

corded their full liberty of action. The only effectual method from the present viewpoint is for the state to assume guardianship of such individuals and refuse them that privilege or destroy their procreative properties. There are, of course, many objections that can be offered against such a measure as the last. There would be opposition from many sources, but apart from the destruction of that function by sterilization it is doubtful if any other measures can be utilized that will materially lessen the propagation of defective offspring by them.

Sterilization has its advantages and its objections, its advocates and opponents. The procedure itself is a comparatively safe and harmless one to the individual. But the most serious objection, I believe, is that it places the individual in a position where his sexual nature can be exercised without any restraint, if ever such individuals are restrained by the fear of possible conception taking place, and this affords the greatest opportunity for the diffusion of gonorrhea and syphilis, those great, if not the greatest scourges of the civilized world of today. Furthermore, sterilization laws of the present time are entirely too restricted in their application. It is not the confirmed criminal who spends the most of his time in the various correctional and penal institutions, nor the extreme mental defective who also must be cared for in one or other of the charitable institutions who are the source of danger, but it is more particularly to those milder forms of defectiveness that more attention must be given, those individuals who in spite of the average opportunities of life never get above a con-