Birth Control in the Empire.

By LORD MORRIS, Ex-Premier of Newfoundland.

Is birth control good for us as a nation or is it bad? That, in brief, is the core of a controversy much more vital in its ultimate results than many that have been thrashed out at Downing-sreet this year. On this subject there can be only two opinions, and already two keen intellects have ranged themselves on opposite sides. Lord Dawson declares that birth control is not merely good but necessary as a palliative for the overcrowded and depressing conditions prevailing in the poorer districts of our national life to-day.

On the other hand, Lord Northcliffe receives the cordial approval of the Australian Government for publicly declaring that the maintenance of white populations in our Dominions and Colonies is our final and greatest imperial safeguard.

For a century Britain has been the pioneer of colonization. Our natural overflow has carried the seeds of British influence and prestige to every corner of the globe. We have poured an endless stream of prime, lusty manhood across the ocean ever since distant lands were first discovered. We have been the main generating force of Colonial power. The bone and muscle of our great Dominions and Colonial possessions were born of our island stock, and because it was so the blood-bond held when the Central Powers rose up to annihilate the Homeland, Britain without her Dominions and Colonies is that awful upheaval would have been a battleship without guns.

Lord Dawson, of all men I know, would be the last to fling a dam across that river of future power and quality. For if that were done we might as well cut our cables, sink our merchant marine, and relapse into the careless somnolence of national decay. Without free birth we are a dead nation. As an Empire we shall cease to exist.

Stripped of all polite dressing, birth control means that instead of allowing our overflow of labour to carry its influence across the world we shall prevent that excess labour from being born.

Why Rome Decayed.

It is inconceivable that so learned a student as Lord Dawson can be unaware of the grim lessons that are writ large and in red letters on the pages of history regarding the suicidal folly of checking natural procreation. The ancient empires that once stood where Britain stands to-day date their decline and fall from the moment they adopted the abhorrent cult propounded by Malthus, and which, as Lord Dawson points out, is practised in no small degree at the present time.

Indeed it is not necessary to go right back to the dead empires of Rome and Greece for illustration and example. When the tragedy of the Napoleonic wars had been played through to the finish the signing of peace found France a ravaged and distressed country.

Wealth, which is nothing more or less than commercial productivity, and drifted from her. She had lost both trade and trade outlets. She was in that state of national convalescence that we are in to-day. The inevitable result was that there were more mouths to feed than food to feed them. Birth control became a factor of French national life, and from that hour France's man-power began to decrease.

When the world-war broke out France was the only nation engaged whose male population showed a decrease on the ten-yearly census, and her population had been decreasing for many years. To-day she is using black troops in the occupied territories of Germany.

Birth control has been proved illegal, dangerous, and harmful ever since historians first began to tabulate contemporary facts.

The fundamental and basic principle for which this earth was peopled was that the human race should be propagated in the natural order. That is the dominant reason for existence. "Increase and multiply," was the great command given by God in the Garden of Eden. That is the whole and sole object of human life.

Compulsion After Marriage.

People need not get married; they are not bound to; but if they do it is for the purpose of uniting their love for a definite end, not merely to have a good time or because housekeeping would be cheaper or that more golf might be played; but that children should be born of their union.

Having married and having consummated the marriage, neither party, except for justifiable reasons, may arrest or control in any way the natural results of their union. To do so is a crime, a sin, not alone in its effects upon themselves, but far more serious in its effect on posterity, over whose destiny it was never intended by God, angels, or men that they should have any control.

St. Paul, the great interpreter of the ethics of Christianity, made it quite clear that there was no obligation whatever on anyone to marry. Nor is there. Indeed, he pointed out that the higher life was celibacy. But that, if people were not able to resist the attractions and allurements of conjugal union, and were likely to fall into forbidden sins, why then it was better to marry than burn; meaning to run the risk of incurring the consequences of improper and illegal union, both here and hereafter. So that clearly when people marry it is not merely for the pleasure of having a child to amuse them, as some are amused by having a Pekinese to fondle, but to shoulder the full responsibilities of married life in its relation to God and the State.

Teaching of History.

If such a principle as is now suggested were once admitted, if the adoption of such a habit could ever in any way hope to evade public censure and condemnation, then one would only have to take the statistics of some modern nations in order to calculate the exact year when the human race would become extinct.

History shows the extinction of plant and animal life to be the result of altered physical environment. The human being is equally liable and subject to the danger of extinction by any serious sustained attack on its moral and physical environment, and when that is still further weakened by the encroachments of physical degeneracy then indeed have we cause for despair.

Of course I know the argument: "What is a poor man to do with a large family?" The answer is, he should have thought of that before marrying; but in this case it is not so much the poor man as the rich man and his wife, who refuse to allow the calls on their social life to be affected by nursery cares.

The other argument that the world is unable to produce enough food is untenable. A remedy is no remedy at all if it is worse than the evil it aims curing, and history shows that the inventions and discoveries of science can keep fully abreast of normal demands.

Thus I think that if the theory expounded by Lord Dawson at the Church Congress were seriously entertained by leaders of thought in these islands and adopted generally by the public, it could not fail injuriously to affect in the very near future the strength of the British race both at home and in our Dominions.—Weekly Dispatch.

Mons Remembers Her Liberators.

The citizens of Mons still remember the Canadian Corps, as attested in the following cablegram received by the Canadian Government from Burgomaster Lescartes:

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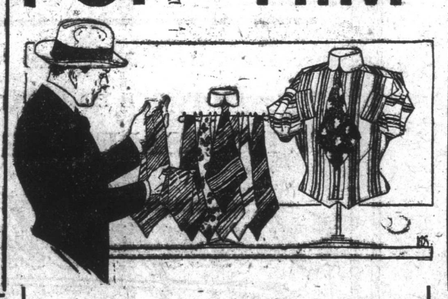

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