

Author of the universe; and he is a criminal, a murderer, who deals an exterminating blow to the incipient man, and drives back into nothingness a being to whom God designed to give a living body and an immortal soul. From this it follows that the young woman whose virtue has proved an insufficient guardian to her honor, when she seeks by abortion to save in the eyes of man the honor she has forfeited, incurs the additional and deeper guilt of murder in the eyes of God, the Judge of the living and the dead. Who can express what follows with regard to those women, who, finding themselves lawfully mothers, prefer to devastate with poison or with steel their wombs rather than bear the discomforts attached to the privilege of maternity, rather than forego the gaieties of a winter's balls, parties, and plays, or the pleasure of a summer's trips and amusement?" To all this I say *do manus*.

It is the testimony, too, of those who know, that in proportion as people become indolent, or fashionable, the temptation to produce abortion is increased; that in many circles it is absolutely a matter of boasting and vanity to tell the number of times they and their friends have been guilty of the deed. This must be owing to the fact that such do not know their deep guilt, or else the conscience is dead beyond all that language can describe.

The causes of this child-murder are to be found, often, in ignorance of its guilt,—the ease with which it is done and concealed,—the unwillingness to criminate one's self,—the loss of character,—the reign of extravagance and fashion, and the fear of childbed.

As to guilt, I want all to know that in the sight of God it is wilful murder. "The wilful killing of a human being, at any stage of its existence, is murder." It is quenching immortal existence,—it is destroying what, in a few months or weeks, all allow, would bear God's image; and if any one thinks she can do it without the guilt of murder, she is greatly mistaken. The very remembrance of this guilt has often upset the reason, and by remorse turned the doer into madness.

Very false notions prevail on this subject. It is thought and said to be safe to the mother. Anything but that. The shattered constitutions, the pale faces, the feebleness of future life, not unfrequently tumors and internal diseases, prostration of the vital powers, remorse, shame, and sometimes madness, tell the fearful results. "God requirereth that which is past," and never more surely than in this case.

It is pleaded that the health of the mother requires this. Nonsense. If she is too feeble to be a mother, let her not marry; but let her not dishonor and profane the holy name of wife by shirking her responsibilities. But as a matter of fact, the fairest, healthiest, happiest, most respected, and most useful women that have ever lived, have been the mothers of large families. It is the law of nature. Let my reader look around on the families of his acquaintances, and see if it be not so. The Bible everywhere holds up the thought that a great family is a special blessing. And if there be a beautiful sight in the world, it is the true mother surrounded by a large family of children.

It is thought that the parents who have a small family have healthier children. I more than doubt it. I have no belief in it. And if it were so, it is from these delicate organizations that the writers, the poets, the inventors, the geniuses of the generation often come. We cannot afford to lose them. The woman who, at this day, feels that to be the mother of living children "is the first, highest, and, in earlier times, almost universal lot," is worthy of all admiration and praise; and the woman who, to save herself from inconvenience or pain, or to be able to keep along with the giddy, fashionable ones, will deliberately destroy the child which in a few months would be dearer than her own life, deserves execration. How can it be that she will murder, unborn, what, if born, and if taken from her by death, she would mourn with the sorrow of Rachel?

As to danger—Tandieu reports that "in thirty-four cases of criminal abortion," where their history was known, twenty-two were followed, as a consequence, by death, and twelve were not. In fifteen cases necessarily induced by physicians, not one was fatal."

Is it not a shame to womanhood that physicians have to testify that they are appealed to almost constantly by mar-

ried women to aid them to abortionate, and that in proportion to numbers who thus appeal, and whose circumstances are alike, married women vastly preponderate over the unmarried?

The practice is a direct war against human society, the best good of the country, against the family order, against the health, the peace, the conscience, and the moral well-being of the mother, and against the child which is created for immortality, but shut from the light of earth by the last hand that should do it.

Since anæsthesia is able to carry through childbirth, divesting it of most of its horrors, and every way safe, and which I would earnestly recommend to be used, there is hardly an excuse left.

I appeal to our New England women, and to the women of my country, the daughters of an ancestry who never were spotted by the blood of innocents, who never stifled the natural longings of a mother's heart, and never quenched life immortal for the sake of ease or fashion, and ask them if it is so that they are so degenerated that they cannot meet the holiest position and duties ever imposed on woman.

