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NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY  
AND  
NATIONAL POVERTY.

REASONS WHY IN EVERY FAMILY THE NUMBER SHOULD  
BE REGULATED; THE METHODS THAT HAVE BEEN  
PROPOSED, EXTENSIVELY ADOPTED, AND FOUND  
TO ANSWER FOR DOING IT; TOGETHER  
WITH A FEW VALUABLE HINTS  
FOR THE YOUNG.

BY

JNO. HY. PALMER.

“One would imagine that children were rained down upon married people, direct from heaven, without their being art or part in the matter; that it was really, as the common phrases have it, God's will, and not their own, which decided the numbers of their offspring.” “No one would guess from the language of either (rich or poor) that man had any voice or choice in the matter. So complete is the confusion of ideas on the whole subject, owing in a great degree to the mystery in which it is shrouded by a spurious delicacy, which prefers that right and wrong should be mismeasured and confounded on one of the subjects most momentous to human welfare, rather than that the subjects should be freely spoken of and discussed. People are little aware of the cost to mankind of this scrupulosity of speech.”

JOHN STUART MILL.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

## PREFACE.

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AFTER penning the following pamphlet it seemed to the writer, that to ensure the complete success of his effort, some little preface was needed to be addressed to those who from various circumstances are unable to regulate families of their own. Although the subject applies definitely to persons in the reproductive age of life, yet it must not therefore be supposed that none others are interested in it. By a careful consideration of the law and its precept endeavoured to be set forth on pages 8 to 13, I think it will appear that the matter is of immense importance to everyone. Many are of opinion that apart from the practice here recommended there is no effective remedy for the wide spread poverty, and with it the vice, crime, and misery that prevail. For strong language in support of this I would refer the reader to Book II, chapter 13, of John Stuart Mill's "Principles of Political Economy," (People's Edition) in which he treats on the Remedies for Low Wages; also to "Poverty, its only Cause and only Cure," in "Elements of Social Science." These authors especially desire the formation of a sound, healthy public opinion in favour of small families. To assist the growth of that opinion by stating some important reasons why it should everywhere obtain, and how it may be complied with, has been the object of the present writer.

On pages 14 to 17 will be found a little advice, which, had it been known, and perseveringly followed by many persons when young, would have saved them from a deal of expense, shame, and misery.

## REASONS WHY IN EVERY FAMILY THE NUMBER SHOULD BE REGULATED.

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As its title indicates, the object of this little pamphlet is to state as briefly as possible some important reasons why the number in every family should be regulated, to point out the various methods that have been proposed, extensively adopted, and found to answer for doing it. The ideas here put forth are not new, they are most of them to be found fully developed and demonstrated in the books mentioned in the preface, and from which they have been taken. The present writer desires only to give such a condensation as he thinks will be useful for general distribution by all, even the poorest who should feel an interest in the subject. I say by the poorest, for although the reasons apply with great force to all, yet they refer especially to, and their importance will be seen the clearest by working men, the toilers and the bread-winners, who with their wives and children make up the vast majority of the nation.

By regulating the number in a family I mean that the parents, having brought forth as many children as circumstances warrant them in having, they shall thereupon cease to beget any more. If people have this power, and I shall presently show that they have, then it follows, that they also possess some control over the times when such increase shall take place. The author of the "Elements of Social Science," and Mr. R. D. Owen, in his "Moral Physiology," deal only with the subject of controlling the number of children to be born; Mr. Combe, in his book on the "Constitution of Man," treats of the kind of children they will be. I wish to urge that parents should regulate with reference both to the number and the kind of children they desire.

The first part of my task will be to demonstrate the existence and illustrate the working of a great law in nature, a knowledge of which is of the utmost importance; for unless it be understood there can be no regulation in any proper sense of the term. And the law is that children's characters are entirely the result of circumstances, which circumstances are to be considered as to whether they were previous to or after birth. Circumstances previous to birth may be called constitutional; those after birth educational.

