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JULY—AUGUST, 1933

The
Madras Birth Control Bulletin.

The Official Organ

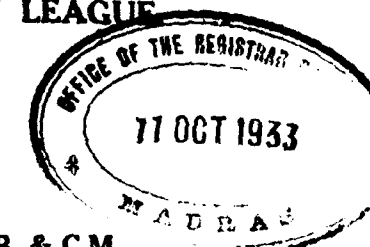
OF

THE MADRAS NEO-MALTHUSIAN LEAGUE

(Published Bimonthly.)

EDITOR:

M. S. KRISHNAMURTHI AYYAR, M.B. & C.M.



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All communications relating to the Bulletin and other matters connected with the League should be addressed to the Secretary and Editor, 3, Appu Mudali Street, Mylapore, Madras. Matters for publication in the Bulletin should be typed on one side and sent to the Editor. Papers and articles forwarded for publication are understood to be offered to the Bulletin alone and any breach of these rules will be followed by non-publication. The League is in no way responsible for the expressions of contributors nor does it necessarily endorse the views of authors.

The Madras Neo-Malthusian League.

(For human welfare through birth-control. Founded July, 1928.)

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OBJECTS.

- (1) To spread among the people by all practical means, a knowledge of birth control and of its possibilities for human welfare ;
- (2) to give under medical help and guidance, instruction on hygienic contraceptive methods to all married people who desire to limit their families or who are in any way unfit for parenthood ;
- (3) to publish pamphlets and leaflets and a periodical journal on Malthusianism and birth control ;
- (4) to organise lectures before societies of various kinds on this subject and,
- (5) to form a library and to subscribe for journals on birth control.

The League appeals to all liberal and advanced thinkers in the country to help the cause and through it, the evolution of a higher humanity in the motherland and the uplift of mankind in general.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP.

All persons above the age of 20 (1) who are married or about to marry (2) who are members of the medical profession or (3) who have children are eligible for membership. The subscription is Re. 1 annually or Rs. 20 for life. The members will each get a copy of the Bulletin free.

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Vol. III.]

JULY - AUGUST, 1933

[No. 4

Extracts.

FRANCE IS URGED TO GIVE EDUCATION IN BIRTH CONTROL

Deputy Bergery Tells of Advances in Other Countries.

"Let us have Government regulation for the development of clean, healthy French youth," said Gaston Bergery, Deputy of the Seine-et-Oise and member of the Commission of Foreign Affairs, in an address before the Association d'Etudes Sexologiques at the Salle Pleyel.

Bergery, advocating the formation by the State of birth control institutions to protect women to whom maternity would be a danger and who would be likely to give birth to undesirable and incapable children, was the principal speaker on a programme which dragged out age-old sex bogies and exposed them to the light of modern science and reasoning.

"The State must provide the proper cradle if it wants the right to claim its children," he warned a large and enthusiastic audience.

The meeting opened with a short greeting and explanation by Justin Godart, Senator and former Minister of Public Health, following which M. Dorival of the Comedie-Francaise read an address on sexual problems of the present. A dramatic programme

was presented by Mlle. Colonna Romano, Mlle. Marie Morgan, Mlle. Lucie Brille, Mlle. Claude Martel, M. Pierre Dux, and M. Maurice Donnead, all of the Comedie-Francaise.

France Backward.

In his lecture, which outlined sexual conditions in a bold, frank manner, Bergery touched on the development of the birth control movement in different countries, comparing it with the backward attitude taken by the French Government. Attacking the hypocrisy with which most sex matters are dealt with throughout the world, he gave as an example the conditions in the United States, where birth control is authorized and encouraged, but where the practice of abortion and the sale of contraceptive articles are prohibited.

In France, he stated, the conditions are much worse. "France is called the last trench of liberty, yet here everything is prohibited. But everything is practised. Therein must lie the liberty!"

The speaker cited cases in Germany, Denmark, Switzerland and Mexico, in all of which countries government clinics have been established. The address was interspersed with pointed remarks and was received with approval.

The Association d'Etudes Sexologiques was founded in November, 1931,

under the presidency of Dr. E. Toulouse. Mme. Maria Verone is vice-president, and Dr. Jean Dalsace is secretary general. The association is represented in the International Congress of Eugenics and in the World League for Sexual Reform. It is represented in the United States by Clifford W. Beers, general secretary to the International Committee of Mental Hygiene.

The purpose of the Association is to bring about more honest and adequate treatment of sexual problems in France and to insure thereby a wholesome posterity.—*Birth Control News, June, 33.*

INDIA IN 1930-31.

