that the first group came from families averaging 5.5 children, while the latter had

only 23 children per family. While these figures might indicate a drastic control of births on the part of the small professional class, there are reasons for believing that they are not representative of the larger upper layer of the Negro population. The conclusion has been arrived at as the result of an analysis of census data on black and mulatto families.<sup>1</sup>

An analysis of the census data on about 13,000 Negro families<sup>2</sup> for 1910 and 1920, drawn from three rural counties and three cities in several southern states, brought out some important differences between mulatto and black elements in the Negro population.<sup>3</sup> In 1910 in 43 per cent of the black families (both husband and wife black) there were no children present, while only 32.9 per cent of the mulatto families (both husband and wife mulatto) had no children. For 1920 the percentages for the blacks and mulattoes were 45.3 and 38.7 respectively. Probably of even greater significance was the fact that the average number of children present in the mulatto families was higher than the average for the blacks. Whether these differences in favor of the mulatto families were due to a higher death rate of black children, or less stable family life among the blacks, or the conscious control of birth, we are unable to say from these figures.

Fortunately, we have data for 1910 on the number of children born and living in about 10,000 of these families. The mulattoes had a slightly smaller—15.0 as compared with 17.6—percentage of families than the blacks with no children born. They also had borne slightly more children—about a fourth of a child—than the blacks. The mulattoes had living, on the average, almost a half of a child more than the blacks, but the blacks had lost, on the average, about a fourth of a child more than the mulattoes. If we consider all the children born and living for the two groups, we find that 60.6 per cent of the black and 67.7 per cent of the mulatto children had survived.

<sup>1</sup> The census data on families used in this article were taken from a longer and more detailed paper which the writer is preparing for publication.

<sup>2</sup> These families are not the census "families" or households but natural family groups, which were taken from the original census returns.

<sup>3</sup> The writer is aware of the criticisms of the census classification of "black" and "mulatto." But since this common sense classification separates two elements in the Negro population that show different social and economic characteristics, it offers a valuable basis for comparisons.

When we consider the foregoing differences between the two elements in Negro population in connection with the fact that the mulattoes are, on the whole, on a higher economic and social level (in our sample home ownership and literacy were considerably higher for the mulattoes), we can not say that restriction of families so far or any kind of selection has been favorable to the lower levels in the Negro population. On the contrary, it appears that the efficient and intelligent elements in the Negro population have had not only as many children on the average as the less competent and more illiterate, but because of their superior culture and higher efficiency they have had more of their children survive. However, we should add that although this might have been the situation during the first decade of the present century we can not say that it is true today. The increase, which we have noted above, from 32.9 in 1910 to 38.7 in 1920 in the percentage of mulatto families without children might indicate a growing restriction of families in this group. Moreover, since this increase was due to the urban families in the sample which we have been considering, the recent rapid urbanization of the Negro may be changing the whole aspect of the problem. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the relation of urbanization to the rational control of fertility.

The proportion of Negroes living in cities has grown from about one-fifth in 1890 to over two-fifths in 1930. Although attention has been focused on the migration to the urban areas of the North, probably because the movement has been directed towards four cities, since 1900 about a million Negroes have moved from the farms and villages into the cities of the South. The effects of urbanization on the fertility of the Negro have been vividly shown by Thompson.<sup>4</sup> The adverse effect of urban life upon the fertility of the Negro is greater than upon the whites. Northern cities especially are dependent upon a constant stream of migrants from the more fertile areas of the rural South to maintain their numbers. It appears that Negro women in the cities simply do not bear as many children as white women.

All this seems strange in view of the general opinion that large families flourish among Negroes who dwell largely in the poorer sections of our cities. There have been many other indications of

<sup>4</sup> Warren S. Thompson, *RATIO OF CHILDREN TO WOMEN 1920* (Washington, 1931) pp. 141-154.

the extremely adverse effects of urban life on Negro fertility Professor Burgess' study of wage-earning families in Chicago in 1919 showed the average size of the Negro families studied to be 3.4 persons, which was less than any of the other nationalities. Although the average size of the families in the sample who were receiving charity was larger, the smallness of the group prevented any generalization.

