

CONTRACEPTION

THEORY. HISTORY AND PRACTICE

MARIE STOPES

Contraception

(BIRTH CONTROL)

Its Theory, History and Practice
A Manual for the Medical and Legal
Professions

BY

Marie Carmichael Stopes

*Doctor of Science, London; Doctor of Philosophy, Munich;
Fellow of University College, London; Fellow of the
Linnean and Geological Societies, and The Royal Society
of Literature; Author of "Married Love," etc.*

NEW AND ENLARGED EDITION

With an Introduction by the late

PROF. SIR WILLIAM BAYLISS, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S.

And Introductory Notes by SIR JAMES BARR, M.D., LL.D., F.R.C.P.,

DR. C. ROLLESTON, AND DR. JANE HAWTHORNE



FIRST EDITION

"Dr. Stopes sets out with precision and no little literary grace the problem of contraception. . . ." "Much of the evidence contained in the book is quite unobtainable elsewhere."—*The Lancet*.

"The book is valuable, and should be read by all interested in racial welfare."—*The Medical Review*.

"Some such book as this had to be written, and this is very well written."—Sir Archdall Reid in *Nature*.

"Dr. Stopes may justly be called the first philosopher of contraception."—*The New Generation*.

"This problem will undoubtedly occupy a more prominent position in the future, and to those who wish to study it we can recommend this volume."—*Journal of State Medicine*.

"This highly important question cannot be studied completely and dispassionately without reference to her distinctly remarkable book."—*The Hospital and Health Review*.

"The book is unique, and marks a new era in literature germane to this subject."—*The Medical Times*.

"Nurses and midwives who work among the poor should be able to give advice upon this topic when called upon to do so, and for this purpose they will find Dr. Stopes's work invaluable."—*The Nursing Mirror*.

"The book is supremely important, and its author is one of the most important women of our time, for, almost single-handed, she is fighting a crusade which, successful or the reverse, cannot fail to have a momentous effect on our civilisation,"—*The Scottish Nation*.

"This book will meet with opposition only from those who desire to suppress the facts."—Professor Carr-Saunders in *The Nation and Athenæum*.

"From a medical point of view there can be little doubt that there are cases in which the prevention of child-bearing in married women is called for, and in which it would be difficult and indeed undesirable to attain this object without the use of one of the methods here described. The simplicity of that advised by Dr. Stopes and its probable efficiency commend its adoption when medical opinion is in favour of the avoidance of pregnancy. If, as Dr. Stopes believes, the adoption of such a method would prevent the frequent production of abortion, very considerable benefit would ensue to the health of women. . . ." "There can be no doubt as to her sincerity of purpose, and the labour involved in the compilation of the book. It contains much information not procurable in any other volume, and may be recommended for perusal by members of the medical profession."—*Medical Journal of Australia*.

SECOND EDITION

The Lancet said :

"Like the first, this edition contains a very well documented history of the theory and practice of contraception. . . . Much that is contained in these chapters is original. . . . This edition amplifies and consolidates the status achieved by the first."

Press opinions of Revised and Enlarged Edition :

THIRD EDITION

"The book deals very fully with all aspects of the subject, and nothing essential seems to have been omitted. We believe that the argument of opponents respecting the physical harmfulness to the woman of contraceptive measures has been much exaggerated, and that simple measures like those advocated may be pursued without detriment. A fuller and wider knowledge of contraception and all that it may mean for the individual and the race is desirable among medical men that it may be judiciously passed on by them to the general public, and this new edition of Dr. Marie Stopes's book will be found to give all the information that may be required."—*Nature*.

"Much interesting information is added upon recently popularised contraceptive methods."—*Lancet*.

"In her descriptions of methods and appliances the author is clear and definite."—*Glasgow Medical Journal*.

"The advice given by Dr. Stopes on the establishment of municipal clinics is sound and practical. Dr. Stopes's book gives the medical profession and nurses full advice and all necessary details as to treatment."—*Nursing Times*.