Taking first the constitutional circumstances, I need only direct attention to the unvarying continuance of national peculiarities as a sufficient proof that *the qualities of children are determined first of all by the stock from which they are born.* Thus from white races will be born white children, from black races black children, from tall races tall children, from short races short children. Similarly from brave races come brave children, from intelligent races come

intelligent children, and *vice versa*. And as races are made up of individuals it is further seen that *children are as their parents are*, whether white or black, tall or short, strong or weak, healthy or sickly, intelligent or otherwise. Mr. Geo. Combe states that "Physiologists, in general, are agreed, that a vigorous and healthy constitution of body in the parents, communicates existence in the most perfect state to the offspring, and *vice versa*. The transmission of various diseases from parent to children is a matter of universal notoriety: thus consumption, gout, scrofula, hydrocephalus, rheumatism, and insanity, are well known as maladies which descend from generation to generation. "Strictly speaking, it is not *disease* which is transmitted, but organs of such imperfect structure that they are unable to perform their functions properly, and so weak as to be easily put into a morbid condition by causes which sound organs are able to resist." Not that this transmission *compels* the offspring of consumptive parents to be consumptive too, but it "renders them so weak as to be easily put into a morbid condition." If the rules of health are thoroughly known and rigidly practised, the tendency may be diminished, or even effectually warded off. Therefore I would solemnly warn all who are afflicted with any hereditary disease, never, on any account to beget children *until* they have thoroughly investigated the laws of health, and determined to enforce them on themselves and their children.\*

A clear and undeniable proof of the transmission of qualities, and also that the characters are derived from both parents, is to be found in the progeny of marriages between moral and intelligent Europeans and native Americans who are inferior. "All authors agree," says Mr. Combe, "and report the circumstance as singularly striking, that the children of such unions are decidedly superior in mental and moral qualities to the native, while they are still inferior to the European parent."

But there is a most important modification of the law, namely that the *qualities of a child are determined not only by the constitution of the stock from which it is derived, but also by the faculties which are strongest in power and activity in the parents at the particular time when the organic existence of that child commences*. In proof of this Mr. Combe relates a case in which at the time of impregnation both parents were utterly insensible through drinking, the result being the birth of an idiot. Another case of a parent addicted to drinking who transmitted the same tendency to several of his children, but children born to him after he had formed more correct habits were not so inclined. When two parties marry very young the eldest of their children is generally less intelligent than those born to them in more mature age. So too "It is rare for the descendants of men far advanced in years to be distinguished for high qualities of either body or mind." Anything

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\* Hereditary Descent, its Laws and Facts applied to Human Improvement, by O. S. Fowler.



which causes the mother to be frightened, excited, irritated, over anxious, or depressed in spirits, has an injurious effect on the future being, and should therefore be avoided. Persons desirous of becoming parents ought well to consider these things; if they can they should obtain the books in which they are fully and distinctly expounded, live up to the characters they would desire their children to possess, and then select that period in their lives most favourable to the production of strong, healthy, good-natured and intelligent children.

Having thus dealt with the constitutional circumstances, my next duty is to point out that whatever may be the inborn qualities of a child, yet as an adult its character will be very greatly influenced by the circumstances attending its early life. Its physical health will depend upon its supply of food, clothing, lodging, personal cleanliness, and exercise. A child with insufficient food or clothing cannot grow up strong. Large and well ventilated bedrooms are as necessary to health as plenty of food. Wide airy streets are better for health than narrow close courts and lanes. Daily washing of the body, and a frequent change of underclothing are also indispensable. And exercise should not be such as to overtax the worker. For children to ripen into strong and healthy men and women all these matters require careful and constant attention. The Government inspection of food in the market, "Local Boards of Health," "Half Time Acts" to prevent children from being gradually killed by exhaustive labour, show to what extent these principles are already recognized by the State. So too the intellectual and moral welfare of children has been partly taken in hand by the Government, compulsory attendance at school for a number of years being already adopted by many of the School Boards. But the parent who desires the wellbeing of his children will not be content with the education enforced by the State, he will endeavour to supply them with good books, and during their youth pay for their admission to evening classes and lectures, or in other ways provide them with instructors, and thus train out their intellectual powers to the fullest extent. And children cannot be thus employed in useful studies without being morally the better for it. Only develop in them a taste for good and useful pursuits, and they will of themselves avoid what is degrading. Then too with regard to a start in life, it is not right that a parent should turn his boy or girl out into the first place that offers the means of gaining a sixpence. A good start in life is half the battle, and parents should endeavour to give such to their children. This brings me direct to the point of numbers, for a man who has a family of six or eight children and only a moderate income cannot help himself. The constant cry of parents is that they do not know what to do with their children. They cannot afford to keep them in idleness waiting for something better to turn up. Nor have they the cash to apprentice them to a trade, or to put them in the way of getting a little business of their own. The children must therefore take the first chance of employment that comes in their way, even though it give little or

