The British birth rate has been steadily declining in recent years, and the latest report shows the lowest rate on record—twenty-seven per one thousand for London. 29.2 per thousand for nineteenth large towns. This barely exceeds the death rate, which must become the greater within a few years. Sanitation has reduced the death rate, particularly among infants; this also helps to mitigate the effects of race differences. The falling off in the birth rate—due partly to stitching and love of pleasure and play—may be expected to continue. However, the smaller and less prosperous communities are less affected, and in these areas the birth rate remains relatively high.

The Avenging Spirit of Pallas

A. D. H. Rose, "The Philosophy of Pallas."

In a Dutch town of a hundred years ago, there was a well-known baker named van der Deu. He was a robust man, given to drinking and a great lover of good food. His wife, Maria, was a woman of good character, but rather plain. They had four children, two boys and two girls. The children were all healthy and strong, but one day, the youngest child, a girl, fell ill with a fever. The girl was taken to a doctor, who diagnosed it as a case of cholera. The doctor prescribed a strong dose of arsenic, which was given to the child. But the arsenic was not strong enough, and the child died the next day. The mother was grief-stricken, and the father was furious. He vowed to avenge the death of his daughter. He consulted a wise man, who advised him to seek the help of Pallas, the avenging spirit.

On the next full moon, van der Deu went to the smithy of an old blacksmith who knew many secrets. The smith gave van der Deu a black stone that was said to have magical powers. Van der Deu carried the stone home and buried it under a tree in the garden. From that day on, van der Deu became a changed man. He lived a more temperate life, and the children grew up healthy and strong. The family became prosperous, and van der Deu was respected by all.

A few years later, van der Deu was walking in the woods when he came upon a young girl who appeared to be in distress. He asked her what was the matter, and she told him that she was lost. Van der Deu took her to his house and fed her, and then he helped her to find her way home. The girl was grateful, and she told van der Deu that she was a princess who had been kidnapped by bandits. She asked van der Deu to help her to find her way back to the castle.

Van der Deu agreed to help the girl, and he set out to find her way back to the castle. He traveled through the woods and over the mountains, and eventually found the castle. The princess was overjoyed to see van der Deu, and she thanked him for his help. Van der Deu was thanked by the princess, and he was given a gift of treasure.

From that day on, van der Deu was known as the avenger of the wronged. He lived a life of service to others, and his family prospered. And so, the story of van der Deu and the magical stone became a legend in the town.
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