

late, when, in this most Christian country, among the enlightened people of this Western continent, it has grown to be "a monster of such hideous mien," that those who see it dare no longer keep silence. It is a noticeable fact, plain to all, that the birth-rate of our native population is continually decreasing, and that, too, among our better classes—socially speaking. Statistics show conclusively that any apparent increase comes altogether from the emigrant population, and chiefly from the poorest class. Have our women lost the power to conceive, or our men to procreate? Or have the sexual passions grown weaker within us? Neither. But of the conceptions that occur, one-half (some good statisticians judge two-thirds) are wilfully destroyed, and many others are blighted by accident and disease.

Do you say this is an extravagant statement? No one is qualified to judge save physicians; and they see its vast proportions only as they come in contact with its frightful effects, and investigate the causes of the thousand ills that woman's flesh is heir to. And this is their general opinion. Those who make a specialty of woman's diseases, learn more of it than the average physician, and their estimate of its extent is proportionately greater.

But though physicians see more, no one can shut his eyes to its existence. It has become a regular business. "Periodical Pills" have agencies in every city, and are advertised almost in every paper—religious as well as secular. How can a conscientious man or woman read without a blush such expressions as these: "Safe except in certain conditions," "Pregnant women are cautioned against their use?" Yet it is a fact that men read them without offense, and women purchase them with avidity. So callous has the public conscience grown in this respect, that desire for offspring has no place in the preparations for the conjugal relations, and the murder of offspring unborn, whether by drugs or mechanical violence, is recognized as the legitimate occupation of many, and the occasional practice of three-fourths of our matrons. The bridal couch is approached with dread of the possible result; impregnation is regarded as a calamity, to avert which the advice of more experienced women is sought. Those who have escaped maternity are eagerly importuned for their "receipt," drugs and patent-medicines are readily swallowed, the professional abortionist is consulted, and sometimes even the family