

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jtvi-01.php

JOURNAL OF
THE TRANSACTIONS
OF
The Victoria Institute,
OR,
Philosophical Society of Great Britain.

VOL. LIII.



LONDON:

(Published by the Institute, 1, Central Buildings, Westminster, S.W. 1.)

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

1921.

625TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,
HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, S.W., ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7TH, 1921,
AT 4.30 P.M.

DR. MARY D. SCHARLIEB, C.B.E., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

The HON. SECRETARY announced the following Elections:—Brigadier-General H. R. Adair, C.B.E., as a Member, and Walter H. Frizell, Esq., M.A., J.P., Mrs. H. V. de Satgé, and Ronald Macgregor, Esq., as Associates.

The CHAIRMAN then introduced DR. AMAND ROUTH to read his paper on "Motherhood."

MOTHERHOOD. By AMAND ROUTH, M.D., F.R.C.P.

THIS subject was suggested to me last year by Colonel Mackinlay, who was then Chairman of Council. Motherhood can be discussed from numerous standpoints.

Without "motherhood" life would cease to exist. "Be fruitful and multiply" is as much a Precept from God now as it was when first given, although now that our world is well populated, we are appreciating quality as well as quantity, and are trying to make men and women healthy and fit for marriage and parenthood, so as to ensure that their children should also be mentally and physically equipped. This is worthy parenthood and especially worthy motherhood.

The instinct of motherhood is present in most little girls, and explains their keenness to have their own dolls and pets, or to nurse their own little brothers and sisters.

Normally, this instinct is less marked as puberty approaches, because of the association of sexual mysteries which perplex the growing girl owing to the want of judicious instruction by mother or teachers.

If a child's knowledge of maternity and sex is wisely and gradually acquired, especially by nature study, she will pass safely through puberty and adolescence into womanhood

without having her maternal instincts obscured by sex problems, and when marriage comes, she will be sufficiently prepared for its obligations and for maternity.

If sexual problems, which are intensified by the physical and mental developments of adolescence, have not been wisely explained, the growing girl may drift into an ignorance which may lead to disaster, or to a dislike of maternity which may prevent marriage; or to a mistaken determination to convert normal marriage into a union unassociated with maternity.

One of the purposes for which we are brought into the world is that when the opportunity for marriage and parenthood should arrive, we should be ready and fit to grasp it, prepared by suitable domestic, hygienic and biological education, and fitted by physical health and moral attainments to bring up our children so that their usefulness in the world may be guaranteed.

THE ETHICS OF MOTHERHOOD AND MARRIAGE.

Motherhood must be normally associated with marriage if it is to be a state of happiness between the partners, and if it is to become a national asset of permanent value.

As regards young and healthy men and women, marriage can only be a normal, useful and happy union when associated with motherhood. Motherhood without marriage, and marriage of the young associated with the prevention of motherhood, are really mere sexual unions which are not only irregular but are ethically, socially and morally wrong.

The marriage with which motherhood should be associated must be monogamous, and it must be a permanent union during the joint life of the partners, a union, that is to say, which, as the ideal, only the death of one of the partners should be able to shorten, "Till Death us do part."

I would advise everyone interested in the subject to read Dr. F. W. Foerster's book on *Marriage and the Sex Problem*,* which Rev. C. H. Malden, one of the Secretaries of the White Cross League, lent me. Its clear views have helped me greatly to prepare this address.

* *Marriage and the Sex Problem*, by Dr. F. W. Foerster, Professor of Education in the University of Vienna, and formerly Special Lecturer on Psychology and Ethics at the University of Zurich; Translated by Meyrick Booth, B.Sc. Messrs. Wells Gardner, Darton & Co., 3, Paternoster Buildings, E.C.

Marriage should be considered as the only state in which intimate sex relationships may occur, and all such relationships apart from marriage should be morally prohibited.

Curiously, yet not unexpectedly, as Dr. Foerster says, most of the suggestions for sexual reform proceed from women writers, such as Ellen Key, the Swedish authoress, but undisciplined and weak men are easily led by the subjective reasoning of these emotionalists, and join in the immature worship of merely natural instincts.

This "new morality" or "new ethics" considers that marriage ceases to be a justifiable state when love, in any of its meanings, fades, and must give way to new relationships.

Loyalty to one's partner is ignored. The paths of evolution of two personalities are not thought worth running parallel for a lifetime. Thus Motherhood ceases to be the link of the sacred union of the partners as in a normal Christian monogamous marriage, but becomes merely a loose tie between mother and child, whether the mother be married or not.

The "Right to Motherhood" becomes an easy further step, and the still further step, the "right to sex-life" soon follows, and with it that false sympathy which, whilst anxious to help the illegitimate child and its mother, demands that all distinction between the married and the unmarried mother should be obliterated, and even to declare as Forel does, "that any such distinction is immoral." It is even claimed that all moral condemnation of unmarried mothers should be done away with, as in this way alone can the position of these women be raised.

Like the action of all moving pendulums, whether material or ethical, there has been a tendency to go from the one extreme of early Victorian severity to an encouragement of unmarried maternity, and even to assume that the "right to motherhood," apart from marriage, needs consideration.

