

More Birth Control Madness

By Rev. James M. O'Connell, C.S.P.

It was bound to come. We have been expecting it. We have wondered why it didn't come immediately. It was as sure as fate, as inevitable as night. And now it has arrived. A woman, "obstetrical consultant" of a State Board of Health has urged that women war workers be protected from "unwanted pregnancies" as a means of keeping the nation's production machine at full speed.

All of us—at least all of us Catholics—felt in our hearts as soon as women went into the munition factories, that the ever alert, never-sleeping birth-control machine would presently come out with a demand that the use of contraceptives be permitted as a war measure in all the States and that the same and means of circumventing nature be taught to women workers.

I shall not here enter upon the argument against birth control. I have consistently refused to do so. I take the stand, now as always, that people who cannot see that the deliberate frustration of the process of nature is filthy and vicious, immoral and criminal, are not amenable to argument. St. Paul long ago complained of moral degeneracy in the days of the Decian persecution. He said that they "left the natural use" and turned to the unnatural. With persons who have fallen that low you can do nothing. Reasoning doesn't appeal to them.

When human beings become so corrupt as to adopt unnatural practices and to justify what is done to people in obviously a vice, God, as the apostle says, "delivers them over to a depraved mind." The corruption of the heart weakens the action of the mind. You may see it any day in those who give themselves over to indulgence in sexual sin. At first they are ashamed, but as they get deeper and deeper into the abyss and discover that they cannot extricate themselves, they turn to self-justification. They declare boldly that all other men—and women too—are the same as they, secretly if not openly; that those who do not admit it are hypocrites; that self-restraint—they mean continence—is unnatural and impossible. And so on and so on.

Living with the advantages of contraception, you may remind them that the interruption or frustration of the action of Nature is not only unnatural but physically harmful. You may call their attention to the fact that actions which had resulted all attack by external enemies, fall to pieces from within, or because a "push-over" for vigorous enemies from without, because they had debauched their own population. You may read them a par-

agraph from the notes of the day such as this: "What are the causes of the fall of France?" General G. read was asked. "That," he answered, "the general question of birth rate." "France," he continued, "was without the war, was on the verge of collapse. The family was disappearing. In the world's darkest country, where the soil yields a living to many who waste it, the country was depopulating itself."

In her General Grant, Eisenhower says that the self same fact for you is almost the only thing which in human documents in the days of American history. That the birth-control machine, and its master, history has its lessons for those who have their physiology. Try a little arithmetic on them. For example, France and Germany in the last eighteenth century had relatively the same population. By 1918 Germany had leaped ahead and by 1941 had almost twice as many people as France. You cannot fight 10 million people with 15 million. But arithmetic does no good. Those who believe that nature has ruled their reason. They are not understand.

And now comes this latest form of madness. In order to win the war we must speed up production of war materials. So says the woman who is the doctor. Warred women? That the warred women will naturally desire to be mothers. They will be particularly what we call "blonde" than dark. Show us that, we shall readily find them. Thanks to "modern science" we shall make it possible for them to work the year around without interruption. They need not cease to enjoy the pleasures of matrimony, but we have devised a way to enable them to change its responsibilities. This is the machine age; and we can regulate all things with machinery.

So there are men and women, ignorant of public ethics, psychiatrists, and the "modern" "scientific" professors" advocating what they are pleased to call "temporary continence," "planned parenthood" by which married women to avoid motherhood and to stick to their war machine.

Fortunately they are not permitted to go their way disrupting the Nation without opposition. Vincent F. McNair, a name well-known to the national grievance committee of the New York State Education Department has "called the carpet" on the birth-control machine. "It is apparent," he says, "that war hysteria is an excuse to encourage birth control; for war plants to advise young women to limit birth control means and thereby encourage parenthood will lead to social chaos and disaster." And we know the hope that Margaret Connelton, Paul V. McNair will make "proper adjustments" for mothers who have to absent themselves for months from work at the war machine.

We have to be thankful for one voice raised in the name of common sense and decency in the midst of what our economist calls "this wacky world." Wacky and wicked.

(Copyright, 1943, N. C. W. C.)

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Little-Known Facts for Catholics

By M. J. MURRAY

Copyright, 1943, N. C. W. C. W. C.



