

Family Planning In N.Z.

This article, written by Mrs. Forde, secretary of the Family Planning Assn. of New Zealand, tells of the work which that movement is doing. It will, I feel sure, be of interest to many countrywomen.—TUI.

THE Family Planning Association came into being as the result of the publishing of the MacMillan Report in 1936. That report showed: (1) That the abortion rate in New Zealand was extremely high; (2) that most women attempted, by some method, to space their families, both for economic and for health reasons; and (3) that the general public was so uninformed on these matters as to be practically at the mercy of quacks and charlatans. Contraceptive methods were largely haphazard, and when they failed, abortion was resorted to, in complete ignorance of the risk involved.

By

FREDA FORDE

Secretary of the Assn.

To meet this state of affairs the Government Committee of Inquiry recommended among other things: (1) That hospital departments be established where contraceptive advice could be given to those who, in the doctor's opinion, should have permanent or temporary relief from child-bearing; and (2) that a more rational and wholesome outlook on sex be encouraged by the teaching of biology and physiology in our schools.

Neither of these recommendations has yet been carried out, and as I said at the beginning, it was this state of affairs that brought the Family Planning Association into being. We are a branch of the Family Planning Association of Great Britain, which is under the presidency of Lord Horder, physician to the late King George.

What the Association Does.

THERE are three main things that we work for: (1) To give those requiring it, information which would enable them to obtain sound contraceptive advice. The Association is concerned with spacing, not limiting, of children, so that each child will be wanted and welcomed, and the mother will not be harassed by the fear of too frequent pregnancies. Nowadays, another reason why a mother does not want her babies in too quick a succession is the difficulty of getting help

ECZEMA

SENSITIVE PEOPLE feel eczema acutely. The continued irritation, the unsightly eruptions and the uncertainty where the trouble will next spread makes them feel almost ashamed.

Eczema is not due to dirt, but to the fact that certain skins react badly to various forms of irritation (internal or external) and poor general health increases the liability.

Since there is a great tendency for eczema to spread and to become chronic, early local treatment is imperative, and the best salve for this purpose is DOAN'S Ointment. It penetrates to the true skin where the inflammation lies, is antiseptic and healing and quickly allays the irritation. DOAN'S Ointment is also good for other itching skin complaints and for the relief of piles. Buy a tin to-day, but, be sure you get DOAN'S.

DOAN'S OINTMENT

in the home. Yet another reason for sound contraceptive advice is that it would do away with much voluntary abortion. This practice is much more common than is generally realised, and two of its most serious aspects are that many women die from sepsis following abortion, while many others are left sterile. Our job as an Association is to recommend the best books on these subjects, and to act as a connection link between enquirers and doctors, whom we know are qualified to give sound contraceptive advice and who are also willing to do so.

Sex Education For Children.

OUR second object is to encourage women to seek medical advice for sterility, minor gynaecological ailments, and difficulties connected with the marriage relationship. This is an important part of our work, and at the moment we are investigating into why there are so many miscarriages. Can a cause be found, can it be treated, are doctors sufficiently interested in this matter, etc.? It seems important to investigate with a view to stopping this terrible wastage of possible lives, and wanted ones too. In this, too, we recommend specialists in such matters.

Our third, and by no means the least, important aim is the spreading of sex education. Sex instruction should start when the tiny tot asks his first question. And the proper person to answer this question is, quite definitely, the parent. Parents should realise that sex is one of the natural instincts which is given to everyone, just like the desire for food or sleep. They must also recognise that the child is a naturally curious and inquisitive being, who wants to know the reason for everything, and is usually perfectly satisfied with a truthful answer, but is very quickly dissatisfied with an

SILENCE

How lovely is silence!

Deep as the shade
Of dark and motionless trees
In a hidden glade.

Cool as a white, clear stream,
Laving the mind
With the dream-enchanted quiet
Music leaves behind.

Still the heart like a star
In the shadowy height
Of a sky remote and dim
In the darknesses of night.

Soundless as water that wells
From a floor of stone,
How lovely is silence—flowing
From depths unknown.

—Una Auld.

evasion. Parents, therefore, will need to have information about their own sexual make-up, in order to answer truthfully and accurately the children's questions as they come. There are books which are most helpful on these subjects, the names of which we would be only too glad to pass on.

In adolescent years such preliminary sex education will enable parents to discuss sex difficulties with their children in an open and understanding manner, and the children will never feel they have been let down by their parents in matters which affect them so vitally. They will also never have the need to seek their information from other, and usually undesirable, sources. It is generally recognised now that ignorance on these matters is at the root of most of the social evils of these times.

I hope this brief outline of the Family Planning Association and its work has interested you, and has shown you what a great scope there is for it. Reliable contraceptive information is still far from widely known, many women suffer in greater or less degree for years from minor gynaecological ailments, many of which could so easily be fixed up, and, thirdly, education on sex matters is sadly lacking. So let us resolve right now, to

start on a course of reliable reading, both for our own sakes and that of our children.

The Association will gladly assist country women with advice if they will write to Mrs. F. Forde, Secretary, Family Planning Association of New Zealand, P.O. Box 751, Wellington, and further information on the work of the movement will also be given where desired.



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