"One can well understand the attitude of Lord Buckmaster, who was reported in the press as saying in the House of Lords:—

"The man who will devise some perfectly certain and simple method by which birth can be put into the control of married people will be as great a benefactor of the human race as Simpson or Lister."

Dr. Stopes has gone very far towards the goal of meriting such an encomium, for one can scarcely imagine any work more systematic in design, nor one in which such design has been more effectively carried out. . . . Dr. Stopes's work seems altogether admirable."—*Medical Times*.

"It is not possible here to recount the evidence and enlarge upon the arguments which Dr. Stopes has collected and enumerated, but the truth of it all will be only too apparent to those who have worked in a social or medical capacity in any big industrial area.

"Contraception is a problem which confronts medical men in all spheres of the profession every day of their lives, and it is one, alas, which in the majority of cases they have been ill-equipped to tackle. Here, however, in a concise form is stored much valuable knowledge to aid them in their task, and there can be no hesitation in recommending that this book should be in the hands of all who are interested in the health of the nation and the future of the human race."—*Medical World*.

CONTRACEPTION

(BIRTH CONTROL)

ITS THEORY, HISTORY AND PRACTICE

Author's Preface to the Third Edition

THE technical details of the Control of *Conception* attract increasing attention from the Medical and Scientific world. Hence it has appeared necessary somewhat to enlarge the scope of this book and to include more explicit details about various methods, some of which I felt it inexpedient to do more than mention in earlier editions, appearing whilst the whole subject was still vulnerable to the attacks of controversialists unwilling to treat this particular branch of medical science in a scientific and impartial manner.

This treatise aims essentially at being of use to the medical practitioner and it is inadmissible to omit description of certain methods because the advisability of their use is still a matter for discussion among experts. Hence descriptions and illustrations are added to this volume of the Luft Pessär (though it appears impracticable for general use) and the widely-known "Graefenberg Ring" and others formerly omitted or merely mentioned.

Since the Permissive Memorandum of the Ministry of Health (see text, p. 360) and the sanction of a large and increasing number of local authorities, numerous Officers of Health are faced

CONTRACEPTION

with demands that they shall institute clinical instruction so that many are specially interested in the simplest technique which will successfully meet the requirements of clinics for the poor. With the foundation of birth-control clinics in many countries a number have now been established long enough to yield statistical data about various methods.

The fresh evidence on such points gathered together in this book will, I hope, be useful. It is especially encouraging to find that the simplest and cheapest technique of all (see p. 161) yields the highest degree of security and reliability so far as clinical records go at present. And it is also a source of personal satisfaction to me to find that my 1918 "fundamental formula" (that a vaginal rubber cap associated with a chemical is the *best* for the normal) is endorsed by the general consensus of clinical opinion (see p. 169).

One new point in the historical section of the book is of outstanding, indeed startling, interest to those who really care for the recognition of priority; and that is a reference I found in an old German book published in the year *eighteen thirty-eight* (1838) to the use of vaginal rubber caps (see p. 296), the original invention of which has hitherto been widely attributed to Mensinga, whose work was published in the eighteen-eighties.

In conclusion, I have to thank a large number of medical and other learned men and women from all parts of the world for their generous appreciation of this book, which more than counteracts the sporadic tendency of others to benefit by the

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION

laboriously accumulated references and the numerous original facts here presented, which some restate while refraining from citation of their source or any acknowledgment of a very obvious indebtedness to these pages.

Finally, I am most happy that in this, the third and enlarged edition, I am able to cut out a considerable amount of matter from the text of the earlier editions which might legitimately be described as "propaganda," for in the decade's work for *Constructive Birth-Control* the propaganda has so successfully penetrated the strongholds of various powers in the community that its work being accomplished it can now be omitted.

M. C. S.

Hindhead,

March, 1931.

Author's Preface to the Second Edition

THE rapid calls for reprints of this work, and the many requests for further information from interested members of the medical profession have encouraged me to prepare a Second Edition. About sixty pages have been added, embodying a variety of further items throughout the text. Two useful new practical methods are described. These are simplifications of technique, and meet a good many of the objections raised by those who desire to see contraceptive methods adopted where they are most needed, and who have, in the past, not been satisfied with the various means available. They are among the harvest of results from the first pioneer Clinic, and are described on p. 135.