EDITORIALS

(Continued from Page 2)

Cross dies for them in time of need, to contemplate the situation it gives to prisoners of war, and to add to this a survey of what it does locally, in state circles, and nationally, wherever money and organization are needed to meet the call of plague, flood, fire, or other such catastrophe.

Share in the wonderful work of the Red Cross by the response which you will make to the current drive for funds.

REQUIEM OF A PRIEST

Elmira is mourning one of its noblest priests. The Rev. John A. Stummeler has been called from life, bringing to a close a pastorate of over thirty-seven years at St. John the Baptist Church. Bishop and clergy gathered devoutly in St. John's last Monday to offer up his Funeral Mass, to pray for his soul, to ponder the events of a priestly life that extended well over fifty years. The surviving words of Father Lene's eulogy announced many a memory in the hearts of the congregation that filled to capacity the parish church that was the scene of his labors, and was now the scene of his funeral.

The Divine Virtues were present in a marked degree in the life of Father Stummeler. Faith inspired his every action, prompted his every word and thought. Hope in God's goodness was reflected in his way of life. Charity that was a constant love of God and of man was the walking of his many years of activity as a priest and a shepherd of souls.

Father Stummeler has departed from his many friends in and about Elmira. But he has left a mark on that city and its people that shall never be erased. The love of Christ and the way of Christ have been impressed by him on many a soul in childhood, have gone on with that soul into youth and mature life, have marked that soul as belonging always to Christ. How many thousands have looked up to him as another Christ, as their spiritual shepherd, as their leader toward the better things of life! The soul of earlier years gave way to a Christ-like spirit of patience in suffering in his closing years. He was a faithful priest, a devoted pastor, a loyal shepherd in his flock. May his priestly soul rest in peace!

HOW THE SEED FALLS

It was a very large crowd that faced Jesus as He began the parable of the sower and his seed. Men from every town were resorting to Jesus; they had heard His word, they had seen His good deeds, they had pondered over the message He had brought them. Some knew the thoughts in their minds. Jesus was ready with an answer for them.

The answer was in the form of a parable. The sower sowed his seed: some fell by the wayside, some on the rock, some among thorns, some on good ground. The seed was good, the soil in all four cases; yet only in one case did it bring forth fruit in abundance. God's will looks to the salvation of all men. Man's response to God's word is the measure of his spiritual success in life. God's grace and man's cooperation are the conditions for a fruitful life, for an abundance of merit unto life eternal.

Some get away to a poor start, let the devil take God's word out of their heart; some easily fall away at the first call of temptation; some allow the cares and riches of this world to prevent the word from ripening. But there always remains the group that sows the seed in a good and right heart and hold it fast, bringing forth fruit in patience.

Hold fast to the good things of God. His word will never fail; but that word means everything. Make them the foundation for your Christian life. Hold fast to them. By faith and knowledge of the things of God, make each day a fruitful one, replete with merit that shall mark you as worthy of eternal reward.

Library Signal

Rendezvous: North Africa

By Rev. Benedict Egan

What were once dots on the map are now places where our boys are digging in, facing fear. Geography books and maps now tell us as intimately a story as a photograph album. Through the ties of blood we are becoming aware of the world.

Just a while ago, say even six months ago, if a priest were to have mentioned Tunis, Algiers, Libya, the Sahara, in a sermon on St. Augustine, or on the Desert Fathers, or on Charles de Foucauld and Cardinal Lavigerie, showing the thrilling adventures of the Gospel along the southern coastal basin of the Mediterranean, he could not have hoped for more than polite interest in his topical references. North Africa was far from the sensitive nerve, then. But now? Boys you and I know, boys from the next street, boys whose stars are on the flag in our own front window, are now living there, four thousand miles away; and four thousand miles away becomes as near as the next street, or as the next room where all their things are being kept just as they were, for their return.

And so, what? We want to hear all we can about this place. We eat up the maps and photographs of it. And now a priest would find it easy to preach on St. Augustine and his mother Monica, on St. Perpetua and St. Felicitas, on the Desert Fathers, on St. Francis of Assisi's journey to Morocco to convert the Sultan, on Cardinal Lavigerie's magnificent fight to evangelize North Africa, on Charles de Foucauld's dramatic sacrifice of self in the heart of the desert. These people become understandable to us because they lived and worked where our boys are now living and fighting.