Although there seems to be no question that urban life greatly reduces the fertility of the Negro, we do not know whether this process is eugenic or dysgenic. Our present information does not permit us to say positively that the poor, illiterate, and inefficient are reproducing while the educated and efficient are committing suicide through failure to reproduce. There are some indications that this is not true. This was the case in the writer's study of the effects of the urban environment on the Negro family.<sup>1</sup> He found that when the statistical data on the Negro family were related to the social and economic organization of the Negro community considerable variations appeared for different sections of the community. The ratio of children under 15, under 5, and under 1, to women fifteen to forty-four years of age was calculated for each of the seven zones into which the community was divided. Instead of finding the highest ratio among the poor illiterate Negroes in the slum, the writer found the highest ratio in the area having scarcely any illiteracy and dependency and the highest proportion of mulattoes, home-ownership, and persons in the higher occupational classes. The lowest ratio was found in the most disorganized area of the community. The relatively large ratio of children to women of child-bearing age in the areas where the Negroes were home-owners and had achieved a high economic and social status seems to indicate that those Negroes who survive and reproduce in the keen competition of urban life are on the whole the more desirable elements in the Negro population.

Additional evidence that the incompetent among Negroes are not supplanting the more efficient through their superior reproductive powers is to be found in the fact that in nearly all of the cities for which information is now available in the 1930 census, the median size of the families of home-

<sup>1</sup> Ernest W. Burgess, "Special Report I. A Study of Wage-earning Families in Chicago," Report of the Health Insurance Commission of the State of Illinois, May 1, 1919, pp. 191, 192.

<sup>2</sup> E. Franklin Frazier, *THE NEGRO FAMILY IN CHICAGO* (Chicago, 1932), pp. 136-46.

owners is larger than that of tenants. It may be that those with little sense of social responsibility and who are failures are destroyed through disease and vice or refuse to accept the responsibility of a family. Birth control among such people would certainly accomplish in a more humane and intelligent way what is left at present to ignorance and the operation of pathological factors. It must be kept in mind that urbanization for the Negro means a thoroughly disorganizing experience. Those with a fund of character, family traditions, efficiency and intelligence can survive the drain on their resources during the experience, but those who do not have any of these possessions are generally lost.

These observations apply to the urbanized Negro. The problem of the rural Negro's attempting any rational control of his fertility involves many obvious and less clear considerations which cannot be included here. However, the writer cannot forego mentioning two factors in the situation: illegitimacy and venereal disease. The high rates of illegitimacy in many of the rural sections of the South are not a sign of demoralization as in the city. So birth control could not be expected to change this situation, which grows out of the folkways of a peasant people. On the other hand, the effect on the Negro's progeny of the high incidence of venereal infection, which is accompanying the facilitation of communication in the rural areas, as a recent study has shown, might be reduced if the disorganized persons who spread the disease were acquainted with contraceptive methods.

In this article the writer has attempted to set forth some of the selective factors operating among Negroes especially in the urban environment. A program for the rational control of Negro fertility, it seems to the writer, must take into account these factors. There is still much ignorance and superstition not only among the illiterate but in the better informed classes of Negroes that need to be abolished before rational control will be possible. If the increasing urbanization of the Negro simply means disorganization, he may use birth control for purely individual ends and bring about his own destruction, but if, because of a developed social consciousness he desires to become a more efficient and intelligent, though probably a relatively smaller, element in the population, then birth control, that is the rational control of his numbers, offers one of the best means to the fulfillment of this end.

## Book Reviews

NURSES ON HORSEBACK, by Ernest Poole  
*Macmillan, New York 1932 \$1 50*

**N**URSES ON HORSEBACK is a sketch of the splendid work done by the Frontier Nursing Service established by Mary Breckinridge in the Kentucky mountain districts populated by some of the poorest whites of the South

The work itself is of the greatest significance. The difficulty with this description is that Mr Poole has let his enthusiasm run away with his better judgment. Instead of being a sincere and critical evaluation of the work done, this book sounds like an over romanticized, well-nigh sentimental attempt to intrigue the interest of all sixteen year old girls, firing them with the determination to join this band of "new pioneers on old frontiers"