Such tendencies prove the existence of loose irrational free thinking on the sacred union of the sexes.

I will quote a few warning words from a woman scientist, and they should rivet our attention, for they clearly show what this change in the moral standard may lead to, involving as it does the assumption that chastity is not essential to social life. These are the words as quoted in the newspapers:—

"It must be remembered that chastity imposes a rule of life which is contrary to natural impulses, and that there are many more girls than boys, women than men in the land. It must

be also remembered that the wider education of girls, their entry into the world of labour and their general emancipation, all tend towards a liberation of natural impulses, and a desire for freedom of choice. The 'right to motherhood' is a doctrine which is rapidly gaining ground."

"The right to motherhood," if the partners are married, is, of course, a happy ideal, but this is not what these words mean, for the quotation continues its words of warning as follows:—

"It is quite possible that the future may see, especially in view of our progressive thought on the subject of unmarried motherhood, some forms of extra-marital sex-relationship and of parenthood finding a recognized place in our social code."

If this warning is justified all sections of the community should move themselves to check these dangers to national purity before they dominate our country.

Our nation and especially its women have a strong basis of common sense and resistance, when cherished ethical foundations are threatened, and I do not believe that extra-marital motherhood will ever become a national institution, for our monogamist marriages and traditions of "home" tend to blend the parents into a harmonious family life, and boys and girls are brought up to protect and reverence motherhood. Attempts to level down family life to a mere sexual association will, I feel sure, fail.

What binding obligations regarding the education and welfare of children can there be in mere sexual unions?

Mothers often try to be true to their duty in these respects to children born out of wedlock, but this is far from substantiating the dictum of Ellen Key, as quoted by Foerster, that "all motherhood is holy if it has called forth deep impulses of duty." An unmarried mother's life may become a holy one, but in irregular motherhood the impulses which led to it were not holy, and self-control would usually have been non-existent. We may encourage maternal love and solicitude for the child of an irregular union, and we may penalize the runaway father by making him financially responsible, but we cannot call such a motherhood holy without condoning such unions.

As Foerster says: "The unwavering condemnation of irregular motherhood must always remain the foundation of woman's code of honour. If the unmarried mother is put on the same plane as the married mother, the sure effect will be to lower the institution of marriage, to lessen its significance and to make it appear superfluous."

THE EFFECTS OF MOTHERHOOD WITHOUT MARRIAGE. ILLEGITIMACY.

Unmarried motherhood is not only wrong, but unnecessary. Premarital continence in both sexes is consistent with normal health, and is compatible with full physical and mental activities, provided the child has been taught (1) that purity is a beautiful ideal and impurity a sin, (2) that self-control over natural instincts builds up character, (3) that the child and adolescent be occupied by other activities involving physical exercise, and mental excursions into such things as the useful acquirement of domestic duties, artistic tastes, music, etc., and (4) be trained for a career of usefulness and integrity.

As a nation, we have to face the fact that about 40,000 children are born annually in England and Wales by unmarried mothers.

As a result of the great reduction of total births in England and Wales, the proportion of illegitimate to total births, which fell to a minimum of 3.95 per cent. in 1901-05, rose to 6.26 per cent. in 1918, the highest ratio reached during the last fifty years. There has also been some increase of actual illegitimacy from 37,157 in 1917 to 41,469 in 1918, and 41,876 in 1919, but the increased percentage proportion of illegitimate to total births is mainly due to a lowered total birth rate.

I have asked Dr. T. H. C. Stevenson, C.B.E., Superintendent of Statistics at the General Register Office, if he can tell me what is the probable ratio in England and Wales during the ten years 1911-20 between unmarried and married mothers, and he tells me that the ratio would be about 10 per cent. He assumes that about 75 per cent. of the unmarried mothers would (whilst still unmarried) have only one child each during the ten years, whilst the majority of married women during the same years may be assumed to have had 2.07 children each. Of course, this ratio is not a proved one, but Dr. Stevenson has come to this conclusion after making every allowance for possible errors. About one in ten mothers in England and Wales are unmarried. This should make us think.

Unmarried mothers are not now treated with the severity and ignorance which was the attitude adopted fifty years ago. The modern proposal that a child born out of wedlock should become legitimized by the subsequent marriage of its parents would not have been tolerated or even discussed then. This proposal is not yet adopted, and has its own difficulties to remove

before it can be legalized. It is, I think, a point to aim at, on the condition that no efforts are made to force the parents to marry if they are fundamentally unsuited, associated, in fact, only in an abnormal sexual relationship.

One of the great difficulties in which an illegitimate girl is involved is when she reaches a mature age, and has the opportunity of what is likely to prove a happy marriage.

If she knows that she is illegitimate and admits it, the marriage may be prevented, for she would have no reputable parents or relations to introduce to her husband's family.

The knowledge of such an origin often prevents a girl accepting an offer of marriage, and may lead to life-long depression; and if the knowledge is only acquired at adolescence, or later, may lead to despair, and even to suicide, or to a life of irregularity similar to that of her parents.