Because this is a time when we listen to these things with the beating of our hearts and the running of our blood, I shall tell you, off and on in this column, about some of these great Christians of North Africa. Because of them our twenty-century-old Church is the richer. Shall I call the roll? It is a noble litany, that of the African heroes of Christ: St. Perpetua and Felicitas, St. Cyprian, St. Cyril of Alexandria, the great apologists Origen and Tertullian, St. Augustine, greatest Africa of them all, towering genius of all the Christian centuries, his mother, St. Monica; St. Raymond of Pennafort and St. Vincent de Paul and Ramon Lull, Cardinal Lavigerie, Charles de Foucauld and Ernest Pachari—none of these last six, Africans, but taking Africa to their hearts and desiring to lift it to Christ.

Northern Africa of ancient days was a land of glories. After the fall of Carthage in the year before Christ, the whole Mediterranean shore and far inland became a mirror of the dazzling imperial splendor from Rome across the sea. During the scramble for power after the assassination of Julius Caesar, Mark Antony came to Egypt, where he met his "other half of the world," Cleopatra, and dragged Egypt to Rome. In the first Christian centuries, the Church flourished in Africa as vigorously as in Rome. There, too, she had her glorious martyrs, her outcasts, her blood-witnesses. From the African Tertullian came the unforgettable words that "the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church." The African Doctors and theologians were as significant as the Roman and the Byzantine in their witness to the Gospel; St. Augustine alone is great enough to have commanded the respect of the Christian world for the Church in Africa.

But something happened. Something was back 1000 years ago, which changed North Africa so completely that there is nothing left of those ancient glories to inspire them upon our boys who are now fighting upon that soil. First, there were the barbarian raids, swift and terrifying, in that movement from the North and West which finally brought Rome to her knees. When St. Augustine lay dying in Hippo (the present Bone), the Vandals were storming the city. Africa might have recovered from these invasions and restored her ancient glories even as Italy and Gaul and Spain did, by absorbing their conquerors and Christianizing them. But a further scourge swept over her northern rim—a scourge which left little almost untouched, which France threw back in the critical battle of Tours, and which engulfed Spain till the days of Ferdinand and Isabella.

This was the Mohammedan Conquest. It was so complete and devastating in North Africa, that today no link of continuity is left with the institutions of its Christian past. The Christian hero which now exist are of a later establishment, through the efforts of the French and the Spanish in the colonies where they have control.

For over a thousand years the fanatical Moslems (Mohammedans) have held firm. At different times, saintly Christians have tried to make the Cross of Christ prevail there once again. St. Francis of Assisi went in person to Morocco to speak of Christ to the Sultan, hoping by this pacific means to do what the Crusades had failed to do. St. Raymond of Peñafort, St. Raymond Nonnatus, St. John of Mathis, established a missionary Order to deliver the Christian captives from the Moslems. Ramon Lull, like Francis, devoted his life to the peaceful conquest of Islam for Christ.

In modern times, Cardinal Lavigerie organized the White Fathers exclusively for the African Missions. Charles de Foucauld, who had been a French soldier, spent a life of isolation in the Sahara to work for the remote Touareg there; and later, Ernest Pachari, another French soldier, did the same. All in all, the record of the Church in North Africa is heroic and glorious, and it is good for us to take the present moment of interest, so as to acquaint ourselves with this large portion of the Lord's Vineyard.

FIVE and TEN Years Ago

From Feb. 22, 1938, Edition
Approximately \$3,000,000 were moved to taxpayers of the City of Rochester during the previous year by operation of parochial schools on the voluntary contributions of the faithful. His Excellency, Bishop O'Hara declared in a statement to Rochester's three daily newspapers for the information of all taxpayers of the city.

From Feb. 24, 1938, Edition
His great good will toward the National Catholic Welfare Conference in the United States and his satisfaction with its multiple benevolent activities were confirmed by His Holiness Pope Pius XI in a 45-minute audience accorded at the Vatican to Archbishop Edward Mooney of Detroit, Chairman of the NCWC Administrative Board.

Facts and figures revealing that the Catholic majorities in North Ireland were being denied a vote in voting were released by the NCWC News Service from Belfast.