An interesting addition to the historical section is the discovery of extraordinarily early advertisements for "condoms," namely in 1783 (see p. 266), which pushes back considerably the known date at which preventives were publicly advertised and sold on a large scale.

In the section dealing with the Clinic will be found a brief account of the most important physiological discovery arising out of my clinical experience, namely, the detection of the existence of a

CONTRACEPTION

definite percentage of women in whom "interlocking" (as I have named it) does take place or potentially may take place, and whose structure thus involves a consideration of contraceptive means on lines not taken into account by others. It may seem surprising that anything should have been left to be discovered about the ordinary anatomy of human beings, but it is evident that a new addition to anatomy and physiology has been one of the harvests of our pioneer Clinic.

For the sake of completing this text-book, descriptions of, and an additional plate illustrating, various metal devices used on the Continent, have been added, although I do not advise their use.

In conclusion, may I warmly thank innumerable friendly correspondents, principally in the medical profession of this and other countries, who have cheered and encouraged me by their approval and co-operation.

In spite of the fact that a few reactionary medicals are voluble against contraception, one may safely say to-day that the majority of the medical profession are in favour of its study and suitable application.

MARIE C. STOPES

Leatherhead,
February, 1927.

Author's Preface to the First Edition

THIS work was begun four years ago at the request of some distinguished medical men, and I have since been kept at the arduous toil by repeated and insistent demands from medical and scientific people all over the world.

To those acquainted with the details of the making of books there will be no need to emphasize the amount of labour involved in compiling a work on a theme about which so many scattered and miscellaneous opinions have been published, and never cleared up in any comprehensive manual.

In this book I hope at any rate to have gathered together and set out clearly all that is valuable of available human knowledge on our theme, and thus to have cleared the way for the initiation of deeper researches. I hope also to make easier the adoption of the best practical means of contraception by methods varying to suit specific cases.

In this book will be found not only that which is already contained in the scattered literature on the subject, but also new matter, both scientific and historical. Among the latter items undoubtedly the most interesting are the hitherto undetected and unpublished manuscripts of FRANCIS PLACE which will be found in Chapter X.

CONTRACEPTION

My endeavour has been to present the whole theme in language as simple as is consistent with scientific precision, so that not only experts may find it easy to grasp as a whole. Those who know most of the subject will best recognize the amount of new material in this book.

I am indebted to many distinguished medical and legal friends who have helped and encouraged me throughout the production of this book, but who desire not to be thanked by name; and my thanks are especially due to those who most kindly have written introductions and prefatory notes.

The generosity, appreciation and encouragement of those whom not only I, but the great world reverences and esteems, have filled me with a deep gratitude that I have been allowed to accomplish a task which I can only wish were better done.

I trust the work will be of use to those whom I desire to serve.

MARIE CARMICHAEL STOPES

Givons Grove,
Leatherhead, 1923.

Introduction by the late Professor Sir William Bayliss, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S.

Professor of General Physiology, University College, London.

IT is with great pleasure that I take the opportunity given me to express a word of welcome to this book, which must have involved an enormous amount of work on the part of the authoress. I feel it indeed an honour to have even a small share in the beneficent efforts which we associate with her name.

So far as I am aware, there does not exist in any language a manual of this kind, giving a complete history of the subject, with full documentary evidence, together with a scientific account and criticism of the various methods of contraception advocated from time to time. It cannot fail to be of real service. We are led to form an opinion as to what may be the best method in any given case and warned from the use of those likely to be injurious. As is pointed out, we do not yet possess a universal and infallible one, but the best of those we have are of inestimable value as being almost invariably to be depended upon. The fact should incite further research, but this is difficult. No doubt, the records kept at the "Mothers' Clinic" will in time lead to much valuable information.