(Published by the Government of India, Central Publication Branch, Calcutta, 1932.)

"It appears to be the general opinion of Indian economists who discuss the population problem of this country that the only practical method of limiting the population is by the introduction of artificial methods of birth control'. But how this practice can become widely established in a country where the propagation of male offspring is considered a religious duty and barrenness a retribution for crimes committed in a former incarnation, it is difficult to see. In India, as elsewhere, there has indeed recently been a marked increase in the demand, among certain classes, for scientific knowledge on the subject, and the movement appears to be distinctly 'less hampered by misplaced prudery than in some countries which claim to be more civilized. Not only is artificial control advocated by a number of medical writers, but Indians can now boast of a Neo-Malthusian League with two Maharajas, three High Court Judges and four or five men very prominent in public life as its sponsors'. But such interest as is displayed in these matters is inevitably confined almost entirely to the educated classes, and the practical effects on a population of 353,000,000 of whatever artificial restriction is actually practised must be almost nil. Meanwhile, until

the use of this method becomes so extensive as to yield appreciable results, little can be done. Some authorities have been forced to the conclusion that the only alternative means of checking the present rate of increase would be by relaxing the efforts to reduce the infant mortality rate; and despite the extraordinarily beneficent work which is performed in the child-welfare and maternity centres, the purely scientific arguments which can be adduced in support of this view are substantial. At any rate there seems to be a good deal to be said in favour of arranging that in maternity clinics, and during the course of 'Baby Weeks,' instructions in birth control should be provided. 'A move in this direction has already been made by the Government of Mysore, which in 1930 sanctioned the establishment of birth control clinics in the four principal hospitals of the State.'

"Apart from artificial restriction of this kind, there is theoretically, one other way in which an excessive increase in population can be prevented. 'It has been clearly demonstrated in Europe that a rise in the standard of living is normally accompanied by a fall in the birth-rate, and the same principle no doubt operates in this country'. Nevertheless, it is important to realize that, to have this effect, the rise in the standard must be substantial. A mere increase in the food supply, among the poverty-stricken masses who constitute the vast majority of the Indian population, might easily have a contrary result, by encouraging them to breed right up to, instead of to some degree short of, the subsistence level. 'In order that a higher standard of living may affect the rate of reproduction it is apparent that not only is an increase in education and culture involved, but also a psychological appreciation of a higher probability of survival.' But this latter factor could scarcely operate in India under existing conditions."

BIRTH CONTROL AND AFTER.

The Old Morality.

Its Impossibilities.

Birth control has now made remarkable progress. In 1876 the birth-rate of England and Wales was 36.3. To-day it is 15.3. Fifty years ago we were increasing our home population at great speed, and sending abroad several hundred thousand emigrants every year; and this was done in the teeth of an enormous deathrate. To-day emigration has stopped and we have almost abolished infant mortality; yet we are producing only enough babies to replace 78 per cent of our existing population. Nearly all western nations are following in our footsteps. This is a revolution unparalleled in history. What influence will it have on our general sexual and economic life? Men like Russell, Ellis, Shaw, and Wells think it will have an enormous influence, and will lead to the recasting of our social and moral life. Others take a strongly conservative view, and we have an excellent example of this type of thought in *Marriage, Children and God*, by Claud Mullins, the wellknown London Magistrate. Mr. Mullins writes admirably on birth control, but introduces many reactionary views which we are glad to say are rare among birth controllers. For instance: "The law might reasonably refuse to countenance any divorce for any cause until the marriage has lasted for a definite period: I would suggest seven years as the minimum period" (p. 58). It is extraordinary to hear a man whose daily duties bring him in contact with the poor talking like this. If a woman's husband is sentenced to penal servitude for life, or becomes an incurable lunatic, what useful or humane purpose would be served by making her wait seven years for a divorce?

The New Morality.

After that, our readers will not be surprised to hear that Mr. Mullins makes some vigorous attacks on the "New Morality" which is simply the morality of the leading thinkers of the

age. Mr. Mullins is curiously innocent for a Magistrate. Says he: "Those who would change our bed-rock moral standards are ignoring the welfare of the family as a whole, and in particular they are jeopardizing the interests of children" (p. 170). What can Mr. Mullins know about children? Has he ever considered the situation of a widower with young children? They have lost their mother, but are being brought up by an affectionate aunt or other relative, and are perfectly happy. Then the father turns the aunt out of doors, and gives the children a stepmother. Does Mr. Mullins imagine that in one case out of every hundred such a change can cause anything but misery to the children? Yet "our bed-rock moral standards" can give no help in such a case. No man of common sense imagines that a young man who has lost his wife is going to remain continent for ever. Under the Old Morality there is nothing for such a man to do except turn the affectionate aunt out of doors and take in a stepmother. We utterly reprobate such a solution. We think it would be infinitely more humane for a man to form an extra-marital tie than to inflict upon his young children the calamity of a stepmother.

