

Marriage and Wisdom



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“I give to universal history a strange but true title—*The Martyrdom of Man.*” So says Winwood Reade in his brilliant but sombre survey of the struggling upward progress of man on earth. “In each generation,” he goes on, “the human race has been tortured that their children might profit by their woes. Our own prosperity is founded on the agonies of the past. Is it therefore unjust that we also should suffer for the benefit of those who are to come?”

These words were written half a century ago. Truly has this generation suffered that their children might have freedom. The wide prosperity that came in with the industrial era, the depopulation of the countryside and the crowding of people into the towns, the mushroom growth of the towns to keep pace with the rapid and universal increase in the population—all these factors worked together to create the situation which exploded in 1914 in the greatest war in the history of the world.

The martyrdom of man in the past has been very much the martyrdom of overpopulation. But those who hope—and who does not?—that Wisdom is, at long last, coming into her own, have much on which to base their optimism. Nature is a relentless teacher. If man does not, through the gift of his reasoning powers, get at the truth of things the lesson will, all the same, be enforced in the end though the time be

long and the experience costly and bitter.

It may well be that the historian of the future, looking down the long vista of years with a vision denied to us, who are too near the events through which we have lived, will point to the recent war as marking a turning point in human progress. There are many who, in disillusion, cry out that the vast struggle has taught us nothing. But this, surely, is because they misread the facts which are there for all to see.

Who will deny that the deepest effect of all is a profound awakening and stirring of the whole human conscience? Everywhere a spirit of examination, even of rebellion. Human institutions, the world over, are coming, one by one, under searching review. The human mind to-day may be symbolised by a gigantic question mark. It is prepared to accept nothing that has no other sanction than custom or convention. This attitude, of course, leads to mistakes and to experi-

ments that may sometimes be fruitless. But is it too much to hope that out of this vast welter of thought and of trial there will emerge, at the last, a brighter dawn bringing promise of that era of peace and goodwill that has been the sustaining dream of prophets since man first saw the light of day?

Perhaps the most significant manifestation of this new awakening is the earnest consideration which is being everywhere given to the problem of birth-control or, to be strictly correct, conception-control. An examination of the birth-rate statistics of all civilized countries reveals an acceleration in the decline of births in recent years. It is a fact worthy of careful thought that, for all the wonders of modern machinery, the essential foods, which in the last resort govern the numbers of people that the earth can support, cannot be produced beyond a certain very definite limit. What

machinery can, and does, do, is to provide a large number of objects, more or less cheaply, which bring comfort and variety to the lives of all but the very poorest. The working man of to-day may enjoy the fruits of invention, and a degree of comfort in certain directions, that were beyond the dreams of kings of a former age. We may cite, for instance, the power, at the cost of a few shillings, to hear without stirring from his own fireside, the glories of the world's greatest music recaptured from invisible waves rushing through the air with the speed of light. Or the amazing organization which culminates in the placing upon his breakfast table of the printed news of the world's doings. But machinery, by displacing labour at the same time as it does little to augment the basic food supply, can offer its favours only to limited numbers. It is not surprising, in view of these facts, to read in the report of the Colwyn Com-

mittee, published early in 1927, that the standard of living among the working classes in this country is higher than it was before the war, whilst the average family is smaller.

There is considerable confusion of thought on the subject of birth-control and it is well at the start to get some things clear. Above all, what does birth-control stand for? We can give no better definition than what has already been given by Lord Dawson of Penn. *It stands for Choice, not Chance, in the production of children.* It has its roots in no selfish feelings. It does not, necessarily, mean small families. What it does mean is that the imaginative and affectionate parent of to-day wishes that his children shall come along when he can best afford to look after them and that they should be so spaced in their coming that each one gets a fair chance in life. Moreover, he realises that in this way he secures his own happiness.

Children who arrive when they are wanted and can be provided for, bring joy, not embarrassment, into the home. Those critics who see in birth-control nothing but a selfish wish to avoid the responsibilities of parenthood would do well to study human history and human nature! Listen to the words of Dean Inge. "Men and women," he says, "are not so selfish as to prefer personal self-indulgence to the sweetest and purest of all pleasures—that of loving and caring for young children I am not afraid of depopulation." No, indeed! As long as the race endures, so long will the parental instincts and virtues retain their age-old strength.