Much could be done to lessen the penalization of both mother and child by reducing the terrible mortality and morbidity of both mother and child by better nursing and by more efficient obstetric help. The death-rate of unmarried mothers and their offspring, during pregnancy and the lying-in period, is about twice as much as the death of married mothers and their children. Thus 72 per 1000 illegitimate children in 1917 died during the first month of life in England and Wales, as compared with 37 per 1000 legitimate children. The prevalence of venereal disease in unmarried mothers and their children is much greater than in wedlock.

The majority of unmarried mothers are domestic servants, and girls employed in hotels and restaurants. These are better able to find employment again. Many such mothers are feeble-minded, and may fall again and again, owing to deficient self-control, which in these cases is often associated with exaggerated or perverted sexual tendencies.

Much is being done by the Ministry of Health and by the public to provide hostels where the mother and her illegitimate child can be domiciled together during and after lactation. The mother is encouraged to do daily work outside the hostel, so as to keep in touch with her child, and eventually perhaps gets a caretaker's place or finds a home with a lady in the country who needs one servant and does not object to the baby coming too, or she may marry, and emigrate with her husband and child.

Efforts to restore the self-respect and regeneration of the mothers are often successful, but I agree with Mrs. Ransome

Wallis that any scheme to give pensions as a legal right to mothers of illegitimate children would often prevent the moral reclamation of the mother.

Legislation is needed to establish a satisfactory scheme. Hitherto divergent views as to what points should be embodied in a Bill have been the cause of failure, as in the attempts to carry through the recent ill-named Bastardy Bill.

MARRIAGE WITHOUT MOTHERHOOD.

We have also to consider the modern view that motherhood in married life may be justifiably avoided, or limited in various degrees.

Of recent years, and especially during and since the war, earlier marriages, sometimes even before the partners were really mature, have occurred with remarkable frequency, but unfortunately many of these young couples have agreed to avoid parenthood during the first few years of marriage. Others have decided to do so after the birth of one or two children.

It is stated that the neo-malthusianism marks an advance in the subordination of nature to the spirit. But this is a false sophistry. These practices do not assist men or women to master their instincts and passions. Such practices are not associated with control of the sexual instincts, but allow full or even excessive licence, accompanied by suppression of the normal results.

The control is not of the instincts but of the natural physiological processes. The methods adopted are not only morally wrong, but physically and mentally harmful.

As I have elsewhere stated,* I do not believe that artificial avoidance of conception can be habitually carried out (apart from continence) without the probability of serious disturbance of health in both parents.

My advice to those inclined to have over-large families is to adopt at least Nature's spacings of about two years' interval; to those who have too few children, to reconsider their personal and national obligations, and if under medical advice conception becomes unadvisable, let it be avoided by longer periods of abstinence rather than by unnatural or artificial methods.

* *Official Report of the Church Congress at Leicester* (pp. 154 to 161), 1919. London: Nisbett & Co., Ltd., 22, Berners Street, W.1.

This would give time for the present housing difficulties to be overcome.

There is plenty of scriptural encouragement to continence and self-control, but I can find no recognition or approval of any artificial limitation.

It is now realized that the knowledge of contraceptives has extended to the unmarried, who in some instances, instead of being enthusiastic for marriage and motherhood, are content to lead a life of unchastity before marriage and to try to avoid, by artificial means, the risks of maternity after marriage.

THE RISKS OF NORMAL MOTHERHOOD.

About four mothers in 1000 confinements lose their lives, and many more lose their good health, but it is now clearly established that early medical supervision of pregnant women, especially valuable during their first pregnancy, makes maternity almost free from danger, and even enables the risks of labour itself to be largely eliminated. Let every expectant mother consult a doctor and attend to his advice, for most of the potential complications of the confinement will be recognized, and can be so dealt with that danger will be averted.

Mortality of Children before Birth.

Perhaps one in ten die early in pregnancy, or do not survive their birth. The health of the child during the mother's pregnancy is necessarily dependent upon the health of the mother, and the child's ill-health can only be treated through the mother during that period. Very few children need die during pregnancy if their mothers come under medical supervision and are scientifically treated by modern methods.

Mortality of Children during and soon after Birth.

Motherhood is necessarily stripped of all its happiness and contentment if the child is stillborn or only lives a few days or weeks.

Yet this is what now frequently happens, for more than one-third of the deaths of infants who die in their first year of life die in the first month, and more than half of these actually perish in the first week, whilst nearly one in eight of these infantile deaths occur on the day of their birth.

Perhaps the following figures will make these facts plainer :—

Out of 692,438 births in 1919 in England and Wales, 8383 died in the first twenty-four hours after birth, and 9388 died in the next six days, or 17,771 in the first week of life. Whilst 27,555 died in their first month of life, only 34,160 died in the remaining eleven months of the infantile year, representing a total of 61,715 infant deaths or a death-rate of 89 per 1000 births.*

The deaths in the early days after birth are due mainly to delayed and difficult labour caused by obstructions, such as pelvic contractions, etc., or to debilitating disease or infections transferred from mother to child, or to malpresentations of the child, or to combinations of these causes, all of which could have been detected and dealt with if the mother had occasionally been seen by an experienced doctor during her pregnancy. Every child has a right—a birthright—to be born healthy.