The Spinster Problem.

Says Mr. Mullins: "Mr. Bertrand Russell believes that 'contraceptives have altered the whole aspect of sex and marriage,' but this seems to me a shallow view." We think Mr. Mullins's view is the shallow one. Take the question of the spinster. In the upper and middle classes more than half the women never get married. This has always been cruel to the individual, but to the race it did not matter so much, because the other half of the women bore such enormous numbers of children that they made up for the celibacy of the rest. That day has gone for ever. Intelligent women will no longer do double child-bearing, because celibacy is forced on others. Dr. Fisher of the Eugenics Society has told us that the middle and upper classes are producing only two fifths of the children neces-

sary to replace their numbers. At that rate these classes will have perished entirely before the century is out. Under the Old Morality they have no outlook except to perish. Half the women will never again do double work. If Mr. Mullins wishes to exterminate the educated classes of England, he has only to continue his present campaign and to do it eloquently enough.

The Adolescent Problem.

Birth control has given tremendous significance to another great problem—that of the long delay between puberty and marriage. The average interval between puberty and marriage is ten years for women and twelve for men, and these intervals are longer for the educated classes. As we have again and again pointed out, this interval leads to habits which impair the reproductive power of the race. This has been proved to demonstration by a whole series of questionnaires. In past times the prolificness of some made it possible to overlook the sterility of others, but that will never be so again. If Mr. Mullins believes that the Old Morality will give any help here, he is simply beckoning the way to racial disaster.

Mr. Mullins and Moses.

"The fundamentals of the old morality are in my belief immutable," says Mr. Mullins. When we read words like these, we really feel some pity for Moses, Paul, Mahomet, and the venerable protagonists of the Old Morality. The world for which they legislated was so utterly different from anything that exists today, that it is ludicrous to bring their ideas into the discussion at all. In the East everybody was married at puberty. There was a curse upon a father who allowed his daughter to reach puberty without finding her husband. Moreover, everybody married. An old maid was totally unknown. If there were any surplus women, the richer men took them as extra wives. The Old Morality was invented to fit that social system. Moses and Mahomet never contemplated a society like ours,

and would have been horrified at the very idea of such a society. It is outrageous to take the morality devised by such men and attempt to apply it to conditions wholly unlike anything they ever contemplated. —*The New Generation*, July '33.

SUPERFLUOUS PEOPLE.

BY

EMILY C. VAUGHN.

For the last year the case of the unemployed has been diagnosed from A to Z in every newspaper and magazine in the country. It seems to be proven beyond doubt that the machine has supplanted man; that, even should we surprise prosperity around the corner, fifty per cent of the workers would never again find work, that is, regular work in sufficient quantity, at a high enough wage, to keep them self-supporting at a decent level. Automatically then, they become "superfluous." And does that prevent breeding? We know that it does not.

Undoubtedly the greater proportion of the unemployed are skilled workers, have been, steady workers. It is ominous that the unemployables are, relatively, few. No more convincing proof of this than the appalling array of pawntickets they never produced unasked, and then—reluctantly. As an investigator for an unemployment relief agency I must have interviewed five hundred cases direct, and come into contact with twice that number hunting up landlords and relatives. On my list were carpenters, machinists, plumbers, painters, clerks, dressmakers, masons, stenographers, salesmen, tailors, peddlers, a doctor or two, a dentist and two clergymen; of all nationalities, nearly all American born.

It was Harry Berman, in Brooklyn, where the children get sun and air galore, and where the space and privacy of a two family house raise the standard of living, who became, for me, the spokesman for his section of the National Dilemma. Pacing up and

down his beautifully neat, clean kitchen, waving aside his share of the slender meal the sad-faced wife was putting before two children, aged ten and seven, he gave me his story. "Yes, I am a 'cutter' by men's suits. Fine suits, where you should know how to look every piece of cloth for flaws, to lay out that it should not stretch. I have always good work till three years now. I save; I marry and have two children only. Two I can care for. I buy a house; the top floor I rent for thirty a month. All goes well—Comes the depression; not so many people wear the fine suits and now they can cut many with a machine a boy can work. A boy can do and they pay him ten dollars. I had in the bank a little money; on that we live. See the bank book? Now, no more than twenty and my brother who pays the mortgage the last time can pay no more. For six months the people on the top floor don't pay the rent. Friends they are; can you put your friends on the side-walk and no work? Even it costs you something by the City Marshall to put your friends on the side-walk. What to do. What to do."

