

# **THE ETHICS OF MARRIAGE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649176533

The ethics of marriage by H. S. Pomeroy

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**H. S. POMEROY**

**THE ETHICS  
OF MARRIAGE**



## PREFACE.

---

THE matters here treated have been on my mind and heart for many years. Heart-sickening facts have come to my notice within the past few months, and I feel it my duty to send out this warning in regard to what I consider the first and greatest danger of our family and national life. I believe the prevention or destruction of unborn human life to be, pre-eminently, *the American sin*, and that, if not checked, it will sooner or later be our calamity. This sin has its roots in a low and false idea of marriage on the part of some, and in others it is fostered by false standards of modesty.

On our statute books are excellent and ample laws bearing upon this crime, but public opinion is such that these laws are nearly a dead letter.

This appeal is made to the middle class—the rank and file of Americans—because they are the makers of public opinion, *and because they are, often unwittingly, the principal offenders.*

It is understood that preachers find it easier and more agreeable to denounce the sins of

---

other times, places, and castes than those to which they themselves belong ; how difficult and unpleasant a task it is to do the contrary I never before realized ; my courage has nearly failed me many times.

One may easily denounce the Mormons, because they are far away, and their peculiar sin is not shared by one's audience.

It is not a very difficult matter to work against intemperance, because the drunkard has little part in the moulding of popular sentiment ; but to use voice or pen in matters the free treatment of which must touch and grieve many whom one meets in the daily round of social and industrial relations, many even of those whom one holds near and dear, is not only a bitter and ungracious task, but also a most delicate one.

It was intended to give some statistics as to the spread of the evils touched upon, and to furnish more illustrations of them ; but it is almost impossible to obtain really trustworthy statistics, and the estimates made by medical professors and others who have referred to this crime are so appalling that the public is hardly prepared to receive them, and might derive more harm than benefit from seeing them in print. After carefully sifting the illustrations, there are but few left which may be used with-

out grieving many who would see, or think they saw, themselves in the persons mentioned.

As these pages have been written there has crowded upon me a company of those who were *not* used as illustrations, and the number has grown until the sad and reproachful faces have haunted me like a nightmare.

While it has not been possible to treat this subject in such a way as to make the whole book suitable for reading aloud before a mixed company, yet there has been an honest endeavor to avoid that which might arouse or foster impure fancies, or offend a well-balanced judgment and refined taste. Some most excellent people will doubtless feel that it had been better to leave some points covered by the cloak which society, if not charity, throws over them ; but if such might have knowledge of all the facts possessed by the writer, there is little doubt that many of them would wish the matter probed more deeply still.

Others may feel that undue space is given to side questions, such as woman's work, home-making, the higher education of women, etc. All that concerns woman's education and employment has an important bearing, near or remote, on the question of maternity, and it is impossible to treat the sin against parenthood

---

without touching upon what is called the Woman Question.

I am not a pessimist—quite the contrary. However doubtful the present may seem, I feel confident of the ultimate future ; whatever may be the sins and shortcomings of society to-day, I believe those of a century ago were graver and more numerous.

A large share of the American sin is the result of ignorance of the laws of parenthood. I am so confident of the strength of character and the common-sense of the average American, that I am sure that very many of them will only need to be shown their mistakes in their theory and practice of marriage in order to set about correcting them. We Americans are an intense people ; if we surpass other peoples in some forms of foolishness and vice, we are at least teachable, and when we really undertake a reform, I believe we excel most others in the thoroughness of our work.

This little book can scarcely be said to have been written—it has simply grown. The first intention was to make a good-sized tract ; that grew into the dimensions of a pamphlet, and *that* finally developed into a little book, which has been written in odd moments from a busy life, much of the work having been done when head and hand were in need of rest ; further-