no prospect of rising to a higher position. Now suppose a man has had two children born to him, and he and his wife are in good health, such as would ensure the production of a strong and healthy child, I urge that if he happen to desire another, he ought first to consider seriously whether he is able to do for it all that its wellbeing requires, and that too without injustice to the children already born, without injustice to his wife, and without injury to himself. If he cannot do this, then I say he should refrain himself. In other words a man should beget no more children than he and his wife can bring into the world strong and healthy; no more than they can perfectly nourish with wholesome food, comfortably clothe, and healthily and decently lodge in their homes; no more than the wife can properly attend to without becoming a drudge, no more than the husband can have well educated, well supplied with good books, and fairly started in life; in short no more than he can do whole justice with. If a man be in a high position, receiving a good income, and can comply with these conditions, there is still one more,—while bringing up to maturity and sending into the world a large family, can he at the same time be doing justice to the children of his neighbour? This last consideration is a national one, which is gradually receiving the attention it deserves. I am myself of opinion that in the present state of England no man should beget more than three children, while the circumstances of many warrant them in having but one or two. And the reasons for this I will endeavour to make plain by showing how the four parties affected are severally interested in the regulation of numbers, namely the children, the mother, the father, and the nation

In reference to the children let me remind my reader that I urge for regulation first as to the kind of children, that they may be strong, healthy, good-natured, and intelligent, four qualifications of inestimable value to their possessors; and next that the parents should beget no more children than they can bring up strong, healthy, good-natured, and intelligent. If a man only possess these qualities we need have little fear of his doing well. By enjoying a healthy constitution he is free from bodily suffering, having strength he is able to perform with comfort to himself the labour of life. A man of good nature may have a few enemies, but will certainly get more friends; and if in addition to this he possess a strong and active intelligence to guide him through life happy is he. The same holds good in their early years; for whether they be born of high family or low, of a prince or a peasant, who so happy as strong, healthy, good-natured, intelligent children! Contrast with such the puny, the delicate, and the dull children often met with. One is weak in the lower limbs and cannot run, another from consumptive parents is soon put out of breath when playing, a third is sickly and bilious and often ill, a fourth has a watery brain, a fifth, a cross irritable spiteful disposition, a sixth being unintelligent is dull and lazy with his lessons, and stupid at anything given him to do. When these maladies and a multitude

of others are considered, and *it is known that for the most part they might have been avoided*, I think it will be at once admitted that it would be beneficial for the parents to regulate towards the health, strength, good nature, and intelligence of their children. As to numbers, need I say that children in small families can have more comforts than those in large ones? A man with only two children can do better for them than if he had with the same money to provide for six others besides. He can give them better food, and in a possible sickness a few dainties if needed, stronger and better clothes, including plenty of underlinen, better ventilated and more comfortable bedrooms, pleasanter living rooms, can lodge them in nicer streets, keep them longer at school, buy a few books for them, and take more care of their starting in life. Is it desirable that he should be able to do this? Would it have the effect of sending into the world stronger, healthier, wiser, and better men? If so then I hold that in the interest of his children a man should regulate their number.

Next the mother's reasons:—The late John Stuart Mill in his "Principles of Political Economy" says, "It is seldom by the choice of the wife that families are so numerous; on her devolves (along with all the physical suffering, and at least a full share of the privations) the whole of the intolerable drudgery resulting from excess. To be relieved of it would be held as a blessing by multitudes of women who now never venture to urge such a claim, but who would urge it if supported by the moral feelings of the community." I, as one of the community am endeavouring to support the above remarks, and to urge her claim on man's consideration. First, think of the "physical suffering" a woman has to undergo when bringing forth a child, even if she be herself strong and healthy. When she is not strong the suffering is intensified, even to the risk of her life. Many a mother is ruined in health and strength, many more are killed outright, by bearing children so quickly one after another. Would she not be happier by avoiding this suffering and risk of life? If so then regulate the time of her childbearing. The mother too has to endure her full share of the poverty resulting from a large family, and the whole of the intolerable drudgery. She must have poor clothes that the children may be supplied, and poor fare that they may be fed, and that too sometimes when having two lives to sustain she needs the most nourishment of all. As to her work it is never done; what with meals getting, house cleaning, washing, clothes making and mending, a baby to tend, and it sometimes a poorly one, where is her rest or peace of mind? Among the poorest her home too is so cheerless that her husband often will not stay in it, but goes away to the publichouse, where, in the company of his mates, and with the aid of drink, he strives to forget his poverty.