One instance will suffice. On page forty-eight, to illustrate the difficulties which must be overcome in combating weather conditions, especially in winter, he quotes one of the nurses as saying, "Many of the cabins have chinks or cracks in floors and walls. On zero nights the wind blows in, and in spite of open fires some of the cabins get so cold that often I've reached for the baby's cord-tie and found it frozen solid in the sterilizing pan." On page one hundred thirty-five the story appears again, but this time it reads, "And once on a delivery case in a room with big cracks in its log walls that let the snow come drifting in, snow that did not melt on the floor, I reached around for something I needed and found it frozen solid in the sterilizing pan"

It is unfortunate that the work was not depicted in a truer, better balanced, more realistic manner. Surely it is not all romantic dashes at night through raging storms across swollen torrents to rescue some far away mountaineer from snake bite or to deliver another mountain baby. The book lacks most desperately that atmosphere of solid forthrightness necessary to give substance to the life it professes to describe.

Reading between the lines one sees Mary Breckinridge as a courageous, far-sighted pioneer, leading a great, new work. One hopes that in the plans for the future to "help mothers to have their children well born" birth control will play an active and vital part. Instances are cited repeatedly of

girls having their third or fourth pregnancy so that "they are old mothers at twenty-one." The stoicism and courage of these young women suffering from and burdened by frequent childbearing is much stressed. Their attitude is, indeed, to be commended, but there is no particular virtue in eulogizing the amazing fortitude of these "old mothers" without doing something about it—teaching them that frequent pregnancies can be safely avoided, and thus lessening their suffering, easing their burden and affording improved opportunity for themselves and their children.

In conjunction with the farsighted plans for reforestation which Mrs. Breckinridge is furthering for the purpose of improving economic conditions, regulation of population increase must also be considered or the improved conditions will be swallowed up by the greater number of mouths which these better conditions will permit to reach adulthood.

LE MON CLARK

WHY MARRIAGE? by S. L. Katzoff *The Institute of Domestic Relations, San Francisco, California 1932 \$1*

THE HYGIENE OF MARRIAGE, by Millard Spencer Everett *The Vanguard Press, New York 1932 \$2 50*

**I**N BOOK reviewing the unexpected frequently occurs. Here are two books, one written by a professor of philosophy at the Central Y. M. C. A. College in Chicago, and the other by a medical director of the San Francisco Institute of Domestic Relations. Both books deal with marriage and its problems, but in substance and approach they are worlds apart. While the professor of philosophy who is a layman in the field of sex writes like a sexologist, the medical director who is a professed sexologist writes like a layman, and while the sexologist is content to treat his problems with a few trite observations on marriage and love, the layman attempts to deal with his subjects objectively, and as far as possible dispassionately.

In *Why Marriage?* Dr. Katzoff elaborates some commonplace reflections on the troubles and perplexities that beset married life, and offers facile advice for their solution, guaranteed to restore amorous bliss and marital harmony. In essence the

advice is to pay careful attention to food, conversation, appearance and so on. Study, ponder and digest my maxims, maintains Dr Katzoff, and to quote from the delightful Bab Ballads

Here's a first rate opportunity  
To get married with impunity  
And indulge in the felicity  
Of unbound domesticity

With this advice the reviewer has no quarrel although he finds it difficult to see why it merits the writing of a book. The form and structure of the author's reflections are, however, open to criticism, especially as they issue from an institute of domestic relations and not from a girls' seminary. "Marriage," exclaims the author, "develops ethical stamina and makes for the humanizing of humanity and the civilizing of civilization. Love is the essential ingredient, the cohesive power which binds humanity into a united fraternity, gradually producing higher planes of evolution. Under the soothing and magnetic influence of love, the eyes begin to see the beautiful in all things, and the nostrils begin to smell the flowers more than ever before."

The book's most ambitious and at the same time most puerile effort is a peculiar concoction of a self-grading chart entitled "How to Hold your Mate," which if utilized honestly by husband and wife, will lead, the author believes, to happiness in marriage or to an institute of domestic relations. The thing is simplicity itself. Just give yourself or your mate marks ranging from 100 to 0 every day of the week for the following ingredients, each of which is dignified with a separate chapter: love, freedom, endearment, conversation, patience, food, appearance, sexology, home and health. "If the average is near to 60 something is wrong. If it is about 50 or less the case calls for a more careful study of the contents of this book or consultation with a physician or psychologist or both." The book is dedicated "To all women to those who love, to those who are loved, and particularly to those who are loved by the ones they love."