The children ate silently, and with poor appetite. For lunch, a whole-wheat-and-lettuce sandwich, half a glass of milk, half an apple. Wellchosen, but not enough.

"And the worst, the children, my God," he continued, ".....must they go in an institution, or in one room if the Bureau give me a job at fifteen dollars? These two are strong already but you do not see the baby asleep in the yard; he should not have been and we do not know how he was an accident. There are many doctors who do many things; yes, but it is a lot of money, and by a midwife is dangerous. So there he is and it is better, for his sake that he should die of a sickness; it is better for all the children that we turn on the gas.....Why should not the doctor at the hospital help you. Or the nurse from the Settlement. Or at the milk station there could be someone, may be...."

But not a word betraying any knowledge of a birth control clinic, a birth control movement.

It was edifying to note, since I had mounted like stairs fifteen years ago as the minister's wife on a strike committee, the immense improvement in general living conditions. Gone the clutter of too heavy, stuffy furniture. Here now, linoleum, enamelled tables, refrigerator, bottled milk and the baby asleep on the fire escape instead of by the hot stove. Always the first anxiety: "I must stop the grade A. No more oranges I can buy. When I can pay the rent no dark rooms." To Child Care talks they listen on the radio; these they read in the tabloids.

And they all know, such as are neither dumb nor defective, something of birth control; make some effort to practice it. But it is hit-or-miss affair. There is a complete lack of correlated knowledge—sex hygiene—how to find the best medium for oneself. Lack of correlated knowledge and swift, sure, practical help, is the great stumbling block.

Oh! they tell you. You are neither authorized to ask, nor have you the time but a middle-aged woman, in a shabby coat, round whom the children cluster, invites confidences. It came pouring out, day after day. "What to do? I try this; no good, I do what my friend tells me and for three years no baby; then two more and I do the same thing always.....Four abortions by a 'lady' and I am very sick. A quart of ergot I drink and it makes me very sick but not the right way. One child only by you! What you do? Tell me, please." And on and on, and on.

Several of my cases should make the tax payers extremely thoughtful; should make the voter ponder deeply on compulsory sterilization.

On a pouring wet day, a deformed deaf-and-dumb girl opened to me the door of a bare, dirty, stuffy place to disclose her mother in bed, with two little girls, while the father and two bigger boys sat huddled on the outside. To my astonishment I saw that the woman had a beautiful face, but that

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it was completely vacant. She made no attempt to speak; the little girls, stunted and stupid, also held their tongues. The man, Italian, told me there were two more in an institution. By his registration card I could see that they had been on and off the "Charities" for years. His union card said he was a stonemason. With a wave of the hand towards his wife, he made one remark: "No maka da good keed? What to do?"

In another most disreputable flat I came across a menace of different complexion. Nine members of Vagabondia, who transplanted to sunny skies, tricked out in a red rag or two, given a barrel organ and a monkey might not have been the disability they certainly were, in Brooklyn, to the tax payer. At a rickety table near the fleeting blaze of a box retrieved from the street, sat six wan, worn, but not un-cheerful children, a woman with a baby on her lap, and a stout knave of a father with splendid teeth. The teeth of the children were rotten; the mother had lost several. The baby was wizened. "No meelk," explained the woman calmly, "I geeve oatmeal and water—he die I theenk—plenty more keed". The man had no specific trade. "I work. Oh, anytheeng," he said. His card was plastered with the initials of every available welfare agency.

But it was a little German family who measured for me the height of negation, the depth of despair.

On a poor street, in a cheap house, in the cleanest of little places, I found a young couple with two boys of six and four. The rent they got for janitor service; but the man, a carpenter, could not now pick up enough jobs to keep them going; the woman had sewed in a factory now shut down. They had twice moved to a poorer neighbourhood; they had pawned everything—a fine garnet necklace, ear-rings, an old clock from Germany. The man sat at the table, an open Bible before him, his face swollen with toothache. He was, he said, trying to forget it. Grabbing the girl roughly by the arm he shouted, "Look at her! All her

teeth going too—and mine—I got a plate and it drives me crazy, and at the clinic they say: 'that'll do, yet awhile, and when they pull them out they are rough with you. I read the Bible to try and keep calm, see my father's name in the Bible, he was a Lutheran minister. I go crazy and then I beat the kids; I can't stand their noise. Do you thing I go near her? I wouldn't dare. Not for two years. I beat the kids, but I care for themand we are young yet."