Oftentimes the husband dies while the family is still very young, and leaves nothing for the poor mother but increased slavery and the permitted beggary of asking for parish relief. Think of the difference if the wife had only one or two children, strong, healthy, good-natured, and intelligent, and with them the assurance from her husband that

she is to bear no more. How her toil is saved! With what care she can nourish her children! How daintily tend the home! How well preserve her own health and beauty!

And think too how much better for the husband! For in social affairs whoever gives real happiness to another increases thereby his own. Is it not better for the man to have two children well nourished, well dressed, well lodged, well educated, and well started in life, than to have six or eight children so badly provided for that he is almost ashamed to own them? And what husband does not feel pleased when his wife looks fresh and happy? Who can take a pleasure in seeing the lines of care come early on her face? I say then that a man for his own sake should regulate the number of his children. For, by taking care of his wife, that she does not conceive while in delicate health, that she be spared the pains of bearing a large family, and the slavery of tending it afterwards, he will draw towards himself a double portion of her love and kindly offices; when, returning from his day's toil, a welcome smile is ready for him, along with his well kept and comfortable home. With a large family a father is never free from the harassing care of providing the means of living, but with a small one he is relieved of such trouble, and in its stead may lay by a little store for his own and his wife's old age. It is surely pleasant to feel that you have something in the bank ready for a "rainy day," that you will not become a burden to your children. Let me, therefore, urge on my readers the desirability of regulating in favour of strong, healthy, good-natured, intelligent children, and for such a number as the parents can do whole justice with, both to the children and to themselves.

And also such a number as by having them the parents do no injustice to their neighbours. This may seem a new doctrine to my readers, but it is by no means new to the thoughtful men of the age. A doctrine that has been before the world for seventy-five years, and accepted by the ablest of the political economists who have lived during that time, cannot be called new. It may be unknown to the masses, or ignored by those who should obey it, but that does not remove the suffering caused by violating it. The precept is founded on what is called the Law of Population, which was first discovered by the Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus, and published by him in 1798. If the remarks which I shall make on this subject are not convincing to my readers let me earnestly request the perusal of the chapters on Poverty, its only Cause and only Cure, page 331; the Law of Population, page 457; the Laws of Exercise, Fecundity, and Agricultural Industry, page 485, and the Opinions of English and Foreign writers on the Law of Population, in the "Elements of Social Science." See also a few chapters in J. S. Mill's "Principles of Political Economy," namely Bk. I, chapters 9, 12, 13; Bk. II, chapters 11, 12, 13; these and many observations in other parts of his great work derive their force from being based on the Law of Population.

Which law may be briefly stated thus:—1. It is not only possible but natural for population to continue doubling itself every twenty-five



years. 2. In old countries it is not possible for it in the same time, and from the same soil, to continue doubling its supply of the necessaries of life. 3. If therefore the births continue at such a rate as to double the population in twenty-five years, then those that cannot maintain themselves in their native place must either emigrate, be supplied with food from other countries, or die a premature death from poverty. 4. If the population of any place is not doubling itself every twenty-five years then it must be either from premature deaths, emigration, or limitation of the number of births. 5. Wholly to avoid premature deaths, and the necessity of emigration or importation of food, the number of births must be limited to the number that can be nourished in their native place. 6. Wherever poverty of resources and therefore the necessity of emigration exists, there has been too great a number of births. These rules apply to every village, town, county, or country in the world.

To enforce the first statement I need only to quote from Mill's "Political Economy," people's edition, page 97, where, in treating of man's multiplying power he states, "It never is exercised to the utmost, and yet in the most favourable circumstances known to exist, which are those of a fertile region colonized from an industrious and civilized community, population has continued for several generations, independently of fresh immigration, to double itself in not much more than twenty years. That the capacity of multiplication in the human species exceeds even this is evident if we consider how great is the ordinary number of children to a family where the climate is good, and early marriages usual; and how small a proportion of them die before the age of maturity, in the present state of hygienic knowledge, where the locality is healthy, and the family adequately provided with the means of living." In the "Elements of Social Science," page 451, quoting from M'Culloch, the eminent statistical authority, we find, "It has been established beyond all question that the population of some of the States of North America, after making due allowance for immigration has continued to double for a century past in so short a period as twenty, or at most twenty-five years." For the figures and calculations see "Elements of Social Science," page 277. If the population of the British Isles could increase at the same rate, it would in seventy-five years amount to no less than 240,000,000, or nearly as many as the present population of all Europe. And by continuing the process another fifty years the number of 960,000,000 would be reached, a number nearly equal to the estimated present population of the whole world. On the second head Mr. Mill says, "After a certain and not very advanced stage in the progress of agriculture it is a law of production from land that in any given state of agricultural skill and knowledge, by increasing the labour, the produce is not increased in an equal degree; doubling the labour does not double the produce." This law of agricultural industry is the most important proposition in political economy. The produce may be increased by whatever adds to the skill of the labour applied;