Let it be the self-imposed duty of everyone here present to urge every expectant mother to consult a doctor during her pregnancy. This is easy in private practice, and should not be difficult nowadays even amongst the poorer classes, for every midwife is in touch with the Health Authorities of her district, or with an Ante-natal or Maternity Clinic, where a doctor is in regular attendance.

INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL UPON MOTHERHOOD.

Mothers and expectant mothers should be careful of their diet, especially as regards alcohol.

You all know that inquests are often held to determine the cause of deaths of infants under one year of age, who are well in the evening, but found dead—suffocated—in their mother's bed in the morning. These deaths before the war occurred about twice as frequently on Saturday nights.

I append tables† published by the National Birth-Rate Commission, showing the infantile deaths of infants in each year from 1913, before control of alcohol, up to 1918, when there was full control. The figures also show the percentage of deaths on each day of the week, and the numbers of convictions for drunkenness in women during those years. The relations shown by these various figures are very striking. As pointed out in

* In 1920 the death rate of infants was reduced to 80 per 1000 births. It will be interesting to see whether the reduction is, as in 1919, only in the later months of the infantile year.

† *Problems of Population and Parenthood*, pp. 292-3. London: Chapman & Hall, 1920.

the Report of the National Birth-Rate Commission in 1920,* there was a fall of 80 per cent. in the convictions for drunkenness in 1918 as compared with 1913, and coincidentally deaths of infants from suffocation fell from 1266 in 1913 to 557 in 1918, a decrease of 56 per cent., and the excessive incidence of such deaths on Saturday nights which is prominent in 1913 had practically disappeared in 1918.

DEATHS OF INFANTS FROM SUFFOCATION—PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF CASES OVER THE SEVERAL NIGHTS OF THE WEEK IN 1913 AND 1918.

	Sun-day.	Mon-day.	Tues-day.	Wednes-day.	Thurs-day.	Fri-day.	Satur-day.
1913 ...	14·1	12·8	10·1	12·1	10·7	13·6	26·3
1918 ...	14·3	10·4	13·1	15·6	13·8	15·6	17·0

CONVICTIONS OF WOMEN FOR DRUNKENNESS AND DEATH OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR FROM SUFFOCATION, 1913-1918. ENGLAND AND WALES.

	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	1919.	1920.
Convictions for drunkenness	35,765	37,311	33,211	21,245	12,307	7121	10,875	12,737 (44 weeks)
Deaths of Infants from suffocation	1226	1233	1021	744	704	557	—	—

Such improvement will not continue if the women of our country have not learned the value of control over themselves, for convictions for drunkenness in women increased to 10,875 in 1919, and to 12,737 in the first forty-four weeks of 1920.

From every point of view, alcohol, during both expectant and actual motherhood should be avoided, for, apart from

* *Problems of Population and Parenthood*, pp. 292-3. London: Chapman & Hall, 1920.

infantile deaths of acute maternal alcoholism, two important facts are known as regards the harmful influence of chronic alcoholism upon the well-being of the growing embryo and of the infant.

- (1) In both sexes the reproductive cells contain a minute portion of cell-tissue called the germ-plasm, which combines in the fertilized cell, and is passed on from generation to generation, imperishable and largely unalterable by environment. Practically this germ-plasm dominates the race. Unfortunately this germ-plasm can be affected seriously and for several generations by parental chronic alcoholism leading to prematurity and to mental and physical degeneration of the offspring.
- (2) It is known that alcohol gets into the circulation of the offspring before birth as well as during lactation, especially in chronic maternal alcoholism, and may encourage a taste for it in the child's later years, or lessen its self-control, besides causing damage to the immature organs and nervous system of such offspring.

BREAST FEEDING.

The intimate association of mother and child during pregnancy is very close; the child is protected by its mother's tissues from all external injuries, and receives its food, prepared for it by marvellous processes going on in the various maternal organs, directly from the mother's blood-stream. Every emotion of the mother is probably felt by the child, so that a happy healthy satisfied mother may expect to have a happy child free from restlessness of body and mind.

Yet some mothers do not suckle, so that this intimate nutrition relation between mother and child ceases at birth.

If the mother is tubercular or otherwise unhealthy, lactation should be avoided. In a few cases also a child cannot suck, owing to prematurity, debility or maldevelopment. Probably, however, 80 per cent. of normal mothers can, if they will, supply their offspring from their birth with their best food, warm, wholesome, germ free and individually suitable.

Is it realized how maternal lactation helps to mould the child's character? First of all, the child looks to its mother for its

most imperative need. This need, supplied with regularity and love, may well lay the foundation of the beautiful camaraderie which is sometimes seen between a healthy sympathetic mother and her growing boys and girls who are all "chums" together right up to their adolescence. The close mutual attachment involved in a six months' lactation must influence the child's mental and moral development, and may well inculcate such virtues as punctuality, patience, self-control, obedience and reverence, and thus unconsciously help to form a child's character.

I think also that the nursing mother's character is purified, ennobled and fortified by the loving sacrifice of her time and energies to this most absorbing of all maternal obligations.

COMPULSORY HEALTH CERTIFICATES FOR MARRIAGE.