If it be said that I have in any measure exaggerated the evil and the fashion of the day, I reply, I would not advise any one to challenge further disclosures—else we can show that France, with all her atheism, that Paris, with all her license, is not so guilty in this respect as is staid New England, at the present hour. Facts can be adduced that will make the ears tingle. But we don't want to divulge them; but we do want the womanhood of our day to understand that the thing can be no longer concealed, that commonness or fashion cannot do away with its awful guilt. It is deliberate, cold murder, and if anything short of the murderer's doom shall fall upon the perpetrators of it at the judgment, the reason will be, that there has been great ignorance of its guilt.

I have now done a painful duty, and have done it fearlessly. To the attention of the gentle, tender heart and conscience of woman I commend this subject with earnest prayer.

THE CLOUD WITH A DARK LINING.

There is a large pile of fresh letters lying before me—some from men unknown to me, some from men in high places,—East, West, North and South, all speaking to me about an article lately published in the *Congregationalist*, entitled "Fashionable Murder." A new sensation that! Why, when we, modest men of the quill, sit down to write, we seem to be communing only with the paper on which we are making letters. We can't realize that our thoughts will ever get off our sheet. But now I feel as if several thousands were peeping over my shoulders and saying, "What next?"

Almost all these letters vehemently urge me to take my pen once more and make an ink-picture of an evil, a calamity, and a sin, kindred to one already mentioned,—not less needing to be exposed, not less to be deprecated.

To the watchful eye of the physician, and to that of the far-seeing clergyman, too, it has been apparent that through our country our native population is not on the increase, but diminishing fast,—that our families now in the country will not average over three, or three and a fraction, of children born,—and that while our foreign population have large families, our own native American families are running out, and, at this rate, must and will entirely run out. The statistics presented to our legislatures on this subject are fearful. For a long time the hearts of the good have pondered and ached, and only physicians have spoken out. One cause of this distressing fact I endeavored to assign in the paper alluded to. A second and more general cause is now to be mentioned.

And here, too, the reader may shrug the shoulders and cry, "How can he be so indelicate?" Gentle reader, I can't be, and I won't be! and no one will accuse me of being so, except those who commit the sin! It is the wounded bird that flutters. "To the pure all things are pure," and those only will be shocked who do what I am to talk about—for many actually do things which they can't bear to hear mentioned. If there be indelicacy, it is in the facts, not in calling the attention to them. Is not that point clear?

The great fact is, that all over the land, families have few or no children.

The Puritan descendants are no less involved than the rest of the country.

The cause is, in addition to child-murder, an unwillingness to have children, and the taking of decided measures to prevent it.

It has become the fashion for parents to be leading round a solitary, lonely child, or possibly two, it being well understood, talked about, and boasted of, that they are to have no more! The means to prevent it are well understood, instrumentalities shamelessly sold and bought, and it is a glory that they are to have no more children! Married people dare do this, when they would not dare go to a fashionable Aborter. We are told that in one large, populous district of a beautiful Western city, not a single living Anglo-American child had been born in three years! Let my reader take up any twelve families, the best educated and the best supplied with worldly comforts, and count the children in them. No, it is an agreement between husband and wife that they will not have children, and they think it no sin to do so. This fashion threatens to desolate our land, and run our American families into non-existence. The colored women at the South, now free, but not knowing how to provide for their offspring, are playing the same game. There are next to no births among them at the present time, and at this rate, that race will run out also. Why should they not do as their educated, respectable, and Christian white sisters do? The squaws of our Indians have long done the same thing, till the race is almost extinct.

Now, the truth of the fact is, that while many women of our day are unwilling to forego ease, pleasure, freedom, and endure privation, and pain, and confinement, and rear children, there is still a very large number who lack that sympathy, kindness, and pity from their husbands by which their trials and burdens alone can be rendered tolerable. The conscience becomes dead, the instincts of the mother's heart are crushed by the very hand that vowed to uphold and comfort her. It is a refusal to share the burdens that often gives her the heart of the ostrich. But did not our noble mothers have the same trials? This is the whole difficulty condensely stated.