One might go on *ad infinitum* and tell of nine filthy, starved, half-frozen children, with their parents—all morons—and three grubby, sore-eyed poodles huddled together in a welter of unspeakable bedclothes in an unheated, one-roomed shack on a waste stretch back of Brooklyn. One might expatiate at length on the deadly menace of the East hundreds in Manhattan, where Italians, Negroes, Turks, Porto-Ricans, Armenians and Portuguese all huddle together in the terrible rabbit warrens long since condemned by law but still pulling down rent. In one of these, deserted by the landlord but still inhabited, it was up to me to find James Wilson on the top floor. Misery incarnate! No front door, no bells, no lights, no heat, no water. Litter, dirt, stench, and adolescent boys shooting craps in empty rooms giving pause to hurl a jeer or two at me.

And it was this neighbourhood that presented a sight curious and touching. Before the landlady turned her flashlight on to a pitch-black room from which came no sound whatever, I wondered what on earth could be the smell; what in the world could be those peculiar flashes of light, operating in a circle, on different levels. "The gas and electric is cut off," explained the Polish landlady, as her torch revealed seven Negroes, three men, two women, and two children sitting in a ring, chewing gum. An old Negro, with a child on his knee, held the little package. "No ma'am," he said, in a low soft voice. "Tom Johnson, he don't ba'ad here no more. Yes ma'am, come

they chew a little gum it seems lak they don't crave to eat—so much."

And I could tell you of children, hard and bitter, hating their parents for adding to a crowded, underfed family. A girl of fifteen, dragged out of school to take care of a mother with a goitre and four younger children, told me she wished her father, since he had no work, would die. And a boy of seventeen flung into the air: "Eight of us to eat on a four dollar grocery ticket! If I ever have kids I'll kill them right away."

But there should be sufficient here to point to a speeding up of birth control movement in the very near future. Taken on a percentage basis my experiences stand for very little, but these may be multiplied by the thousands in one city alone. There is now a vast multitude conscious of the need for birth control in their own group, conscious of the dreadful meaning of the term "superfluous." It is safe to say, that everybody in the world whether or not hit by the depression is aware of its implication, far-reaching, deep-seated. Welfare organizations—settlements, nursing associations, churches—all facing increased demands on their service with decreased incomes, are doing a lot of thinking. The general public, scurrying past five beggars to a block, or pausing to propitiate, with a nickel, the Gods, whose emissaries they may well beWhat a field for new endeavours! What an army from which to draw new recruits.

If we are not too stupid, we shall learn many things from these last sorry years. If one of them should be that all existing social organizations must commit themselves to the avowed belief that "Prevention is better than cure," must throw their united weight into the arena, the dissemination of birth control knowledge, the swift, sure, practical aid towards keeping out of life those for whom there is no place, may be an accomplished fact in a very short time. Thus, a major blessing may be pulled out of a major depression.

—*Birth Control Review*, June '33.

News and Comments.

When Population Drops.

Professor Carr-Saunders has astonished the world by pointing out that the population of this country will be diminishing after 1940. This has long been known to experts, but statesmen and journalists seem never to have heard of it.

In our opinion this will prove a priceless blessing. Since the war the number of competitors in the labour market has annually been increased by 200,000. This has been the main cause of unemployment. If our population had remained steady, we could have employed almost the whole of it. With constantly increasing population, and constantly shrinking markets, the task has been hopeless.

All men of any sense now see that a substantial reduction of our population is what the country needs. The way to get this benefit as soon and as thoroughly as possible is to keep up the birth control propaganda.

Make Britain Independent!

The World Economic Conference has totally failed to reduce foreign tariffs. Our manufacturers are to remain excluded from the markets of the world. The eighty per cent. of our population who live in towns are to continue largely unemployed.

Intelligent people now see that there is not the smallest chance of world markets being reopened for our benefit. On the contrary competition from Japan and the East will be more severe than ever.

The remedy is to depend more on ourselves. The way to do this is to have a smaller population. So long as we attempt to support 45 millions, we shall be dependent on the foreigner for

most of our food and raw materials. With a smaller population we can produce most of what we need ourselves.

Birth control is the way to become self-dependent.

B. M. A. On Abortion.

On July 21st at the Dublin meeting of the British Medical Association, there was a thorough discussion of the need for a radical alteration of the present ferocious abortion law. Lord Dawson of Penn said that opinion was moving very rapidly. He thought it was better to let opinion crystallize rather than pass any premature resolution.