I should like to see the day when both sexes contemplating marriage should be required to produce a doctor's statement that they are free from tuberculosis, venereal or any other infectious disease, but I fear the nation is not yet ripe for such a hygienic proposition. I am glad to say, however, that the conscience and knowledge of the nation are progressively clearer on this aspect of worthy parenthood, and few now marry if they know they are unfitted to rear children, and many parents desire some assurance of the good health of their would-be son or daughter-in-law.

Sterility.

In some cases motherhood is denied to a wife from causes beyond her own or her husband's control, but this is not the occasion to deal with the anatomical or physiological conditions which in either sex tend to thus reduce the birth-rate of the nation. Suffice it to say that the various abnormal conditions which may prevent motherhood, especially during the first few years of marriage, can in many cases be successfully remedied.

THE MIDWIFE'S PART IN ANTE-NATAL AND NEO-NATAL HYGIENE.

A midwife does not come into direct association with the expectant mother till she is engaged to attend at the approaching confinement.

It is her duty when thus engaged to enquire into the history of previous confinements, and to discover any indications of abnormal conditions which might lead to premature labour or to other complications.

Every midwife should be in touch with a doctor, directly if working privately, or through the health authority if she is a municipal midwife, and if she should recognize anything likely to cause trouble she must at once, by the excellent rules of the C.M.B., whether during pregnancy or the lying-in, seek medical advice.

The need for efficient training of the midwife is obvious, especially as she now attends over 70 per cent. of the total confinements in England and Wales, and, at all events after labour has commenced, is not only the *accoucheuse*, but the nurse of her patient and of the baby.

The status and the remuneration of the midwife, especially of those who are living in country villages where fees cannot ensure her a living wage, must be improved, otherwise the number of practising midwives will continue to decrease.

In 1915-16 there were 30,543 trained and certified midwives on the roll of the C.M.B., but only 6754 were practising midwifery, and although the numbers on the roll continue to increase, the proportion of practising midwives continues to diminish.

The certified midwife, by administrative or State aid, should be guaranteed a minimum remuneration of at least £150 per annum.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

There are many side issues in relation to motherhood which ought to be shortly considered, but I will only touch on three :—

- Adoption.
- Endowment of motherhood.
- Assured education.

ADOPTION.

Attempts have been made to bring in a Bill in Parliament to legalize the adoption of children, but it is a particularly difficult subject, for it involves medical, social and legal questions of much complexity.

Medically, the good health of the child to be adopted and of its parents has to be assured, more particularly if it is illegitimate, and especially as regards transmissible diseases such as tuberculosis or venereal disease.

Socially, the antecedents, character, reliability and financial position of the persons who are wishing to adopt the child should be carefully considered, including the question of other children of their own, present or potential.

Legally, the difficulties are great, and are obvious by the fact that, so far, societies advocating adoption have not agreed upon the terms of a Bill to submit to Parliament, and legislators have not yet seriously tackled the question. One of the difficulties is to make the adoption a legal transfer, which should be permanent, and not able to be broken by the mother wishing to regain possession of her child. The foster parents again should be protected from undue interference by the State in their management of the child, and yet there ought to be an assurance that the foster parents are properly nurturing, tending and educating the child. How can this be done without inspection of some sort? If inspection should be necessary, it would spoil the transaction in many ways, and would greatly add to administrative expenses. Would the child have to be made a sort of ward in Chancery if the foster parents failed in their duties to the child?

I would like to see the child, if illegitimate, legitimized by its legal transfer to the foster parents, and, whether primarily legitimate or not, made their legal heir except as regards real estate so that the child is not turned adrift and penniless if its foster parents die intestate, the estate then going to their legal next-of-kin.

THE ENDOWMENT OF MOTHERHOOD.

This also is a very difficult subject. Some of the first questions which must be faced are:—

- (a) Should the scheme be endowment of the mother or of her children, or of both?
- (b) Should it include unmarried motherhood, and, if so, should it be on the same footing as for married mothers, and for children born in wedlock?
- (c) Should it be an endowment at a flat rate, or below a minimum income, or varying with the income?

- (d) Should it be limited to widows, and to mothers whose husbands are mentally or physically or morally incapable?

Endowment of motherhood in the lowest classes, such as perhaps that of the casual labourer, whose children are often propagated without any regard to the "spacings" of about two years' interval between births, would only lead to more reckless rapidity than already exists, but in the lower middle class of clerks, and to poor professional men, clergy, etc., endowment would tend to relieve the financial anxieties of parenthood, and perhaps help to diminish the incentive to restrict the birth-rate.