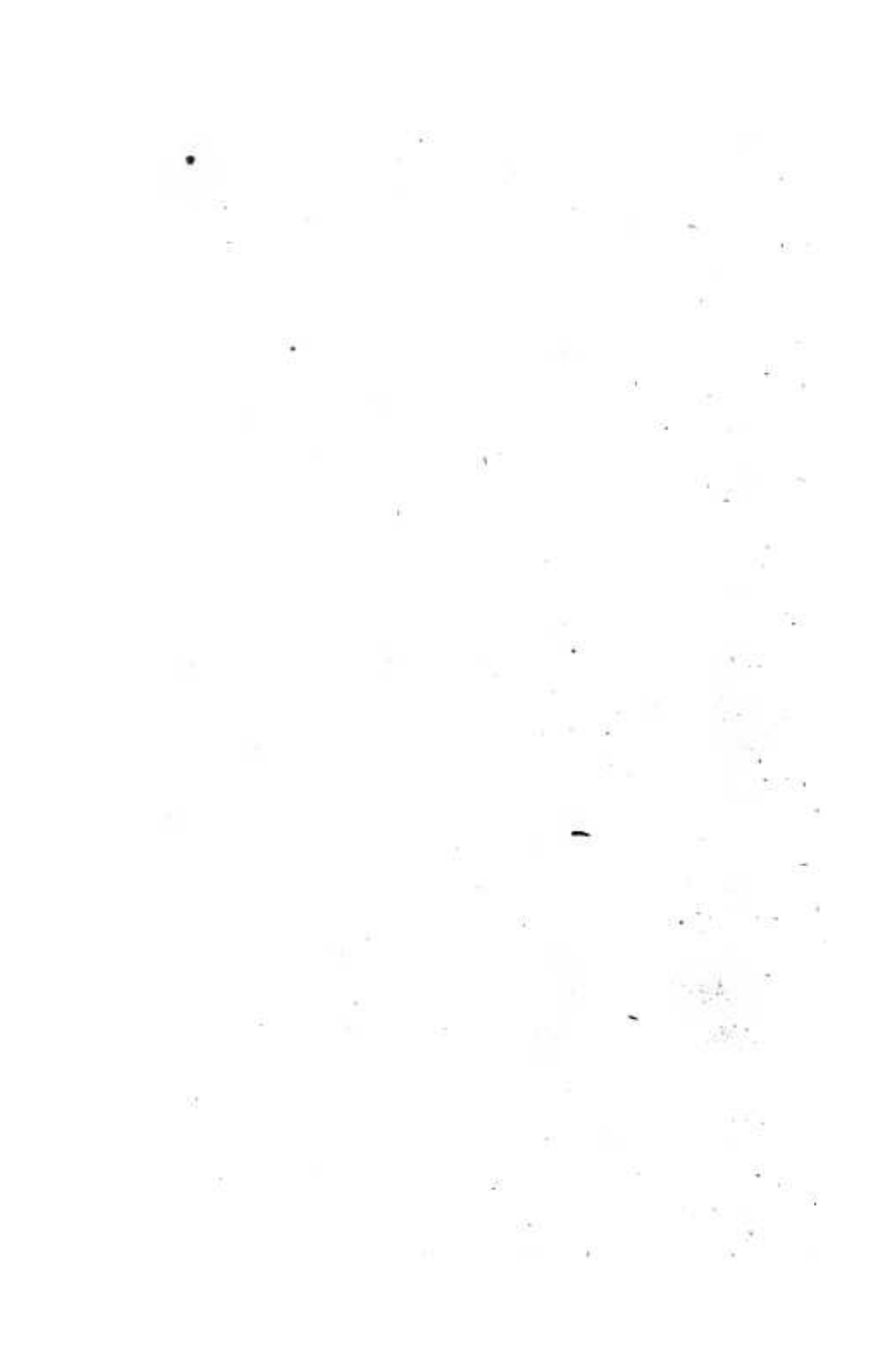
---

more, the author is a physician and not a writer, and this little book makes no pretensions to literary merit. There is also no attempt to exhaust the subject—this is simply a cry of warning, which is intended to set people to thinking and to bespeak their respect and attention for that which others will doubtless, in time, express to them by voice or pen much better than I could. It is earnestly hoped that this warning may reach many readers, and to this end the endeavor has been made to avoid wearisome statistics and the more purely scientific phases of the subject, which might not appeal to the average mind.

If these few pages may lend the smallest aid to the task of arousing popular interest in heredity as related to the family, and in the latter as related to the future of our country, they will have done their appointed work, and amply repaid the one who sent them forth.

241 Boylston St.,  
BOSTON, December, 1886.

H. S. POMEROY.



## CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
PREFACE, . . . . .	v
PREFATORY NOTE, . . . . .	xiii
INTRODUCTION, . . . . .	xix
CHAPTER I.	
THE FAMILY AND THE STATE, . . . . .	33
CHAPTER II.	
MARRIAGE, . . . . .	45
CHAPTER III.	
THE PERVERSION OF MARRIAGE "THE AMERICAN SIN,"	55
CHAPTER IV.	
THE MISSION OF THE CHILD, . . . . .	94
CHAPTER V.	
HEREDITY, . . . . .	105
CHAPTER VI.	
WOMAN'S WORK, . . . . .	125