The discussion made it evident that many doctors are already ignoring the Act of 1861 and obeying the dictates of humanity.

The rapid change of public opinion on this question is mainly due to a few energetic women. It was Miss Stella Browne, who started the agitation in England. Among others to whom great credit is due we may mention Madame Lorsignol, who has proved an excellent and tactful speaker on the subject.

Sir Allan Powell

A reference to "a world of autogiros and synthetic babies" was made by Sir Allan Powell in his presidential address to the State Medicine and Industrial Hygiene Section of the Royal Institute of Public Health Congress at Eastbourne.

Sir Allan declared that to-day there was a growing realization of the part which eugenics should play in modern life, and of the wisdom of explaining to all classes the knowledge of birth control and the undesirability of defective parents having children.

Sir John Ramsay

"How the Nation is Deteriorating" was the subject upon which Lt. Col. Sir John Ramsay, K. C. I. E., C. S. I., addressed the members of the Rotary Club of Walthamstow. The speaker dwelt on the need for limitation of population as an essential factor in preventing racial deterioration.

The only reason, he said, that pressure of population had not caused an explosion was that birth control had provided a new safety valve. There was tendency to recruit the nation disproportionately from the bottom of the social and economic scales.

The subject demanded the attention of all thinking men.

Meeting in Blackburn.

Nurse Williams spoke to about fifty members of the local Women's Co-operative Guild, at their meeting at St. Aiden's School, Mill Hill, on Wednesday, June 7. Mrs. Higgins presided. The audience showed great interest and appreciation and a number of questions were asked. A hearty vote of thanks to the speaker concluded the meeting.

Meeting in Bromley.

Dr. Evelyn Fisher addressed over a hundred members of the Bow and Bromley Labour Party, Women's Section, at the Public Hall, Bromley, on Tuesday, June 13. Mrs. Topson, President of the Women's Section and a member of the local Council, took the Chair.

The audience displayed keen interest and sympathy when Dr. Fisher read to them extracts from some of the letters Dr. Stopes had received from working mothers like themselves, imploring her to help to put an end to their excessive number of pregnancies. They were most appreciative of her work in being the pioneer of birth control clinics in the Empire.

The Ante-natal Centre under the Bow authorities is one at which birth control advice is given when required.

Doctors' Demonstrations.

The short lecture preceding the next doctors' demonstration will be given by Dr. Marie Stopes, D. Sc., on July 5, at 2-30 p.m. sharp, followed in the clinic by Dr. Evelyn Fisher M. D., who will superintend clinical demonstrations on women of various types, and practice in the use of various contraceptive devices. Previous application for tickets (which will be supplied to medical practitioners and senior students only) should be made in writing to the Hon. Secretary, C. B. C. 108 Whitfield Street, W. I. as space at the clinic is extremely limited.

Demonstration Days on the first Wednesdays will be continued throughout the summer, as so many visitors ask for them. That on August 2 will be conducted by Dr. Beddow Bayly, M. R. C. S. and on September 6, by Dr. Evelyn Fisher, M. D.

Cochin Census

Cochin today is the most densely populated State in India. The recorded density of its population exceeds that of Belgium, the most thickly populated country in Europe. "There are as many as 814 persons per square mile in Cochin, and the density has doubled itself in the course of five and half decades." Belgium, with 702 persons per square mile, is by comparison, thinly populated. What of the future? Cochin cannot support these enormous increases. The pressure of population has hitherto been relieved by emigration, notably to Ceylon but this outlet has almost entirely closed and many emigrants desire to return. Other parts of India have provided homes for thousands of other Cochinites but here too the openings are rapidly diminishing. The Census Superintendent looks to the development of Cochin Harbour to provide an outlet for the future increase

of population. He speaks of "the unlimited possibilities of further increase of population consequent on the industrial and commercial development connected with the improvement of Cochin Harbour." But even the most optimistic must doubt the ability of Cochin Harbour and its environs to provide employment for the large numbers which each decade adds to the population of the State.

The remedy is to be found in some restriction of the rate of increase. How this restriction shall be secured, the methods by which the increase of the population should be controlled, are subjects of intense interest to India as a whole. The country cannot support the enormous population which the present rate of increase will produce within a generation. The natural checks, disease, famine, war, internecine strife and the like, are rapidly being eliminated.—*The Madras Mail*.