In evidence before the National Birth-Rate Commission,* taken in February, 1919, the Family Endowment Committee suggested a scheme for all classes of the community at a flat rate of 12s. 6d. a week to the mother for the eight weeks before confinement, and so long as she has any child under five years of age. She is also to receive 5s. a week for the first child and 3s. 6d. for each subsequent child. Thus a woman with three children under five years of age would have 24s. 6d. a week. Even with our present low birth-rate this would cost in Great Britain and in Ireland £240,000,000 a year, which is, of course, impossible. Modifications of such a scheme to poor widowed mothers or to women whose husbands are mentally, physically or morally incapacitated, or where the income of the parents is less than a certain sum, such as £130, £150, or £200, according to various suggestions, would cost much less, ranging round £40,000,000 a year only. The need for inspection by the State or Municipality adds greatly to the total cost of all such schemes. Judge Lindsay says, and I think he is right, that we must begin with the mother before confinement, but it is equally true that after birth our interest should centre on the rearing of the offspring through the mother's care, or by outside help if the mother is dead or incapacitated. Mr. Harold Cox says: "For the State to give a subsidy to every woman who bears a child would only increase the evil. A child born and reared in a crowded area has a poor chance of becoming a fine specimen of humanity even if the State pays for its maintenance."

* *Problems of Population and Parenthood*, pp. liv-lviii. London: Chapman & Hall.

The State has in recent years, through the National Insurance Act, recognized the need of financial help for expectant mothers, especially when incapacitated as a result of pregnancy, in addition to the increased maternity benefit. The income-tax allowances introduced last year for the domiciled wife and for each child under sixteen years of age, or later if the child is receiving full-time education, are also steps in the right direction.

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN APART FROM STATE EDUCATION.

There are now ways by which the future education of children can be insured by small annual premiums payable for a fixed series of years, up to a stated age for each child. If such premiums are begun soon after the birth of the children, the policies for, say, £100 a year for each child will soon be coming in, so that by the time that their elder children go to school the parents will be receiving much more money for schooling or apprenticeship, or for the advancement in life of their children, than they are paying out in premiums for the younger children. If any child dies the premiums already paid for that child are returned. Such assured education is especially valuable where the father is dead, or the parents are pensioners, or with fixed incomes, and especially if they desire that their children should adopt some profession or technical career, for which education is expensive.

In conclusion, I would remind you that though all these questions concern the nation as a whole, they are of great personal importance where they touch the individual citizen, and especially the women of the nation. Women, now endowed with widely extended opportunities in almost every profession and career, should carefully study all the problems surrounding "Motherhood," so as to be able to influence legislation and civil administration and philanthropic effort.

They should try to preserve motherhood, not only as an honoured institution, pure and unsullied, but as an essential national asset, by which our country may continue to rear such men and women as fought and worked for us in the Great War, and are now reconstructing our somewhat shattered organizations.

DISCUSSION.

Dr. MARY D. SCHARLIEB, C.B.E., said : Unfortunately the parents of the present day too frequently fail to realize that an important part of their duty towards their children is to give them enlightenment as to the facts of life so far as they are able to understand them. It is impossible to assign any age limit, for some children are more developed mentally and morally at 7 or 8 years of age than others are at 12 or 14.

The great rule is to answer the children's questions simply, truthfully, and in a reverent manner. It is unfair to allow children to meet the troubles and temptations of life unwarned, and it is unfair to expect children and young people to keep their bodies in "temperance, soberness, and chastity" if they have never been taught the necessary care of the body, and if its beauty, value and dignity has not been pointed out to them.

Dr. SCHOFIELD then proposed a vote of thanks to the learned Lecturer, whose paper was most admirable, and if he added a few remarks it would be mainly to emphasize some important points that might be forgotten, but which should be ever remembered.

On page 56, we read, "Motherhood without marriage, and marriage associated with the prevention of motherhood, are really mere sexual unions which are not only irregular but are ethically, socially, and morally wrong." This is a pronouncement from a high authority of the utmost weight, and worthy of all attention.

On page 58, we read of the supposed "right to motherhood" in the sense that every woman has a right to become a mother (without marriage being necessary). This is a distinct retrograde step from the human to the pure animal. It is a doctrine of the animal kingdom, but humanity has uses far above bestial ethics; but his responsibility both to God and his own humanity is degraded by the accepted meaning of the phrase "a right to motherhood."

Page 59 shows that one in ten mothers are not married, and produce 40,000 children. The evil of this is immense, though little thought of. If the strength of Britain lies in its pure family life, all unmarried mothers sin, not only against God, but against their country, and become in many ways a fertile source of evil, the man who is

the cause being a still greater offender. They are a sure cause of evil to their children, bringing needless hardships upon them and inevitably blighting their future. Such motherhood is a degradation of woman in her highest ideals, as well as being a sinful waste of manhood.

It is well that the false sophistry of Neo-Malthusianism is unsparingly exposed on page 61, as well as the terrible dangers of alcohol on pp. 63 and 65. The fact of it being a persistent and virulent poisoner of the ovary cannot be too widely known, and is established scientifically beyond doubt.

I now turn to the education of our girls in these subjects as suggested by the admirable words which have fallen from our Chairman—Mrs. Scharlieb. I feel sure that in future ages the historicist will refuse to believe that so late as 1920 the greater number of women were educated without any reference to their coming position as wives and mothers, and without the least instruction in the care of infancy. Such criminal neglect will appear too incredible to be believed. And yet it is the fact. For forty years I have done my best to insist that all girls before their marriage should have at least six months' instruction in these matters; and in my practice have succeeded in delaying the marriage of an ignorant girl until she has had a six months' course in these subjects. I have gone so far as to hope that some day our great Government may be able to spare a few hours to consider the trivial question of the welfare of the rest, and however difficult health certificates may be, may at least enact that no marriages be solemnized without the bride producing a certificate showing a reasonable knowledge of the duties she is undertaking in matrimony.

