

sophist, she therefore believed in a God and immortality. Immediately she withdrew her book from circulation, although she was offered a large sum for the copyright, and confessed her error in writing. She declared that when advocating the system she considered man to be but an organism which was produced on the earth and perished upon it, but that as soon as she realized that man was immortal she became convinced that the practice was not only immoral in itself, but also only put one evil in the place of another. How, then, can any one who names the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ—anyone who professes to believe in the Resurrection of the Dead, and the life of the world to come, for an instant advocate or defend this sin?

Time will not permit me to dwell at any length on the evil effects of these practices upon the individual, upon society and upon the nation. Medical opinion is overwhelmingly against them. French physicians who have large experience are especially vigorous in denouncing their dangers to both sexes. In women they produce hysteria, congestions, inflammations, morbidness and all sorts of nervous diseases, they shorten life and excite a craving for morphine, ether and other drugs.

In society these practices must tend to increase pre-nuptial unchastity; for can our women maintain their high standard of virtue—can the marked difference between the chastity of women and that of men continue, if there is no fear of exposure and disgrace by becoming mothers.

Then, too, they greatly encourage divorce. For, undoubtedly, the presence of children over and over again averts the separation of husband and wife. Quarrels are made up and differences are borne with for the sake of the children, and from the unwillingness of either parent to be parted from them. In the case of the childless marriages there is no such restraining influence, and divorce is consequently sought upon the slightest provocation.

And if this system is morally and physically wrong in the individual; if it undermines the sanctity of family life, the very foundations of well ordered society, it is also disastrous to the nation. The decay of the Roman Empire is a striking instance of this. The poet Juvenal describing the many causes which were bringing about the downfall of that Empire, in his sixth satire freely mentions this one, "The wealthy dame is seldom brought to bed." St. Paul in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, also refers to the awful lust of the age. When the Roman women anxiously about their own self-indulgence, only refused to nurse their children and came to look upon infanticide without any shame or horror, the glory of the nation soon departed. And who can fail to see that France of today is rapidly losing her present place among the nations of Europe from the same cause, and a like fate must sooner or later await every nation that yields itself up to licentiousness. God grant that the British Empire may realize her danger in time and return to the paths of matrimonial virtue.

The defenders of these practices plead in excuse that there is danger of over-population; that too frequent child-bearing ruins a woman's health; that people cannot afford large families, that parents in temporary sickness or having chronic disease ought not to beget children, and so on. All which is perfectly true.

But human beings differ from the lower animals in that they are able to control their sensual desires, and in such cases

these desires must be controlled, except, at least, at those regular times, when God, who knoweth all our needs, has provided that conception will not take place. Temperance in conjugal matters is an imperative as temperance in eating and drinking; and excess in any of these brings its own punishment. Self control is the first condition of all morality. To command the passions, not to be a slave to them is man's proper state, and the man who does not command them is every whit as bad as the drunkard, although his excesses are hidden from the eyes of his fellows, as the drunkard's are not. The present state of society, the difficulty in providing for large families, or the ill health of a husband or a wife may demand a greater exercise of self-control, but it can never condone a sin, let alone such a sin as infanticide.

My dear brethren, I have felt constrained to speak to you thus plainly tonight, because of the pressing need of checking the insidious vice which is everywhere taking possession of our homes. A few years ago this subject had been better left to some special occasion; but so rapidly has the knowledge of the evil increased of late, that now there is little fear of troaching that which is not already known, and even if this danger did exist, there is the still greater danger of allowing the practices to pass unchallenged for the sake of a warning word. I am sure that many offenders have no idea of the sinfulness of them. They may feel that they are not altogether right and honest; but they know so little of physiology that the enormity of the sin does not manifest itself to them, and how are they to learn it unless the clergy speak out.

I can assure you it has been no easy task for me thus to speak, and if it has given you pain in listening, I am certain my pain in speaking has been tenfold greater than yours. But if my speaking, through God's mercy, be the means of checking this sin in the least degree, if it be the means of waning the light of day and the crown of life for one babe yet unborn, if it be the means of making husbands and wives realize that married life is for something more than the selfish gratifications of the lusts of the flesh, then I am willing to bear the pain, aye, and the censure that is likely to follow from some quarters, knowing that if I kept silence any longer I should be guilty before God of my brother's blood.

One word of warning in conclusion. This is far too solemn a subject to jest about. If you have to talk of it at all, do it with the full realization of its sinfulness. And judge no one. There are, thank God, many married people, who, although childless, or with one or two children, are living pure, chaste, continent lives. There are others who from some physical cause are temporarily or permanently unfruitful. That such lie under a certain suspicion, in some minds, is unfortunately unavoidable in the present state of society. But I beg of you, in God's name, to judge no one. Exercise your Christian charity;—never say even to yourself, that you suspect any person. Leave the matter in God's hands, where it belongs; and pray ever and earnestly that this stone of reproach may be rolled away, and that once more "marriage may be honorable to all, and the bed undefiled."

Price 5s each, or 40c per dozen, post free. Address, Box 227, Charlottetown, P. E. I.

N.B.—For an exhaustive treatise on this subject see "New Malthusianism," by R. Usher. Published by Gibbins & Co., 18 Bury St., London, Eng. Price 6s.