Birth of the Fittest

"If we really wanted above everything else that our race should flourish, we should give everyone a really equal chance to succeed, and should see to it that the people who had the highest inborn intelligence and energy were those who were actually doing the work requiring the most brains. And having found those people we should encourage them to have as many children as would be consistent with the mothers' and children's health and welfare. The people who were inferior we would encourage to have few children. That would be true patriotism.

"I like to see our birth rate controlled so as to give the highest possible average standard of living. Most people who consciously limit their families probably do so without any particular thought of the state as a whole. They are concerned with the health and happiness of the mothers and children concerned. A mother's life may be rendered almost intolerable by pregnancies following one another in quick succession and there is evidence that children tend to be

healthier when they are not born in quick succession. In poor families the birth of each child reduces the standard of living of the others." Dr. John Baker, *The Listener*, March 29th.

Birth-Control World-Wide.

France. According to the official general statistics for France, the birth rate in 1932 was 17.3 and the death rate 15.8 per thousand and the infantile mortality 7.6 per cent. *La Grande Reforme* comments:—

"Will it still be contended that France is being 'depopulated'? 61,364 inhabitants more in one year, almost as many as a town like Metz; and in 1931 the increase had been 49,539. Let us note that stillbirths and infant mortality reached the frightful figure of 82,714, a hecatomb of poor mites that with a little care and hygiene could be diminished by at least half. But go and tell the repopulation-maniacs and the Catholic celibates that the prudence of French households is praiseworthy and that, after all, France is none the worse for it!"

Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovakian Church has recently followed the example of the Churches of England and America, and published a statement of its position with regard to birth control. While aiming to promote responsible fatherhood and motherhood and anxious for quality rather than quantity, it recognises that abstinence in marriage is not to be relied upon and leaves it to the discretion of married people to decide upon the number of children they feel they can do justice to.

South Africa. Dr. E. G. Malherbe, in Volume III of the Carnegie Commission's Report, published in April, entitled "Education and the Poor White", views the increase of the poor whites with anxiety. He points out the dysgenic effects of a restriction of births in the upper strata of society along with unrestricted multiplication in the lowest strata and says:—

"The somewhat crude pre-occupation with mere quantity which characterises

the public reaction to the announcement of falls in the birth rate will have to be modified by considerations of quality.....The thing which will enable us to survive culturally as well as physically is quality rather than mere quantity. It is precisely the bottom fifth of our whites which, owing to their rapid increase in quantity and not in quality is giving us all this trouble and anxiety..... We, above all, in Africa, cannot afford a decline in the average intelligence of the white people."

United States. In a radio address delivered on April 17th, Mr. Guy Irving Burch, Director of the Population Reform Bureau said:—

"Some of the most important developments during the past year have been (1) the marked progress which Mrs. Sanger's birth control bill has made in Washington; (2) the establishment of a Department of Eugenics and mental Hygiene for the propagation of birth control and sterilization by the State of Vera Cruz, Mexico; (3) the advocacy of birth control as an effective means of relieving misery and poverty in Puerto Rico by the Governor of those islands; (4) the introduction in the State Legislature of Wisconsin of a drastic anti-birth control bill; and (5) the appearance of a book concerning so called natural means of birth control, which book and method appear to have the support of the Roman Catholic Church. At present there is considerable controversy among medical authorities concerning this subject...Many people believe that in advocating so-called artificial methods, the Catholic Church appears to have gotten itself into a dilemma the horns of which are very sharp indeed.

"To sum up it might be said that the birth control movement during the past year has continued to make the rapid progress which was so actively and militantly begun before the World War by Mrs. Margaret Sanger and a small number of forward looking pioneers. In fact, the progress during

the past three years has been perhaps more rapid than many of the friends of the movement thought possible."

The "Doctors' Bill" sponsored by Margaret Sanger and the National Committee for Federal Legislation on Birth Control, has again been introduced into Congress, during its emergency session, by Senator Daniel O. Hastings of Delaware and the Representative Walter Pierce of Oregon. It has been referred to the Judiciary Committee of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Congress has now adjourned but the legislation now pending can be acted upon early next session, and every effort will be made before next January to ensure that the Bill will be favourably reported out of both Committees and brought before the Senate and the House of Representatives for a nation-wide vote.

The Bill aims at the modification of the Federal Postal Law so as to allow contraceptive appliances to be sent to doctors, hospitals, dispensaries and druggists carrying on their lawful business of dispensing prescriptions.

Sweden. It has been recently decided by the Government of Sweden that it is legal for birth control advice to be given by qualified doctors. In 1930 a birth control clinic was opened in Gothenburg, and latter another in Malmo and recently one has been started in Stockholm. All three are supported by the municipalities.