With the present generation of the married, all that can be done is to preach in season and out of season the old, old story that "Babies under six months must have nothing but milk." No one will believe the touching faith that still exists in the remote districts in pap. It is indeed a fact that in a distant workhouse only recently has the practice been discontinued of allowing every new-born infant a loaf of bread per week, apparently ignorant of the fact that they might almost as well have ordered strychnine. The reason of the immensely greater mortality of artificially-fed,

as compared to breast-fed, children is as yet but little understood. No doubt a mother's milk is best for her own child, but this is not the cause of the mortality from cow's milk.

It lies in the fact that when the infant is nourished from its mother's breast it gets milk, when fed otherwise it gets milk *plus dirt*. The quantity is now much less, thanks to sanitary regulations, but the fact remains that dirt is seldom wholly excluded.

Dr. Schofield again expressed his sense of the value of Dr. Routh's admirable paper, and begged to propose a hearty vote of thanks to him.

Lieut.-Col. M. A. ALVES said : With most of the matter contained in this paper we shall all, I feel sure, be in hearty agreement ; but some few points in it need consideration and perhaps a little criticism.

In Gen. i, 28, the words run, " Be fruitful and multiply—and replenish the earth and subdue it." God has joined together these two phrases ; and any attempt on man's part to put them asunder can only lead to disaster, as I fear that this nation may soon learn to its cost. We all have a natural inclination towards the first clause ; not too many of us towards the second ; and we need those two great prison-warders, Hunger and Exposure, to compel us to do our duty ; and if the State dismisses these two valuable officials she is likely soon to find herself bankrupt.

The passage from Genesis that I have quoted teaches us, I maintain, that the right to parenthood is not inherent, but something to be earned ; and it seems to me that State aid, if given at all, should be restricted to those cases where both parents have come up to a certain approved standard of fitness in mind and body. What the nation needs is VIRI, not HOMINES, still less HOMUNCULI, of which two latter classes it has plenty and to spare. It should, in my judgment, be restricted to regular unions only, except perhaps in those rare cases where the bigamous party to a marriage has been so unwittingly.

Monogamy is probably the general custom of Heathens as well as Christians and Jews ; and if the Old Testament permitted Polygamy, it did not encourage it. Further, if a man " enticed " a maid in Israel, he was bound to marry her, and forbidden to divorce her (adultery was punished by death, not divorce), see

Exod. xxii and Lev. xx. But I doubt if Polygamy was forbidden to any except members of the Christian Church, who, by the Holy Spirit given to them, have a power of restraint denied to others in their natural fallen condition.

As to marriage without motherhood, I can only say this, that the penalization of industry and thrift, through the cruel taxation of the industrious, and the indiscriminate subsidizing of motherhood, irregular as well as regular, can only lead to the increase of the unfit, and the elimination of the fit. What inducement have the fit to "reconsider their national obligations" under such circumstances? By its action the State has freed them from such obligations.

Regarding the mortality of children—except in cases of over-laying—I can only consider that, if it is due to their being below the normal standard, it is a blessing in disguise. Think what it must be for a man or woman, not up to the mark, to have to fight the battle of life; "damned into an evil world," as Carlyle truthfully and forcibly expressed it.

Regarding the adoption of children, a man with an inherited or an earned income has a moral right to its disposal; but I must confess that I consider it an injustice for an adopted child, legitimate or not, to be made, *ipso facto*, the legal heir of inherited estate, to the detriment of blood relations.

The case of illegitimates is unquestionably hard; it is partly the result of our marriage laws inspired by an ignorant ecclesiasticism; but war is also hard, whose results fall alike on innocent and guilty; and I fear that indifference in this matter, and the treatment of legitimate and illegitimate as if no difference existed, would speedily lead to a condonation of that want of self-control on woman's part which Heathenism, Judaism, and Christianity have alike condemned.

It seems to be one of those sad signs of the times concerning which I have little earthly hope.

Dr. Routh has rightly insisted on the need of inculcating general self-control, the "temperance" of Scripture. The foundations of this should be laid in the cradle and nursery.

The vote of thanks to the Lecturer was carried by acclamation.

Lieut.-Col. G. MACKINLAY said: My pleasing duty now is to propose a vote of thanks to our learned and gifted Chairman. We are indeed happy in having one so distinguished to preside on this

occasion ; we thank her warmly for coming and for the part she has taken in the discussion.

The Scripture speaks in plain words on these subjects, and the modern tendency is to consider them in freer terms than was the case only a very few years ago. Both our Chairman and Lecturer have taken happy advantage of the present opportunities.

I notice that our Chairman emphasizes the great need for teaching the young on the subject of motherhood, and she herself has done noble work in this direction. All thoughtful parents must thank her and Dr. Amand Routh for their wise and tactful words.

How many an unmarried mother might have been protected and saved from her sorrowful position if she had had some faithful friend who could have told her beforehand of the woes of all in such a position ; many a young girl has ignorantly fallen for want of a parent's loving warnings.