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position in which people live the better are they able to secure good positions for their children in their native country. And they generally do it, leaving those of the poorer classes to shift for themselves as best they may, either by emigration, the workhouse, or semi-starvation, and death by the first severe illness that comes upon them. We may see this illustrated every day in the middle ranks. A head clerk in a firm or the foreman in a factory has the first chance of places for his family of boys; the mechanics come next in the order of their qualities, and so on to the lowest. Not that the particular ones chosen will do more to increase the prosperity of the business, but their fathers being in good positions are able to provide for their sons in their native district. The same takes place with business men in towns and villages; the best off are able to secure occupations for their children, and leave to others to go elsewhere. But with a family of two children a man thrusts no one out. He merely brings into existence two beings to take the place of himself and his wife when departed. To bring into existence and keep in their native place such a number of beings as causes others to be compelled to remain unmarried, to be half starved, or thrust out, is an injustice. Let me, therefore, repeat and urge on my readers the desirability of every couple regulating in favour of strong, healthy, good-natured, and intelligent children, and for such a number as *full* justice can be done with, justice to the children themselves, to their mother, the father, and to their neighbours.

A thorough knowledge of this Law of Population is of immense importance to every class in the country, except the highest. For though there are possibilities in trade, yet every one is liable to be pressed down by someone else above him who may be endeavouring to provide for a larger number of children than is his due. So that a man who has only a small family is better off than with a large one; but if small families were the rule, his position would be improved still more. With an industrious people, following to the full the course here recommended, the workhouses will in time be closed for want of paupers, the hospitals almost empty for want of patients, gaols almost, if not quite, unused for want of criminals. Ignorance with poverty are the most fruitful sources of crime. Remove then the ignorance and the poverty. Moderate competition in trade is good for all parties, but a grinding, harassing competition, a struggle to keep head above water invariably brings a crop of frauds of all kinds. People must live, and, whether by fair means or foul, the strongest in mind and body maintain life the longest. For myself I like the old maxim, "Prevention is better than cure." Don't have weak, unhealthy, cross-natured, stupid children, don't have more than can be well and honestly nourished. Without this prevention, all schemes for social improvement are valueless. Let the reader think of them, one and all, and he will find none that can exist along with the crushing influence of over-population, not one that, apart from limiting the number of births, has had any permanent influence in increasing the

happiness of mankind. Without this they can do no more than change the misery from one form to another. See to it then, make yourself thoroughly acquainted with the laws by which qualities are transmitted from parent to children, the laws for rearing those children into strong, healthy, honest, and intelligent men and women; and lastly the great Law of Population as it is at present operating in your own country. And having yourself gained the knowledge of these things, you will further see that for your own individual good you ought to do all in your power to make every one else to understand and obey the precepts founded on them. One means of doing so would be by distributing copies of this pamphlet. I can ask you to do this, as I am interested in its getting well abroad just as much as you are, and not more.

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HAVING thus dealt with the principal reasons why in every family the number should be regulated, my remaining task is to state the methods that have been proposed, extensively adopted, and always found successful in doing it, leaving my readers to choose which they please, or to select any other that happens to come to their knowledge. And in their selection they will be guided by the answers they give to the following questions: Is the moderate exercise of the generative organs conducive to health or to bodily and mental weakness? If their moderate exercise does not cause weakness, then the pleasure derived from their instinctive use, independent of, and totally distinct from, its ultimate object, the reproduction of our race, is it good, proper, worth securing and enjoying? Or in other words, is it desirable that the instinct should never be gratified without an increase of population? The author of "Elements of Social Science," on pages 492 to 505 of his important work, deals with the Law of Exercise, and endeavours to show that a moderate indulgence of the sexual instinct is absolutely necessary to long continued health. Two extracts will indicate the position he takes: "The Law of Exercise is that the health of the reproductive organs and emotions depend on their having a sufficient amount of normal exercise; and that a want of this tends powerfully to produce misery and disease in both man and woman." "It is stated as a law by Mr. Paget, Dr. Carpenter, and other eminent authorities, that 'each organ, by the very fact of nourishing itself acts as an excretory organ to the rest of the body.' That is, every organ selects from the blood the proper materials for its own nutrition, and in so