New Zealand. On May 17th a lecture upon birth control was given by Dr. Harriet Wilkie to the members of the Problem Club of Bayswater (Auckland). At the conclusion of the address a vote was taken of those in favour of the introduction of scientific birth control. It was passed almost unanimously and it was decided to consider the formation of a birth control society.

A lively discussion on birth control has also been carried on in the columns of the *New Zealand Star*, which on June 7th published an excellent letter from Dr. Wilkie. She concludes:—

"What we badly need in New Zealand is the establishment of birth con-

trol clinics where distressed women can obtain the best medical advice as to how to limit their families in accordance with their incomes. Why should New Zealand, this country of fine athletes and fine stock, lag behind in a world-wide movement for the betterment of the lot of women and children and, through them, of the whole race?"

India. On March 22nd Madras Legislative Council had a debate on birth control. Madras is very progressive as regards this question, and has for years had a Neo-Malthusian League, which is supported by two Maharajas, three High Court Judges and several men very prominent in public life. Its Honorary Medical Director and co Secretary, Dr. M. S. Krishnamurthi Ayyar, was formerly Sanitary Commissioner of Travancore, and was Census Commissioner of Travancore in 1921, so has had an specially good opportunity of studying population problems at first-hand. The results of his observations were published in 1930 in his little book, "Population and Birth Control in India."

Of Travancore, an Indian correspondent writes:—

"Travancore is more like Great Britain in regard to population problems than the rest of India. There is no early marriage, marriage is not a sacrament, there is a large number of unmarried men and women at all ages, divorce is absolutely unrestricted, education is very widespread and population is increasing very rapidly."

Letters from all parts of India stress the increasing recognition of the necessity for birth control, as the following extracts show:—

"The number of doctors writing me for information about contraception is increasing."—A Medical Doctor, Bombay.

"In connection with the rural uplift movement in our District we consider it highly essential that we should give birth control information to our poor ignorant cultivators and other people

who are in need of it. So I shall be very grateful if you may very kindly send to us all the necessary information about starting a branch of your organisation in this district."—A Bank Director, United Provinces.

"We are being confronted with similar problems out here and to be able to furnish information in a reliable and practical form would be much appreciated."—A member of the I. M. S. Lucknow.

"I am a general practitioner in Madras for the past eleven years and have interested myself in birth control for the past several years. As a general practitioner I have been able to impart the necessary knowledge to only a few people. As I have now got the idea of opening a clinic for the purpose and of starting also intensive propaganda, I approach you with a request for advice and material in the shape of literature, etc., to help me start this work."—A Medical Doctor, Madras.

China. A medical correspondent in Shanghai writes:—

"The leaders of medical thought and social welfare in this country are now keenly taking up this movement. I am myself thinking of writing a book for the guidance of those who need advice. As elsewhere, the majority of physicians in China are quite out of touch with the most modern knowledge and cannot give any sensible advice to the thousands of anxious wives who seek them. Hence, although I have so many other things in hand, I felt it necessary to devote some time to this important matter."

Yugoslavia. Yugoslavian feminists at a meeting at Louban, have protested against the heavy punishment inflicted by the Yugoslavian Criminal Code for abortion. They ask that exception shall be made in some cases, where there are important reasons justifying abortion. They also demand facilities for the sale of contraceptive appliances.—*The New Generation.*

General mortality rate and epidemic returns for the City of Madras for the weeks ending

1933	Cholera.		Small pox.		Plague.		Total rate of deaths per mille. of population.
	attacks.	deaths.	attacks.	deaths.	attacks.	deaths.	
July 1st			118	14			33.4
8th			61	29			32.4
15th			39	16			32.5
22nd			71	19			30.6
29th			72	16			33.8
Aug. 5th			45	13			34.1
12th			37	4			33.7
19th			80	15			31.8
26th			62	19			32.8

Epidemic returns for the Province of Madras excluding the City of Madras for the weeks ending

July 1st	7	3	642	101	47	17
8th	1	1	557	111	57	22
15th	21	13	554	131	68	31
22nd	112	30	662	125	93	29
29th	135	27	795	164	107	49
Aug. 5th	169	60	616	130	116	42
12th	307	116	623	126	162	64
19th	272	89	792	130	306	126
26th	185	73	596	150	283	163

Population and Birth Control in India.

BY

DR. M. S. KRISHNAMURTHI AYYAR,
Medical Adviser to the Madras Neo-Malthusian League and Editor of *The Madras Birth Control Bulletin.*

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