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Dr. Youngberg Chubckles

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deliver them from the restraint they might suffer under social disapproval. The author will not have far to seek for examples of this tendency; it is quite current in modern society, but fortunately for the most part it spares religion and turns to other disguises. Today it organizes beauty contests and fashion parades, promotes sun-bathing and "art" and seeks a thousand other euphemisms in order to indulge safely and respectably plain old-fashioned lust.

However, that is only said by way of parenthesis. The reason for adverting to Dr. van der Kroef's article is found in a sentence that occurs in the introductory paragraphs, and it is with reference to that sentence that the remarks on the origin of the *sotana* have been written.

Dr. van der Kroef quotes Crawley and Besteman as follows: "Through history the priesthood has a tendency towards effemination" and he adds himself (apparently) "as is evident in their dress today." Are we oversensitive in considering this a slur on the Catholic clergy of our time who wear the *sotana* as their ordinary garb? It seems that any ordinary reader would interpret the sentence in that meaning. If that is really what the author intends, then he himself is indulging a form of transvestitism, concealing the frayed rags of anticlericalism under the toga of pseudo-science. The explanation of the cassock or *sotana* is simple and historical and has nothing whatsoever to do with "effemination."

L. A. C.

Dr. Youngberg Chubckles.

The American Chamber of Commerce Journal runs an interesting section called "Let Your Hair Down". One of its items in the May 1954 issue was a letter to the editor from Stanton Youngberg, former Director of the Bureau of Agriculture, and professor of the U.P. School of Veterinary Science from 1914 to 1925. Among other subjects, Dr. Youngberg handled Veterinary Jurisprudence, which included professional ethics. Dr. Youngberg is holder of a DVM from Ohio

State and has recently been honored by his Alma Mater with an honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

In his letter to the editor Dr. Youngberg touches the McMillan-Rivera report and says: "I read point 22 of the McMillan-Rivera Report with interest and a suppressed chuckle. You and I know whose hackles will rise if any attempt is ever made to implement that recommendation. Not that I disagree; but it hasn't a chance of getting to first base."

The point referred to by Dr. Youngberg concerns "techniques of controlling population growth" and the persons whose hackles will rise presumably are the Catholics. It is not clear what Dr. Youngberg thinks the Catholics' position on this is but apparently he views that position with scant intellectual respect.

It is not likely that this comment will ever reach Dr. Youngberg but it is possible that it might reach some who share his views. Just for the record, therefore, let it be said that the Catholic Church is not simply opposed to limitation of population. If accomplished by blameless methods, opposition or support would depend entirely on the reasons for the move. Taken in itself, the multiplication of human beings is a good thing. But there may be many reasons why it would not be good in given circumstances and therefore the position of the Catholic Church cannot be established beforehand. Whether Catholic hackles would rise or not, therefore, is something that would depend on the circumstances dictating the policy.

But the Catholic Church is unqualifiedly against the limitation of population by means that are immoral. For example, by cutting off the heads of all male children under two years of age. Herod used that method of limiting population. The King was concerned with the solution of what was to him a grave socio-political problem, the possibility of a rival to supplant him in the government of the country.

Another method which the Catholic Church objects to is the Margaret Sanger method, called with great frankness by one writer "mutual masturbation," a name which, while substantially an accurate description, has little regard for the etymology of the word.

When the Catholic Church says that the Herod method and the Sanger method are immoral she states a position that is part of a coherent philosophy. It is not bigotry or taboo. It is a matter of moral principles.

Dr. Youngberg would be surprised at the amount of thought that goes into the Catholic position on such matters as birth control, how much discussion there is back and forth. It is very unlikely that Dr. Youngberg even knows exactly what the Catholic Church's position is or that he is intellectually prepared to appreciate it. This is said with no intention of being unkind. Moral philosophy is also a science. A lifetime in animal husbandry, even in the jurisprudence of animal husbandry, or its professional ethics, is not a favorable background for understanding the delicate reasoning which Catholic moral philosophers apply to problems of human conduct. Dr. Youngberg can rest assured that the Catholic Church has a carefully reasoned position on the problem of population limitation, a position which has made due allowance for all the reasoning that may lie behind the McMillan-Rivera report, and that the Catholic Church's reaction to any attempt to implement section 22 will be dignified and intelligent.

L. A. C.