*The Hygiene of Marriage* by Dr Everett is on the whole a satisfactory book. If its aim is too grandiose in that it attempts to deal with all the numerous branches of sex and marriage, to be in fact almost an encyclopedia of sex, it cannot be denied that the author manages to put in a little of everything. He is especially clear and certain of his ground when he adheres to plain description or

factual explanation. When he embarks on theoretical discussion, as for instance in his analysis of the optimum theory of population, he commits himself to somewhat naive statements. Thus he writes that "periods of depression are partly due to overpopulation" and "that a capitalistic system which has developed certain inherent evils can most readily be mitigated by a limitation of the number of human beings, who are forced to compete with one another for a living."

Besides the usual chapters on the anatomy and physiology of sex, hygiene of sex, venereal diseases, childbirth and methods of contraception, the book gives a very useful account of the history and present status of the birth control laws in this and other countries, and of the good work that is being done by birth control clinics.

A question that arises is how far books such as the above fill any real need. Recent times have seen a plethora of books on marriage and sex, most of which are based on standard works, and make no claim to add anything new to our knowledge on these matters. But what is required is more research. There are available some very good books on marriage and kindred topics and others should only be written if they contribute something new or deal with the subject in an original manner. One good book such as *Ideal Marriage* by Dr Van de Velde makes unnecessary a hundred others. It is true that the tendency to simplify difficult subjects so that they appeal to a wide public is to be welcomed. Unfortunately in many cases such simplification makes difficult subjects appear simple.

JAY RUMYANECK

**SEXUAL TRUTHS**, edited by William J. Robinson, MD. *Eugenics Publishing Co.*, New York 1932 \$3.00

IT IS rather difficult to discover just why a new edition of this 1919 work has been published—on any grounds, that is, except the obvious commercial ones. It is a collection of articles by various writers, mostly Germans translated by the editor, on different phases of "sexology" (Dr Robinson's own word), but chiefly on sexual abstinence and its effects. Much of the material is out-dated, much of it is not applicable to American conditions, being predicated on German law and German social customs, and frequently one writer contradicts another. In fact, occasionally the editor himself takes a hand and contradicts his own



contributor! It is true, as Dr Robinson says in one of the short essays with which he has filled out the volume, that he is no pornographer, and there is nothing obscene in the language of the book, but on the whole it falls under the category of laboring the obvious. In 1900 it would have been sensational, in 1933 it is only boring. Of course with so many authors some cannot fail to be good, and there are pages either delightful or useful, a few are both. Dr Fritz Wittels, for example, in "Instructing the Young in Sexual Matters," combines sound sense with high amusement, and yet he is responsible for some very foolish and some very platitudinous statements in others of his contributions. Celibacy, for example, makes women engage in "masculine occupations", since when did occupations possess sex?

Dr Robinson was a pioneer in his day, and many of us can thank him for our first emancipation from the bogies with which normal young people used to be oppressed by their elders. It is painful for us to have had recent evidence from another field that his days of open-mindedness and understanding are over.

In one respect only *Sexual Truths* is unflinching on the right side, and on a right side that has not yet become altogether victorious, and that is in regard to birth control. Even here the contributors are by no means of one mind. Dr Wittels, arguing passionately for legalized abortion, permits himself to say that "the various means employed to prevent conception ruin our nerves, bring about neuroses of every description, cause anxiety and depression," and is promptly called down by his translator and editor, Dr Lowenfeld, who condemns in round words the best and most harmless contraceptive known, which Dr Nystrom recommends. Dr Gartman, in the worst written chapter in the book, states that "it is in the character of all living creatures to desire offspring, but especially so in the female," whereas Mr Pothoff in the very next chapter says, with far more truth, "Not one tenth of those who yield to love have any desire for a child."