doing it renders the blood more fit to nourish the others. This is especially true of secreting organs, such as the ovaries and testicles, which produce fluids that are intended to be cast out of the body, and are more or less noxious if retained. Hence whenever any important organs are not duly engaged in their own special function not only is their own vigour impaired, but that of the others also. The ideal of health indeed cannot be stated otherwise than as consisting in the due performance of all the bodily functions." The author quotes from numerous medical writers supporting this view, and describes the various diseases which they say arise from repressing the sexual desire. In the same chapter are also given the arguments on the opposite view, that the Law of Exercise, while applying to other organs, has nothing to do with the organs of generation. I will just caution the reader that the matter should be decided by facts alone. For an examination of the second question, and an emphatic answer in the affirmative I refer the reader to the little book entitled "Moral Physiology," by Robert Dale Owen.\* As a matter of fact all who while not desiring an addition to their families yet continue to indulge in sexual embraces show by their actions that they either think it necessary for health, the pleasure good, proper, worth securing and enjoying, or that their instinct gets the better of their judgment. The same is the condition with those who will not marry, yet risk the awful danger, and accept the moral degradation, of a prostitute's embraces. (On these last points see "Elements of Social Science," pages 112 to 156.) If after testing these principles the reader is of opinion that the arguments for what is called the Law of Exercise, are so much bosh, and that the pleasure of the act is not good, not desirable, not worth having, then all he has to do is to select the most favourable periods for conception to take place, and perform the sexual functions so many times according to the number of children circumstances warrant him in having. And if at any other time he happens to feel a desire for sexual embraces he must treat it as a disease in his system, and doctor himself accordingly. For if he allows this or any other passion to get the better of his judgment, either he, his wife, his children, or his neighbour, and perhaps all parties will assuredly suffer in consequence.

For myself I frankly confess that I believe in the Law of Exercise, but do not think it desirable that a child should be the result of every sexual embrace. I am of opinion that voluptuous, or as they are sometimes termed, wet dreams are nature's temporary substitute for the sexual act, and, like it, when only seldom, say once or twice a month, are not a source of mischief. But should they become frequent, as they tend to do, the persons are made weak, and, if ignorant of their cause, are generally in good condition to be fooled by the first crafty doctor that finds them. To prevent their injurious effects let those who have them be sparing in their diet, take no stimulants, never use tobacco, sleep cool, rise early, bathe or wash the whole body daily,

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\* Published by E. Truelove, 256. High Holborn, London.



rubbing with a towel till in a glow, splash cold or almost cold water on the parts, (ladies to use the vagina syringe) take plenty of exercise in the open air, and avoid exciting the organs by rubbing. Whoever has been guilty of this latter practice, and injured their health, let them immediately stop it, follow the course here marked out, and keep clear of advertising quack doctors.

To prevent conception let the husband so steadily manage the sexual act as to give full enjoyment to his wife, and then immediately before the emission of the semen, withdraw the penis *completely*. For an account of the extensive use to which this plan has been put in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain, I refer the reader to R. D. Owen's "Moral Physiology," two quotations from which I will make. "It may be objected that the practice requires a mental effort, and a partial sacrifice. But I reply that in France, where men consider this (as it ought ever to be considered, when the interests of the other sex requires it) a *point of honour*, all young men learn to make the necessary effort, and custom renders it easy and a matter of course." "A Frenchman belonging to the cultivated classes would as soon bear to be called a coward as to be accused of causing the pregnancy of a woman who did not desire it. Such an imputation, if substantiated, would shut him out from all decent society; and most properly so. It is a perfect barbarity, and ought to be treated as such." Some will say that the practice is injurious, but the most extensive experience proves to the contrary. It is simple, satisfying to the passion, and perfectly harmless. The evil of sexual excess, or over-indulgence is another matter. For a clear statement of what in various constitutions would be excess, see "Elements of Social Science," p. 84.

