

BIRTH CONTROL
AND
ITS OPPONENTS

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

Posterity in the Light of Science, Philanthropy and Population

(With a Foreword by Major LEONARD DARWIN, Sc.D.)

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SOME OPINIONS OF "POSTERITY."

Edinburgh Evening Dispatch :—"A strong case for reassessing the question of man's numbers This thought-provoking book."

The Eugenics Review :—"A book which should do much good in attracting attention to the bases and need for eugenics."

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The Times Literary Supplement :—"The book is an excellent stimulant for interest in posterity."

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United India and Indian States (Delhi) :—"This excellent volume deserves great popularity."

BIRTH CONTROL AND ITS OPPONENTS

BY
FRANK W. WHITE,
L.R.C.P. & S.E.

WITH FOREWORD BY
LORD HORDER, K.C.V.O., M.D.



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FOREWORD

THE title which Dr. White has given to his little book seems at first sight rather inadequate in view of the breadth and the importance of its subject matter. The book tells the story of population, how this has been controlled in the past and how this has increased. It also tells of the outstanding benefits to be derived from the control of conception. And yet the title is justified, for the author makes it abundantly obvious, in the course of a clearly thought-out and carefully expressed argument, that whether we regard the matter eugenically or socially, the practical answer to the problem of "the unwanted child" lies in the application of the principle of birth control.

If the position be viewed from the aspect of the mother's health and happiness, or if the child's future be the consideration, the result is the same—the spacing of childbirth is a consummation devoutly to be desired. Can it any longer be doubted that biological control is the answer to the intensely vital problems of overcrowding, of unemployment, and of the growing evil of abortion?

Dr. White deals very patiently and very convincingly with the arguments advanced against

birth control. Some of us are not very optimistic about converting those opponents whose opposition is based upon religious grounds. But there is always the hope that even religious authority may yield to public opinion. For these reasons we welcome this book; a wide circulation may help much in moulding the views of the men and women of this country so that common sense shall, in time, remove the veto that dogma has imposed.

HORDER.

PREFACE

FOR some time prior to the Great War my daily work brought me into intimate association with the poorest regions of certain of our large towns. I had exceptional opportunities of observing the mode of life, the personal characteristics and the general conditions of the inhabitants of slumdom. Suffice it to say that I was profoundly impressed. Here, indeed, was a problem.

Later, after serving some twenty months on the Western Front in the capacity of a non-combatant attached to a Brigade of Field Artillery—a connection eventually severed by a gassing—I realized that I had been afforded a very tolerable first-hand acquaintance with modern warfare. Here, assuredly, was yet another problem.

A little later still, very conscious of my experiences and finding that the effects of war and German gas are prone to linger in the system and render one more fit for study and contemplation than for more active pursuits, I determined to set out upon a lengthy voyage of inquiry. I would investigate the conditions that had appalled me; I would tackle these problems of slums and war;

I would probe down unflinchingly to root causes, no matter how unpalatable the revelations or to what conclusions the quest might lead.

With this object in view, some thirteen years ago, I resolved to extend what knowledge and experience I possessed by devoting most of my time in future to the intensive study of as many of the great masters of thought and research as seemed possible. Beginning with Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*, I applied myself at first to the works of such giants of the past as Gibbon, Adam Smith, Malthus, Lecky, Buckle, Mill, Herbert Spencer, Lubbock (Avebury), Winwood Reade, Haeckel, Huxley, Galton, Weismann and a host of others; and gradually I forged my way ahead to the writings of men of the most recent period. Book led to book, subject to subject—an ever-expanding process.

After years of continuous and diversified reading it is impossible to acknowledge more than a fraction of the debt one owes to an increasing multitude of authors. One seizes upon an idea here, one modifies a suggestion there, one is stimulated to thought in rejecting a view-point in another place; and it all goes into the melting-pot of one's mind to be welded into an organized whole, the exact source of much of it often being forgotten. Since, however, I have found them particularly helpful in the present inquiry, I feel constrained to record here my indebtedness to a few more writers. They include: Edward Clodd, Sir E. Ray Lankester,

Sir Leslie Stephen, Sir James Frazer, Sir E. Tylor, Sir Arthur Keith, Sir J. A. Thomson, H. G. Wells, Major Leonard Darwin, Prof. L. T. Hobhouse, Prof. A. M. Carr-Saunders, Prof. E. W. McBride, Prof. E. S. Goodrich, Prof. J. S. Huxley, Prof. W. McDougall, Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson, Joseph McCabe, Dr. Marie C. Stopes and Harold Cox.

It only remains to say that this little volume attempts to present in simple terms some of the results of my journeyings in search of truth, and that it is designed especially for the general reader interested in the subject-matter of its title.

F. W. W.

Cullercoats, Northumberland.
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