

**GYNECOLOGICAL AND
OBSTETRICAL
MONOGRAPHS: STERILITY
AND CONCEPTION**

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Gynecological and obstetrical monographs: Sterility and conception by Charles Gardner Child

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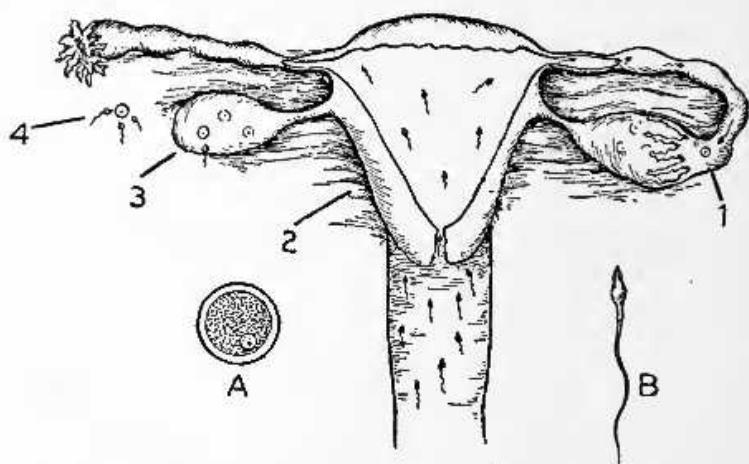
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CHARLES GARDNER CHILD

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SCHMATIC DRAWING SHOWING DIFFERENT POINTS WHERE CONCEPTION TAKES PLACE.

A., ovum. B., spermatozoa. 1, tubal conception. 2, uterine conception.
 3, ovarian conception. 4, abdominal conception.

STERILITY AND CONCEPTION

BY

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GYNECOLOGICAL AND OBSTETRICAL MONOGRAPHS



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PREFACE

The following study of sterility and some of its allied conditions is undertaken in the hope that it may help thoughtful students to attain at least a comprehensive knowledge of this most important subject. It is intended as much for the general practitioner, to whom these cases as a rule first apply, as for the specialist, but it is the latter, however, who should constitute the court of last appeal and sit in final judgment on the respective merits of each case.

It is most unfortunate that the great progress of theoretical knowledge in recent times has not always been accompanied by a corresponding advancement in practical interpretation and we have, therefore, to admit that a great deal of what is to-day called "exact science" is still very far from being such.

The vast extension of medical knowledge in the past fifty years, which has been made possible only by a division into specialties, has rendered it nigh unto impossible for one mind to cover the whole field of medicine with equal thoroughness. My own command of the various branches of medicine is uneven and defective and, even were I largely endowed with the artistic faculty of comprehensive presentation, I should still be unable to write a complete treatise on sterility.

To-day, more than ever before, woman is called upon to play a most exacting rôle in life and one in which the question of mental capacity has assumed a very great proportion. At times it takes such precedence over almost everything else, even to the extent of completely overshadowing all consideration of her physical well-being, that it is quite possible to suppose at some time in the future, should this continue, there might develop a race of women who would be such in little else but name. This could only be brought about, however, at the expense of their child-bearing function and, if they should thus refuse to breed, or succeed in making breeding a physical impossibility, then would come the end of the race.

We are facing at the present time in the United States a higher rate of sterility and a lower rate of fertility among our native-born women than is any other civilized nation; the estimated rate of sterility

for all classes being between twenty and twenty-five per cent, while the number of those absolutely sterile is about twelve per cent.

Accompanying this steady increase in sterility, there has also been a proportionate decrease in fertility in almost every civilized country in which records are available, so that woman's progressive unfruitfulness is really a question of world-wide importance. In the United States, the increase in sterility and the decrease in fertility has developed much more rapidly than in most other countries. While it has been estimated from reliable sources that the rate of fertility in the United States, at the close of the eighteenth century, was five children to a marriage, no such favorable conditions exist any longer. In one century our rate of sterility has mounted from two to over twenty per cent, making us the least fertile of the civilized countries, speaking of native-born and not immigrant classes. Thus we present the truly appalling condition where our sterility is far greater and our fertility much lower than any time in the history of the nation.

The existence of such a condition as this is of sufficient seriousness to call imperatively for a remedy, and it is only by giving the subject the serious consideration and wide publicity which it deserves that we can hope to bring to the people a realizing sense of the ominous fact that, unless they wake up, they will be called upon to face race extinction in the comparatively near future.

In the present monograph, I have, with full realization of its many shortcomings, given an exposition of the problem with the endeavor to help in the treatment of this growing social blight so vitally concerned with the welfare and survival of the race.

CHARLES G. CHILD, JR.

NEW YORK CITY

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