In spite of these direct antagonisms of statement, however, not one of the authors opposes birth control as such, though many of the German specialists consider abortion no more serious than contraception, a view extremely unpopular—and I believe with sound reason—in America. In various chapters may be found a number of strong and

quotable statements on the need for family regulation, such as this one from Dr Max Hirsch: "Even when a family is comfortably situated married happiness is jeopardized as soon as too frequent motherhood endangers the mother's health. Ignorance of preventives [often] is responsible for the breaking up of the home." Dr Tannenbaum, an American, not a German, says "Our laws must be so modified as to permit physicians to instruct men and women in the art of preventing conception. No physician who has seen the benefits of such instruction in restoring marital happiness and in doing away with distressing symptoms can have any doubts as to the wisdom of the policy herein advocated." And Dr Wittels, even though he is arguing for abortion instead of for contraception, contributes this fine and stirring paragraph:

But the wives of the poor, of the disinherited, must bear children until children are as numerous as the sands of the sea, they must bear hundreds of thousands of slaves who will make the wheels turn in capitalism's factories, increase pauperism and depreciate the value of labor and of human material. The church needs Christians, militarism needs recruits, capitalism needs slaves, the three of them need defenceless masses.

I have answered my own question especially in this era of acute economic distress, this paragraph alone justifies the republication of *Sexual Truths*. But I fear that Dr Robinson, who has become an ally of the very system Dr Wittels condemns, did not republish the book for that reason.

MAYNARD SHIPLEY

## Books Received

- HUMAN ASPECTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND RELIEF, by J. M. Williams. *University of North Carolina Press, N. C.* \$2.50
- MARRIAGE, by Ernest R. Groves. *Henry Holt & Co., N. Y.* \$3.50
- MODERN BIRTH CONTROL METHODS, by G. Ryley Scott. *John Bale Sons & Danielsson, Ltd., London.* 7/6 net
- PSYCHOLOGY OF SEX, by Havelock Ellis. *Ray Long & Richard R. Smith, N. Y.* \$3.00
- THE PARENT AND THE CHILD, by Lorine Pruette. *Henry Holt & Co., N. Y.* \$2.00
- SECOND ANNUAL REPORT 1931-1932, *The National Birth Control Association* (26, Eccleston Street, Victoria S.W. 1, England)

# News Notes

## UNITED STATES

**T**HE Senate Judiciary Committee took a vote on the Birth Control Bill (S 4436) on February 13. The vote stood 9-6 against "reporting the bill favorably to the Senate at this time," two members (Wm E Borah, Idaho, and J J Blaine, Wisconsin) did not vote. Senators Hugo L Black, Alabama, Karl Schuyler, Colorado, A R Robinson, Indiana, Thos D Schall, Minnesota, Geo W Norris (Chairman), Nebraska, and Daniel O Hastings, Delaware, supported the Bill. Those opposing the Bill were Henry F Ashurst, Arizona, Hubert D Stephens, Mississippi, Thos J Walsh, Montana, Sam G Bratton, New Mexico, Felix Herbert, Rhode Island, Wm H King, Utah, W R Austin, Vermont, C C Dill, Washington, and M M Neely, West Virginia.

The Federal Committee feels that progress is being made. Pressure will now be brought to bear on the Senators who opposed the Bill.

The Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations at their annual convention on January 31, adopted the following resolution:

*Whereas*, from many and varied viewpoints it is considered desirable to permit the proper medical authorities freedom of action in regard to the dissemination of information in regard to birth control, and

*Whereas*, sections of the Tariff Act and Criminal Code prohibit such dissemination, therefore be it

*Resolved*, that we, the Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations, Inc, in convention assembled, are in favor of an amendment to the sections of the United States Tariff Act and the Criminal Code of the United States of America which refer to supplies and medical literature from the United States Mails, shall not apply to licensed physicians and duly authorized medical schools, journals or associations.

The resolution was proposed by the Unemployment Committee, under the chairmanship of Mrs Isaac Kubie.

**CONNECTICUT** See editorial and page 77 for report on Hartford Mass Meeting and the birth control bill now pending in the legislature.

**KENTUCKY** The First Kentucky Birth Control Conference was held at the Brown Hotel, Louisville, on February 25 under the auspices of the American Birth Control League. At the luncheon meeting Dr Eric M Matsner, Medical Director, American Birth Control League, spoke on *Birth Control and Maternal Health*, Mrs Morton Keeney, President, Michigan Birth Control League on *Organization and Development of a State Birth Control League*, and Dr Fred J Taussig, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Washington University, St Louis, on *Birth Control from a Physician's Viewpoint*.

An organization meeting followed at which Mrs Donald McGraw, Director Field Work, American Birth Control League, spoke on the *Outline of Plan for State Organization*.

