

from others. The father, if he stops to think about it, may realize how large a place sex fills in the idle conversation of men. The jokes that are told, some of them with real humor, often arouse morbid curiosity in the subject. Many fathers who take an active and unblushing part in such conversations with "the boys" actually are afraid to talk to their own sons about sex matters. Boys and girls too frequently are obliged to satisfy their natural curiosity and seek information from those who are almost as ignorant as themselves or from promiscuous rakes, and prostitutes. Sex instruction is a vital part of education; why leave it to the worst kinds of teachers? Fortunately, in recent years, a realization of the importance of proper sex instruction has come to thousands of parents, and the problem they face is how best to convey this information to their children. This Booklet is primarily intended to help meet this need.

Logically the parents should instruct their children in these matters. It is well for a father to teach his sons, a mother her daughters. School-teachers in classes on botany, biology, and natural science can help in a wise and straightforward way. Few ministers of the gospel have had the courage to attempt the subject with Bible-school classes; they usually meet with opposition from parents and unmarried persons in their congregations. When parents are afraid to instruct their children, or feel that they are incapable of expounding the subject, the boy or girl should be sent to the family physician for the necessary information. As a rule, however, doctors are not the best teachers, and many of them will try to cover up their own embarrassment by resorting to technical language that children cannot comprehend. It is the object of this booklet to help parents to know what to teach their children, and also to give them a better understanding of their own sex problems.

The present generation demands a great deal more instruction about sex than sufficed for our grandparents. Reticence between boys and girls is swiftly vanishing. They talk much more freely about these things today than they did at the beginning of the

century. Women and girls wear more revealing clothing than their grandmothers. Great strides have been made in curing of venereal disease but the cure is slow and painful. Divorce is increasing, and is even fashionable in some circles. The automobile has taken the place of the parlor and veranda for "petting." New standards have been set up and to some extent caution has been thrown to the winds, whether we like it or not. These conditions call for more complete instruction and understanding about sex than ever before. Don'ts have little weight; positive knowledge gives much better guidance and protection.

Because of the dangers connected with these shifting standards, public sex education in the schools is being advocated by the U. S. Public Health Service and many educational agencies. That which has long been barred from the curriculum of the public school, with some notable exceptions, is now being urged as a necessary part of character formation. So much instruction as is deemed necessary to form normal and wholesome sex relations and intelligent sex behavior is being included in the program of many schools. This is done, not by introducing courses on sex education, but by including the subject in other well-established courses, as hygiene, physiology, botany, biology, and ethics. One caution is necessary. Unlike other subjects which seek to awaken interest and arouse curiosity in their subject-matter, sex is taught as a direct answer to a curiosity and interest which already exist in the minds of pupils. The thirst for knowledge along this line calls for careful guidance by the teacher. Evasion by a prudish teacher only increases the curiosity of the pupils.

While instruction by both parents and teachers should include warnings against excesses, dangers of venereal infection and morbid mental disorders, the major part of the instruction should be constructive. A straightforward explanation of the operations of the sex organs and functions is better than the negative procedure of trying to frighten the child away from that which nature insists upon. But the warnings also have their place.