If I feel bound to make one or two reservations,

CONTRACEPTION

which in any case are only my personal views and do not concern the main arguments of the book, I hope that they may be taken rather as evidence of the sincerity of my appreciation of the work as a whole.

As a physiologist, I could wish that stronger evidence were to be obtained of the absorption by the one sex of the secretory products of the other sex. It must be admitted, however, that the evidence given is very strong and that cogent proof is difficult. [See, however, confirmatory results obtained since this was written, *passim*.]

The other point is that it seems to me that it is unwise in the present state of knowledge to suggest, as appears to have been done, anything further than a limitation of the increase in stocks *known* to be bad, such as those with hereditary disease of body or mind. Unfortunately, the worst difficulty is with the mentally defective. In any case, such bad stocks are to be found in all classes of society. It is a regrettable fact, on the other hand, that ignorance is but too often shown by the wealthy where it has more opportunity for mischief. Even the so-called "educated classes" cannot be said to be free from it. In opportunities for learning methods of birth control, however, the wealthy have until recently been in a much more favourable position than the poor. It is quite possible that it is this factor which has contributed most to the lower rate of multiplication of the former class. Is it a fact that people of subnormal mentality do actually increase at a greater rate than the normal individuals of the same position

INTRODUCTION

in life? It must be very difficult to answer this question, although people of subnormal mentality are found in all classes. I do not believe that there is any essential difference of opinion between Dr. Marie Stopes and myself on these questions.

To my mind, the chief arguments for Birth Control are two, which are in many ways identical. The one is the relief of the mother from the results of frequent and repeated pregnancies, as is so well brought out in this book. It is inevitable that these results are more exaggerated in the poor than in those with more possessions, more especially as concerns the fate of the children, but it is only a matter of degree. The other argument is that which, so far as I know, Dr. Marie Stopes has the honour of bringing out into a clear light; I mean the possibility of a normal and beautiful married love. I may be allowed to recall that, writing in 1914, I expressed the hope that the sexual act would not only be deprived of all unworthy suggestions and associations, but would come to be looked upon as entirely noble and good. No one has contributed more to the ultimate attainment of this result than has Dr. Marie Stopes, and the courageous advocacy of birth control is an essential part of the service she has done. She has rightly insisted that the sexual act is of benefit physically, mentally and spiritually, and must be so regarded in itself and apart from its other purpose, also a noble one when properly used, of creating new souls.

If I may venture to say so, it seems to me that the question should be looked upon as one of normal,

CONTRACEPTION

physiological behaviour and, for that reason, practical instruction should be distinct from the cure of disease. The scope of the medical profession needs to be enlarged on the health side, with a different kind of training, not so much with an eye on disease as on health. If, as seems likely, the amount of knowledge of disease required at the present time is too overwhelming, is it too much to hope for a new class of "health officers," as we may call them?

Again, let me offer a hearty welcome to this new book, which can but add to the contributions which Dr. Marie Stopes has already made to the happiness of mankind. I sincerely hope that it will be widely read and taken to heart.

WILLIAM BAYLISS

Introductory Note by Sir James Barr, M.D., LL.D., F.R.C.P., &c.

Ex-President, British Medical Association.

K NOWING well the splendid work which DR. MARIE STOPES has long carried on in trying to raise humanity out of the slough of despond, I have much pleasure in complying with her request for a foreword to her book on Contraceptives.

Personally I have always approached the subject from the racial view-point; how is birth control likely to affect the future of the race? Would not Nature's method of the elimination of the unfit, and the survival of the fittest, which in the past produced some splendid examples of humanity, not surpassed in the present day notwithstanding our boasted progress, be as good as any process of artificial selection? Man is a rebel against Nature's laws and refuses to be weeded out merely for the benefit of futurity. Moreover Nature's methods are cruel and have no regard for the individual, her chief concern is with the preservation of the race.

In highly civilized countries such as England our altruism carries our sympathies to the most helpless, and while the fit have to shift for themselves the most degenerate have every consideration extended to them at the expense of the more worthy citizens. Nature's method of adapting the individual to the