The conference closed with a meeting for members of the medical profession, addressed by Dr Matsner. Louisville physicians cooperating with the new Kentucky organizations are Drs Albert Bass, James W Bruce, J S Bumgardner, Nora N Dean, Carroll C English, Morris Flexner, F Wallace Frank, S C Frankel, Harry S Frazier, Emmett S Horine, W O Johnson, Robertson O Joplin, Murry Kinsman, Hugh R Leavell, W T McConnell, A M McKeithan, W W Nicholson, Hulbert B Noland, Alice Pickett, Henry N Rubel, Jesse Simpson, Silas H Starr, Esther Wallner.

**NEW JERSEY** The first meeting of the recently formed Junior Committee of the New Jersey Birth Control League was held on February 3, under the leadership of Mrs Katherine Law Colwell. Members from the Oranges, Short Hills, Montclair, Morristown, Madison and Princeton were present. After the business meeting Professor William L Nunn of Dana College led an informal round table discussion on the economic aspects of birth control.

Directors of the League and others met with Congressman McLane at the home of Col and Mrs Wallace of Summit on February 6 for discussion of the Federal Bill. Then before the Judiciary Committee. Telegrams and letters urging the passage of the bill were sent to Washington. A reception for Baroness Ishimoto was held on February 10 at the home of Mrs Henry Young of Newark.

NEW YORK Dr Eric M Matsner spoke on February 10th before the junior and senior medical students, the interne staff and visiting physicians of the Albany Hospital and Medical College, and later met with the medical and lay trustees of the hospital

The New York City Committee announces the opening of a new mothers' health center at Prescott House, a settlement under the auspices of the Unitarian Church, at 247 East 53rd Street The center is holding one evening session per week to accommodate working mothers

PENNSYLVANIA The annual news letter of the Pennsylvania Birth Control Federation, just issued, carries a box as follows

**NOW IS THE TIME FOR THE RENEWAL OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP**

In order to economize no receipt will be sent unless requested THE BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW has been reduced to \$1 00 a year for members instead of \$2 00 Please add a dollar to your membership if you are not already a subscriber as no one interested in Birth Control should fail to take the REVIEW

VIRGINIA An organization meeting was held at the Jefferson Hotel, Richmond, on February 2, and addressed by Mrs McGraw and Dr Matsner Mrs A E Wilson Harrison will serve as president of the Virginia League

Following this meeting Dr Matsner spoke to the junior and senior medical students, nurses, internes and visiting staff of the Medical College of Virginia

*The three state league reports which follow were received too late for the annual meeting* ED NOTE

**Arkansas Eugenics Association**

The Little Rock Birth Control Clinic sponsored by the Arkansas Eugenics Association was opened in February, 1931 The Board of Directors of the State Baptist Hospital has given the Association the use of a room free of charge, and a clinic is held once a week Two doctors and all those connected with the clinic (interviewers, instructors, doctors' assistants, field workers and motor corps) serve without pay

The clinic registered 227 clients, referred by the charity and welfare agencies, and some physicians Of these 93 were completed or discharged cases, 20% could not be located for a final check, 16 were not following instructions at all times, and 55 were using the method recommended with satisfactory results The clinic is free to any married woman who cannot afford the services of a private physician Funds are derived from membership dues and lectures, a series of which is given each Spring

Last year an afternoon lecture was given by Dr Martin C Hawkins, Jr of the Executive Committee on *Problems of Birth Control and Methods of Contraception*, and at an evening meeting Rabbi Ira E Sanders and Rev Paul W Quillian spoke on *Marriage and Morals* This year the lecture on contraception will again be given by Dr Hawkins Early in March at the annual luncheon meeting Rev Morris Thornburgh Workman will speak on *Anchoring Monogamy*

The chairman spent two weeks in Washington last Spring working for the Birth Control Bill, and many letters and telegrams were sent to Congressmen through the efforts of the members of the Board of Directors

The Arkansas Eugenics Association is a member of the Council of Social Agencies of Little Rock and of the State Conference on Social Work An effort is now being made to interest other communities in the State in the work with the hope that several more clinics may be established