At the fall, two great laws were imposed on our race—the law of labor and the law of suffering. Man was appointed to labor and toil, and the labor and toil of our world fall chiefly on him. Woman was appointed to endure most of the suffering, and it mostly falls on her. There is no denying or getting round either of these laws. Generally, the husband usually wants children. He is disappointed if he has none. He is willing to toil, to run the risk of poverty and want, to support them, though, as I have already said, he may not do what he should to aid woman to bear her sorrows. But it is woman who, in our day, for the most part, shrinks from meeting her appointment. I think I speak within bounds when I say that, at least in nine cases out of ten, where the family is almost childless, she is to blame. But "where is the harm?—whose business is it?" Let me answer that question. (a.) It is a wrong done to yourself, woman dear. God has made no law that can be violated with impunity. What makes these motherless wives so feeble, so puny, so scrawny, so out of health? What makes the husbands go into temptation and sin, or else become dyspeptic and nervous? What takes away the glorious sanctity of the married relation, and makes the institution distrusted, and honors the man who lives in violation of the most solemn vows? It is as impossible to violate a law of God in the natural as it is in the moral world and not suffer. The health suffers—diseases easily come in,—the being becomes unnatural, gnarled, and unhappy. The suffering and sorrows among those who refuse to meet the laws of maternity are vastly greater than among those who do. And what are the joys of parties of fashion, or freedom from the suffering which God has appointed, compared with those of a true mother with a large family of children around her? I could mention such a mother who reared up a large family of sons and daughters. On one occasion she was found with her four sons sitting on stools at her feet as they sat when boys. One was governor, a second was a judge, the third was in Congress, and the fourth was a general in the U. S. regular army. The daughters, four, moved in silver orbits also. Can any language describe the joys of

that widowed mother? "But," you may say, "these were marked and distinguished men." So they were; but did this mother know this when she was rearing and training them?

(b.) It is a wrong done to your family.

It is a disappointment to the husband, it is violating laws that may not be set aside, it is making way for the wife to be feeble, sickly, unhappy, probably diseased, and to meet an early death. It is bringing shadows over the house, which might be full of sunbeams. It is almost throwing away life, leaving none to cheer you through life, comfort you in old age, imitate and mourn you when dead. To woman is committed the trust of peopling the world, and the guardianship of the dearest trusts of humanity. Dares she refuse these high trusts?

(c.) It is a wrong done to the Church of God.

You violate and set aside the first command of God ever given to our race, and the first given after the flood, and you scorn his wisdom when he says, "Lo! children are an heritage from the Lord." It is the design of God that his Church shall be propagated, instructed, and fitted for his service in the family; but if Christian families, who were appointed to this very purpose, and who have the education and the means thus to rear up sons and daughters for Christ, refuse to do it, they imperil the deepest interest with which humanity comes in contact. Where are the strong working men, the hard workers in the vineyard of God, the pillars of the Church to come from, if you Christian husband and wife, feel that you may set aside the great plans of God's mercy? You wrong the Church, you wrong Christ, you wrong the world. What if you do pass through life, seeking your ease and comfort, leaving the world no larger or better, and no influence to be handed down to the future? What then?

The sin of Sodom! What was it? What led to it? Very likely the very fashion of our day was the stepping-stone to the fashionable sin of Sodom! We are drifting fast that way. O Christian husband and wife, do you know you are pitching your tent towards Sodom? "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?" You sometimes hear people laugh at the large families of clergymen. You see the reason why they are large. They have too much conscience to violate known laws of God. The great object of the marriage institution—the rich blessing left from Eden—is not that the husband may live in legal fornication, and the wife in legal prostitution, but fulfil the first great command in the Bible. O woman! honored, loved, cheered, and upheld, while you meet the great responsibilities for which you were created, can you be thrust down from the high and holy position of being a true and faithful mother, to be a toy, a plaything, and something far lower than that? O women of America! women of this century! are you to see foreigners rear up large families, under all their disadvantages, while you blessed as no other women in the world are blessed, refuse to meet the high responsibilities and the holy joys which God lays at your feet? Depend on it, if we continue to do as we are doing in this respect, the wrath of God will burn towards our land, and His indignation will glow till we are consumed. He will not be mocked, nor have His own institutions trampled on or despised. In what way He will first strike, or where the fire that will light the pathway of His thunderbolts will first kindle, I pretend not to say. But I feel perfectly sure that this one sin, unrepented of, and unreformed of, is enough to sink our nation in guilt, and to bring the angel with his "sword bathed in heaven" to destroy us.

It is not probable that I shall ever speak on this subject again, and I desire, therefore, to make my voice heard distinctly by the Church of God, when I say, O Christian husband! Christian wife! I pray you don't do what you would be ashamed to have me name—in order to avoid the laws of your being; because thereby you are placing yourselves on the ground of rebellion, in the defilements of sin, and in company of murderers. You don't murder ministers, missionaries, angels of light, after they are born—but you take it upon you to say they shall not be born! May God forgive you. Could the voice of the universe be gathered into one utterance, it would be, "Obey law, and you live; disobey, and you perish."

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