The second method is for the man during the embrace to wear over the penis a baudruche, or French letter as it is sometimes termed. Accidents in its use cause it to be somewhat unsafe, and it is in every way inconvenient.

A third method has been thus described: "If before sexual intercourse the female introduces into her vagina a piece of fine sponge as large as can be pleasantly introduced (perhaps from the size of a walnut to that of an egg) having previously attached a bobbin, or a piece of narrow ribbon to withdraw it, (or, without this it may be withdrawn with the fingers) it will be found a preventive to conception, while it neither lessens the pleasure of the female, nor injures her health. When convenient the sponge should be dipped in cold water, or in warm water rather than none. The practice is common with the females of the more refined parts of the continent of Europe, and with those of the aristocracy in England." To make this method more certain it should be followed by the immediate syringing of the vagina with cold or tepid water.

A fourth method is that recommended by Dr. Knowlton, who in his "Fruits of Philosophy" gives a full account of the physiological reasons on which it is based, together with other very useful and interesting information. He advises that a lump of either sulphate of zinc or

alum of the size of a chestnut be dissolved in a pint of water, making the solution weaker or stronger as it may be borne without producing any irritation of the parts to which it is applied. This solution, which would not lose its virtue by age, should be injected into the vagina by means of a female syringe immediately after connexion. Two or three careful and thorough applications of the syringe should be made to ensure safety. Even quite cold water would be sufficient if thoroughly used. The doctor gives several weighty reasons in favour of this method, one of them being that "it is conducive to cleanliness, and preserves the parts from relaxation and disease." "Those who have tried it affirm that they would be at the trouble of using injections merely for the purpose of health and cleanliness." Its only drawback is that it generally causes a feeling of sickness in the female.

A fifth method is founded on the fact that women are most likely to conceive within two or three days before, and twelve or fourteen days after the menstruating period. Therefore select the least likely period. But, as Dr. Knowlton shows by a case in point, it is very unsafe, besides being at such a time as women least enjoy their husbands' embraces.

For myself I think every man should prefer the withdrawal, experience having taught that it is the only certain, and therefore the best method. If at any time the husband in the passion of the moment, loses his self control, it is then in the power of the wife to use injections either with or without alum. And should the husband often forget himself, the sponge and injections following had better be adopted. But no strong minded, affectionate, honourable husband would give needless trouble to his wife. But let not the wife in the freedom which her husband gives her, seek for too many of his embraces; temperate enjoyment and satisfaction of the instinct is all that nature allows. Remember that less injury results from abstinence than from excess. It should never be indulged in when either husband or wife is tired; never in the morning just before getting up, but always so as to have several hours sleep after it. If the passion of either husband or wife is greatly in excess, measures should be taken gently and calmly to reduce it, such as those I have indicated for voluptuous dreams, wearing wet bandages over the parts, sleeping in separate beds, and engaging in diverting studies. The same course will be found beneficial to the unmarried who may happen to have strong amative inclinations. And whether they have or not, no better book can be in their hands than that by Mr. George Combe, on the "Constitution of Man." A careful study of its pages will enable the reader to avoid many of the dangers of life, and especially aid him or her in the choice of a fit partner in marriage. Young man, learn well the precepts enjoined by Mr. Combe; shun a prostitute as you would a beautiful but deadly serpent; marry as soon as your circumstances will admit, and then act up to the guidance you have received. My young lady reader, remember the old proverb, "Whatever is easily gained is lightly valued." If your embraces are so cheap as to be had for the asking, do not expect your lover to pay any higher price. The only price worth your having is

the legal safety of a marriage certificate, coupled with at least a moderately comfortable home in which to bring forth and rear such children as *may possibly come in spite of* YOUR endeavours to the contrary. The man who strives for your embraces at a lower cost than this would make you a slave to his lust. If he cannot for the time of courtship be content with what I have termed nature's temporary substitute for the sexual act, and refrain himself before marriage, neither will he do it afterwards when it may be absolutely necessary. On this part of my subject I would specially commend to your attention the following note from Mr. Combe's book: "He who loves from amativeness alone is sensual, faithless, negligent of the happiness of its object. He who combines with love springing from this propensity, benevolence, veneration, justice, and intellect, will disinterestedly promote the real happiness of the object of his affection." From Mr. Combe learn how to distinguish such a man, and trust him accordingly.

THE END



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