MRS EDWARD CORNISH, *Chairman*

**Birth Control League of Indiana**

The Birth Control League of Indiana has spent the first year of its existence on organization and education Literature has been distributed and talks given to clubs and other small groups, clinics have been visited and studied and a canvas made of hospitals with the hope of being able to establish an intra-mural mothers' health clinic in Indianapolis It now seems that the clinic will have to be extra-mural and we expect to open it in the early fall

On February 22nd we sponsored a large public meeting at which Dr Henry Fielding Ogburn of Chicago University, director of President Hoover's

Committee on Social Trends spoke on *Recent Social Trends and Population Control*

Our annual meeting for the election of officers will be held in March, followed by a concerted drive for members and funds

MRS LEE BURNS, *Chairman*

## Maternal Health Association of Missouri

Although the progress of the Maternal Health Association of Missouri has been slow, we are not discouraged, realizing that in a city like St. Louis, in which a large proportion of the population is Catholic, we cannot expect a swift growth

The Maternal Health Center was opened to the public August 1, 1932, in St. Louis. The first patient was advised August 3, and by February 15, 1933, we had had 102 patients, with three sessions a week. The Center is receiving cases from social agencies in the suburbs. In one suburb a group of volunteer workers furnish automobiles and others furnish the \$1.00 charge for patients who are driven in to our center by a social worker.

Our executive secretary is carrying on a campaign of quiet publicity by visiting social workers and others who may be able to send patients. Both she and some of the cooperating doctors have addressed groups of women all over the city. At present she is trying to reach the church groups, giving talks to their women's societies.

At the end of January a clinic was opened in a poor section in the Northern part of the city in the dispensary of a prominent Episcopalian social settlement. Ten patients were advised the opening day. By March first plans will be completed to open another clinic in the Southern part of the city in cooperation with a well established Methodist social center.

Plans for extending maternal health work are under consideration in St. Joseph and Kansas City.

MRS ALBERT E. TAUSSIG, *Secretary*

\* \* \*

The interests of creative motherhood are best served by demanding the right to birth control advice and legalized abortion under proper care as a matter of maternal health, and maternal free choice, rather than economic necessity. The community is all of us, the community to be is our children.

DORA RUSSELL

## Letters

AVOID RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES

TO THE EDITOR

Has not the birth control movement reached the stage where counter-attack, perhaps in kind, on the Catholics no longer serves a purpose but where the struggle should be confined to conciliatory reasoning?

I recognize, of course, the official attitude of the Church is impeding progress in this work but I am also aware that professed Catholics are coming more and more to the practice. It has seemed to me several times in the past year in reading the REVIEW that we might be winning greater support from these by less unnecessary denouncement of their Church. As cases in point, I cite the third editorial in the February number and the opening of the third paragraph of the article by Edith How-Martyn on the following page.

I would continue to have us point out, as we believe, the fallacies in Catholic argument but to do so in all kindness. Let there be editorial leadership in the REVIEW, but not such as will emphasize religious differences.

*Greenfield, Mass*

PAUL S. WALCOTT

A LIBRARIAN SEES LIGHT

TO THE EDITOR

A few years ago it was my desire to have the BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW accessible to persons using the city library. When I offered my copies of the REVIEW to the library I received the reply that the issues would be accepted with thanks but would be kept on closed shelves, available to those who asked for them. Just how anyone was to know the REVIEW was in the library was not explained.

At this point it seemed best to take a few copies to the librarian so that a decision could be rendered not on the name of the magazine but on its contents. As everyone who reads it knows, this magazine has printed nothing for at least seven years that could arouse an unseemly interest in the youngest or most curious of minds. A similar statement cannot be made of much of the work of present day writers whose books and magazine articles are unquestioningly placed on library shelves.

A year after placing the issues of the REVIEW in the librarian's hands, I had occasion to refer to some back numbers. Not finding them on the

open shelves I asked for them at the desk in the periodical reading room, and was referred to some one higher up. Finally a pleasant young woman of the staff produced a small key from her pocket and unlocked a cupboard where at first only dust cloths and smocks were to be seen. From this miscellany the desired issues were brought to light. What dubious material was now to be exposed on the reading room tables! It seemed useless to place further issues in the library.