Birth-control has come to stay, and will spread. That being so it is a matter of grave importance that every married person who wishes it, may have access to responsible and reliable guidance on the subject. The public cannot be too strongly warned

against false and harmful information. They would do well to give the utmost care and consideration to any method which is put before them. They should remember that in cases of doubt the family doctor is the best possible adviser.

Many methods of control are practised. Some are uncertain, others are inconvenient and unæsthetic, whilst a few are definitely injurious to health. There is one, however, which has none of these formidable disadvantages, one which, for over half a century, has repeatedly received medical approval and endorsement. This is the soluble quinine pessary invented by Walter John Rendell.

Let us consider first the question of harmlessness, perhaps, from the point of view of public welfare, the most important question of all. We need do no more than turn to that great medical Journal, *The Lancet*. In a striking article, published so

far back as January, 1899, Doctor Wright Hardwicke not only testified to the harmlessness of the quinine pessary but emphasized the value and importance of its tonic and astringent properties as a remedy against certain disorders. "I do not know," he wrote, "of a single instance in which it has failed or in which quinism has been produced."

It may be argued that this testimony goes too far back. But let us look again at *The Lancet* for January, 1927. There, in the report of an address given by Doctor Arthur E. Giles, the eminent gynæcologist, wherein the various methods of birth-control are discussed, this is what we read with reference to the quinine pessary: "This is one of the most dependable methods, and it is free from the objectionable features common to some other plans."

To these authentic statements we will add one comment. Time is the final and in-

exorable judge whether of men, events, or things. No reputation, unless it is based on sure and firm foundations, can withstand for long the inevitable, corrosive, effects of time. For more than fifty years the Rendell pessary has been on the market. It has been judged by two generations of parents. They have given their verdict in no uncertain terms. Not only have they continued to use this method themselves but they have not failed to recommend it to their friends. To this significant and gratifying fact, and to no other, may be attributed the world-wide increases in the demand for Rendell's Pessaries.

The quotations we have given from *The Lancet* have reference to the quinine pessary in general. We will content ourselves with one further testimony to Rendell's Pessaries in particular. The late Doctor H. A. Allbutt, in his well-known treatise, *The Wife's Handbook*, writes: "I consider these

pessaries to be thoroughly reliable, and that they can always be trusted to prevent conception. Experience has shown that they do all their inventor claims for them. The public should be on their guard against the numerous imitations of these pessaries, offered by unscrupulous persons regardless of consequences. The genuine 'Soluble Pessaries,' which alone I can recommend with confidence are those introduced . . . by W. J. Rendell."

Imitation, it has been well said, is the sincerest form of flattery. If the public interest were not so seriously concerned, Messrs. Rendell might, perhaps, draw some degree of comfort from the fact that spurious articles, offered by irresponsible persons are got up as colourable imitations of their own. But the matter is of great importance. Quinine used in uncertain quantities and not specifically treated may cause harm. The pessaries made from the Rendell for-

mula contain the precise ingredients to prevent conception. No more, no less. They are of a scientific exactness in strength and it is impossible for any one to differ, in the slightest particular, from any other. They are manufactured in a series of laboratories equipped with every modern device. The finest raw material, continuous expert supervision, scrupulous cleanliness, and sterilization of the finished article, ensure one constant standard of strength and purity.

Messrs. Rendell will not hesitate to institute legal proceedings against any firm using the words *Wife's Friend* in connection with pessaries not manufactured by them. Meanwhile the public may protect themselves in two ways: by dealing only with reputable Chemists, and by asking always for *Rendell's*. The one word itself is sufficiently descriptive. No others are necessary. Indeed, it may be confidently stated that the

word *Rendell* is fast becoming a synonym for the word *pessary*. See that the autograph, W. J. Rendell, appears on each box, *in red ink*, and that the blue seal is intact. Note also the words *Wife's Friend*. Each box (price 2/6) contains twelve pessaries. They may be obtained from nearly all good-class Chemists and Druggist stores throughout the world. If any client has difficulty in obtaining supplies he is asked to communicate direct with Messrs. Rendell. One last word to those who travel. Goods which are sent abroad are always specially packed in foil and sealed tins. So packed they travel, even in the hottest climates, with no risk of damage. The proprietors advise this precaution in every instance when the boxes are taken out of this country and they will be pleased, through your local chemist, to pack any quantity in this way, without charge.

Remember, finally, that Rendell's are the one safe, certain and simple method.