

traceptive device, anal copulation. Yet I believe rather few people are so shameless as publicly to recommend this last; to suggest for example that midwives and health visitors should go round advising people to adopt this practice. (How furious the manufacturers of contraceptives would be!)

But what *is* the malice of it? I mean: what is the characteristic mark of it which makes it one of the range of counter-natural sexual acts? For that is one question; distinct from: what is the malice of counter-natural sexual acts in general?

It is that it is a sexual act *per se* inept for generation – as opposed to one that is *per accidens* so inept, because, say, the woman is barren or past bearing.

It is the sort of thing that you know you are doing as you know you are eating or drinking. The identification of the kind of act must be no more abstruse than that. Now the use of contraceptive procedures in one's copulations is of the same character. Hence such sexual acts belong in the list of sins of unnatural vice, and there is no room for considerations about when, where, with whom, in what spirit, or with a view to what, to perform them.

Age

Old man, your skull scored like a rock,
Not moss but grave marks planted there;
Tell of the storms, the seas that struck your coast?

The storms were sighs that could not be uttered,
The seas were tears that could not be shed;
This coast the frailest boundary of the outer world,
Its skin – poor stuff – against the woes that I could bring.

Guy Braithwaite, O.P