

PREFACE TO *TOKOLOGY, OR THE SCIENCE OF CHILDBIRTH* BY DOCTOR OF MEDICINE ALICE STOCKHAM

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The present book does not belong to the great majority of any kind of books from philosophical and scientific to belletristic and practical which, in other words, in other combinations and replacements, interpret, and repeat all the same familiar and overfamiliar general passages. This book is one of those rare books which does not deal with what everybody talks about and nobody needs, but about what nobody talks about and everybody needs to know. It is important for parents to know how to behave so that they can produce, without needless suffering, unspoiled and healthy children, but it is even more important for the children themselves to be born under the best of conditions, as it is also stated in one of the epigraphs of the book: "to be well born is the right of every child."

This book is not one of those which people read so that they won't have to say "I haven't read this book", but one which leaves traces, forces one to change one's life, to emend that which is wrong in it, or at least, to think about it. This book is called *Tokology, the Science of Childbirth*. There are some very strange sciences, but this is not one of them. After all, next to learning how to live and die, this is the most important science. The book has had great success in America and has had an important and great impact on American mothers and fathers. In Russia it ought to have an even greater influence. Questions about abstention from tobacco and all kinds of stimulating beverages, from alcohol to tea, questions about nourishment without the murder of living creatures, vegetarianism, questions about sexual continence in family life and much else, have been already partly decided, and partly are in the process of being reformulated, and have a huge literature in Europe and America, while we have still scarcely even touched upon these problems, and this is why Stockham's book is especially important for us: it immediately transports the reader into a new world of living human activity.

In this book every thoughtful woman reader-- since this book is especially intended for women readers-- will find first of all an indication that there is no necessity whatsoever to live as absurdly as our grandmothers and grandfathers did, and that it is possible and appropriate to find other ways of life using science, and the experience of people and their

¹Translated and annotated by Robert Edwards. This translation is from Предисловие к книге Д-ра Медицины Алисы Стокгэм «Токология, или наука о рождении детей» in *Полное собрание сочинений*, 27: 267-68. An earlier English translation of this is Nathan Haskell Dole's version, "Introduction to A. Stockham's Tokology" in *Shakespeare, The Christian Teaching, Letters and Introductions*, V. 12, 195-196, *The Complete Works of Lyof N. Tolstoi*, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1928). Haskell dates the preface 14 February 1890.

free thought. As a first model of such usage, she will find in this book much valuable advice and instruction which will make her life, as well as her husband's, and that of her children's, easier.

2 February 1890