Four years have elapsed and the birth control movement has gained headway, particularly in this city and state, and now the same librarian has seen the light, for he writes: "I have talked with members of the staff with whom I discussed the same subject when back numbers of the publication were offered us. My notes indicate that some of the best informed persons who were interested in birth control at that time thought the publication should be available in our library for those who asked for it but not publicly displayed. I remember your reference to improved editing of the REVIEW. I think the manner of handling the subject will determine largely whether this periodical will be used primarily by those approaching it intelligently in contrast with those (especially youngsters) who might seek to find an outlet for tawdry curiosity only. We might accept the subscription and let the experience and the judgment of good laymen like ourselves determine the eventual policy of whether the magazine will be placed on the open shelves or in stacks to be delivered on call."

This change of attitude both on the part of the librarian and the library board is most encouraging and makes one feel that if four short years can bring it about, then the whole movement can expect to be seen in a saner light by the public as well as by libraries.

Indianapolis, Indiana ELIZABETH S. HARRISON

#### A CLINIC IN PORTO RICO

TO THE EDITOR

The Birth Control League of Porto Rico was incorporated on October 5th. I am writing to let you know how my work is progressing. The obstacles have been overcome, the hurricane season is past, financial conditions are a little better and we have progressed to the point of opening our Clinic today. Our office equipment has been mostly donated by friends who were interested in our work. Santurce, Porto Rico VIOLET S. CALLANDER

#### CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

GAETANO SALVEMINI, eminent Italian historian, is at present a member of the faculty of Harvard University.

JOSEPH J. SPENGLER, a specialist in population research, is a professor of economics at the Duke University, North Carolina.

E. FRANKLIN FRAZIER, formerly director of Atlanta School of Social Work, is professor of sociology at Fisk University, and author of *The Negro Family in Chicago*, *The Free Negro Family*, etc.

JAY RUMYANECK is a research student in social biology at the London School of Economics.

MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD is the author of *Love Children*, a Study of Illegitimacy, and a frequent contributor to magazines.

## Mass Meeting in Connecticut

A BIRTH Control mass meeting was held in Bushnell Memorial Hall, Hartford, on February 24 under the auspices of the Hartford Committee of the Connecticut Birth Control League. Its object was to stimulate interest in the hearing on the birth control bill before the Joint Judiciary Committee of the Connecticut Legislature, scheduled for March 1st. This bill aims to permit licensed physicians to prescribe contraceptives for health reasons and reasons of social welfare, and to permit the use of contraceptives when so prescribed.

Over 1500 people were present. There was no note of antagonism, on the contrary, much interest and enthusiasm were shown. The meeting expressed approval with a round of applause when Senator Ray L. Harding, Representative Kenneth de Plimpton and a third legislator, who declined to give his name, rose in the audience and announced that they would vote in favor of the proposed bill.

Baroness Keichi Ishimoto, leader of the birth control movement in Japan, was the principal speaker. The present situation in the Far East gave poignancy to her contention that birth control might have been a substitute for Japanese imperialism. "We have settled 1000 colonists in Manchuria," she said, "while we have nearly one

(Continued on page 79)

# Keep the Review in the Libraries

*A library subscription means that hundreds of readers (not one or two) are informed on the progress of the birth control movement. Many libraries have been forced to discontinue their subscriptions this year, is your library among the casualties? The attached list shows the libraries which are still receiving the REVIEW regularly. If you do NOT find your city in this listing, beg, borrow or steal \$1—the price of a library subscription—and put your home town on the REVIEW library map again. Subscriptions received now will include, gratis, the January and February issues to make a complete 1933 volume.*

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**CONNECTICUT MASS MEETING**

*(Continued from page 77)*

million new babies in Japan every year This fact alone answers the militarists" Professor Henry Pratt Fairchild advocated birth control as a better method of controlling population than "nature's methods" or celibacy, abstinence or abortion, and appealed to "thinking people to remove the whole subject and interest from obscurity and a maze of misunderstanding and place it on a foundation of reason and understanding—in the hands of the medical profession, the only ones competent to deal with it" Mrs F Robertson Jones urged the support of the bill and answered questions on the general birth control situation The Rev Dr Percy G Kammerer, provost of Avon Old Farms, presided, and Rev Edward P Ayer, Chaplain of the Senate, stressed how much work there was to be done before the legislators from the "back-country" districts gained a real understanding of the meaning of birth control "I wish more members of the Senate and House could have been here tonight," he said, "to hear these sound arguments"

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