Dr. Amand Routh has graphically told us of the tragic fate of illegitimate children, when he assures us that the mortality among them is about double that of other infants ; but the lot of those who survive is not at all happy, even if they and their mothers are tended with the sympathetic care of Christian women as, for instance, in the Rescue Society, whose honoured Secretary, Mr. Stuart Thorpe, has long been one of us in this Institute. The condition of these unmarried mothers is indicated by the reply of one of the matrons to my wife's question, " Do the mothers love their infants ? " The reply was, " They would not be sorry if they died."

Can we wonder at such an answer when we reflect that the presence of the child is a constant reminder of the woman's shame, and also a great financial burden. Notwithstanding these great drawbacks, many of the young women are restored to positions of usefulness ; but how much better if they had been restrained from falling into such a condition. It is better to put up a fence at the top of a precipice than to build a Rescue Home at the foot of it. This protection can be afforded in many cases by wise, faithful, sympathetic Christian workers among girls and young women.

Mrs. Scharlieb also dwelt upon the need of some assurance of good health between a couple before marriage ; this is an important point, and cannot be too often emphasized, for though most people admit that only healthy people should marry, when it becomes a

personal matter, wisdom is often neglected and only blind love is followed.

But progress has been made in this direction, and we trust the Chairman's efforts will be more and more crowned with success.

I ask you to accord the vote of thanks to our Chairman by acclamation. (Applause.)

Dr. DAVID ANDERSON-BERRY writes: "I have the honour of agreeing with our learned Lecturer.

"But referring to page 59, last paragraph, it is with joy that I own myself a native of Scotland, a land of all lands celebrated for the breadth of its marriage laws. Apart from its *regular* marriages there are those known as *irregular*. These are: (1) By habit and repute. If the two persons live together as man and wife for some time, it constitutes a marriage. I remember a family of some repute where this was done. In order to make it sure, the man called his friends and, standing before them, holding the woman by the hand, and throwing the cloak he wore over the children, he owned her as wife and the children as his children. Afterwards the son thus owned rose to a position of great honour and dignity in the service of his country. (2) If intercourse takes place on promise of marriage, established afterwards by a written promise or on the oath of a defender, the Courts will recognize this as a marriage under the term *subsequente copula*. (3) If the parties own themselves as man and wife before witnesses or in a court of law, this constitutes a marriage *per verba de presenti*. Now all marriages in Scotland legitimize the children born beforehand, whether the marriage is a *regular* or an *irregular* one.

"Lord Brougham's Act of 1856 requires 21 days' residence as a pre-requisite.

"Referring to 'Marriage without Motherhood,' about 33 years ago, I then being a young general practitioner in the West of London, there came under my care a woman whose case caused me much perplexity. I took her to Dr. Amand Routh, and to my surprise he at once solved the mystery. Nature was avenging herself on her who was a party to playing Neo-Malthusian tricks on the Great Mother. Once that ceased the woman recovered her health and became a happy mother of healthy children. Only the other day

I played the *rôle* of Dr. Routh, to the great surprise of the parties, who thought they had kept their secret. Poor fools! a practice that was destroying the health of both. Now they know better I trust all will be well.

“ Referring to pages 68, 69, I strongly oppose all plans whereby the worthy and thrifty are taxed to support the unworthy and thriftless. Let us have *Socialism* at once if you like, but do not rob the hen-roosts that the tramps may be fed on omelettes! I believe in the survival of the fittest, and that does not mean those who are spoon-fed by the State. All these plans mean simply the taxing out of existence the honest man and his thrifty wife that the loafer and bone-idle ones may with their temporary mates be tempted by handsome monetary gifts to load the State with a burden it will then have to bear from cradle to grave.”

AUTHOR'S REPLY.

Dr. ROUTH thanked Dr. Mary Scharlieb and Dr. Schofield for their approval of his views on Sex Education and Family Life and the value of Maternal Lactation. Whilst health certificates before marriage were idealistically desirable, it was impracticable for many reasons to make them compulsory. He agreed with Dr. Scharlieb that both prospective partners and their parents were getting more anxious that marriages should be between healthy persons.

He agreed with Dr. Collingwood that the transmission of hereditary mental disease was especially to be avoided.

It is not easy, as Colonel Mackinlay has so well said, to prepare a growing girl for marriage, maternity and family life, but much was now being done in council and other public and private schools and in continuation classes to give instruction in domestic hygiene in all these matters.

Dr. Routh preferred our English Laws of matrimony to the Scotch Laws as described by Dr. Anderson-Berry, but agreed with him and Colonel Alves and others that, as he had stated in his address, endowment of Motherhood was only possible in cases of real necessity, such as widows left with families, who had little or no assured

income, or where the husband had died or was physically or mentally incapacitated. Colonel Alves evidently thought that if children were born delicate they could not be reared. This was not so. Dr. Routh had tried to make it clear that the measures he had advocated—viz., medical supervision of expectant mothers, and treatment of the children through the mother during pregnancy—would largely prevent children being born delicate, and the terrible infant mortality in the early days and weeks after birth would greatly diminish, together with the unnecessary mortality and morbidity of the mothers which now exist.