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III

MODERN MARRIAGE PROBLEMS

I

Early Marriage

Western civilization, until very recent years, has permitted itself to overlook, if not to sanction, laxity in sexual morality on the part of men, while insisting on chastity and purity on the part of women. This artificial distinction, justified by no reason but by the connivance of masculine appetites, of late has borne its fruit. The post-war decade gave rise to the formation of a "single standard" whereby both sexes flaunted sexual indulgence and promiscuity as the new immorality. And all this is veiled in the high-sounding phrase of "self-expression"! Self-expression we are told, "is a paramount moral duty. It is of vital biological value. To thwart it means moral, emotional and physical suicide." Yet, in the words of a prominent American, this self-expression consists of nothing but a most commonplace hankering after the most primitive sensations.

The dangerous age is that between twenty and thirty.¹ In the earlier years of the twenties it is yet possible to expend one's creative energy on creative work—one may write, establish a business, or engage in civic enterprises, and thereby get rid of the surplus

¹ Mishnah Abot V. 21; see also Tiferet Israel, a.l.

energies which puberty and adolescence have stored up, and which, if not utilized, generate a great number of problems and produce many maladjustments. But the time comes when the vital energies present their claims with utmost intensity. Some young people constrain themselves beyond the limits of nature and such unnatural, abnormal restraint very often results in psychic disturbances. A small minority engages in pre-marital sex relations with one partner only—this involves obvious risks and suffering to both. In the large number of cases, our young people, under the spell of the self-expression theory, fling themselves headlong into a pool of dissipation. They sow their wild oats without knowing that they often may be sowing the best that is in them, and that they may then bring to their marriage the leavings of their escapades: they do not realize that they will find it impossible to eradicate the memory of their vulgar experiences, which will always taint their marital life.

What is behind it all? Behind it is the fact that we have permitted ourselves and our children to be unduly influenced by phrases and slogans. The doctrines of economic determinism and social determinism have been swallowed uncritically, to the detriment of our morals. We have failed to realize our potentialities, our ability to overcome economic pressure and to build by dint of ingenuity and perseverance our own castle of wholesome and intelligent living.

I

Sexual life ought to find its supreme function in creating and maintaining a happy married life. Men

and women ought to wed at a time when they are physically and psychologically mature. They ought to bring to each other freshness, vigor, decency; they ought to start married life without cheap or ugly memories, free from the menace with which pre-nuptial philandering threatens the health, physical, emotional, and mental, of the partners and their children. To the fulfillment of this ideal two objections are offered: the emotional instability and the economic insufficiency of modern youth.

The quarrels which blight so many marriages are due to a great extent to a lack of mutual understanding and appreciation—both partners are apt to view marriage too exclusively from the point of view of their own sex. Tension and genuine unhappiness result. How many tearful brides come to rabbi, physician, friend, complaining of their god turned clay, of their ideals destroyed by awkward violence, by crudeness, by obtuseness! How many young men, when they have conquered the silencing pride of their first months of marriage, blurt out tragic “finalities” about the hysterical attitude, incomprehensible moods, and downright selfishness of their mates. And yet, they had known each other for months or years, they had moved in the same common circle, without discovering those deeply disappointing traits in each other which a few weeks of married life seem to have brought out with devastating clarity. What really is the matter? Boy and girl are unable to settle down quietly to the demands of every-day existence; they are unable to see the necessity of detailed co-operation, of appreciating mutual difficulties, of adjustment in a thousand and one ways, of now agreeing smilingly, of now opposing

gently, of guiding the boat in its initial movement so that it may not founder on the rocks.

Would that children of elementary school age might be given at home increasingly more information about the facts connected with the origin of human life. High school boys and girls, just before puberty, in a manner most suitable to their individual needs should be prepared for the disturbances, physical and emotional, of adolescence.

Since the members of the present generation cannot boast of a satisfactory relation with their parents (which might naturally include healthful guidance in sex matters), and since friends may give them misleading information, colored by their own possibly unfortunate experience, resort must be had to collegiate and popular courses which will prepare them for all aspects of married life, physical, emotional, mental. The lectures should be given by expert biologists and psychologists, who, in addition to their knowledge, have a distinctly sympathetic attitude towards the problems of adolescence and the trials of the newly-weds: they will remove a great deal of fear, of morbid curiosity, of taboo complexes and will enable the young man and the young woman to face the facts about marriage with frankness, decision, and more joy. Such courses will stress the abiding character of marriage, the fact that people marry not only for the intoxication of the beginning, but for many years of harmonious partnership, the fact that people marry to beget and rear children, who need for their growth a wholesome home atmosphere; they will emphasize the fact that marriage implies a continued adjustment to the various problems of life, such as are generated by health and

sickness, by success and failure, by good cheer and dejection.

This education for marriage can never be considered completed, for the more facts science discovers, the more must co-operative leadership offer satisfactory interpretations and suggestions for a continued adjustment of parents and children to new situations. The fundamentals of purity and decency, of sex hygiene and sex esthetics, will not undergo revolutionary changes, but in teaching, in application, in the illumination of the darker vistas of married life, there should be constant readjustment. The best minds of the country look upon this work as all-important, and as deserving most careful attention.

So the first objection to early marriage—the emotional and sexual instability of modern youth—may be successfully removed.

II

It will be asserted that though this obstacle may be overcome because it depends on the development of faculties within the individual which are independent of or not too dependent on outward conditions, economic difficulties will be strong enough to preclude early marriage. The course in preparation for marriage would suffer from too much theory, did it not teach girls the art of economic housekeeping. Instruction in this essential art will be especially applauded in these days of depression, when the inflated standards of prosperity have disappeared, when luxury with the attendant ills of ostentation, has been swept away, when men and women, after mourning the collapse of

their paper riches, are beginning to consider a plan of home life reduced to simpler proportions.

It should be impressed on our young people that marriage implies growth, educational, social, economic, that its chief assets are youth, vigor, joyous companionship, absolute mutual trust. A young man should look upon his married life as the continuation, in an atmosphere of harmony and tranquillity, of his labors towards happiness, aided by a partner who increases his forces. A young girl should be taught to expect from marriage exactly the same thing: to look upon love and harmonious companionship as its major blessings. With these common points of view the economic difficulties appear much smaller.

A girl who has understanding, who seeks happiness in marriage, will reduce her financial demands on her fiancé so that he will be encouraged to consider marriage at an earlier age. She will be satisfied to do away with the embellishments, the unnecessary luxury, the expensive wedding trips and showy honeymoons. Thus she may be able to obtain those advantages of marriage, which, in the clamor and the rush of the present-day wedding arrangements, are well-nigh lost to her.

Either we remain slaves of fashion, and hence feel compelled to postpone the expensive enterprise of marriage till it is almost too late, or, courageously ignoring the unwise example set by the rich and would-be rich, we start marriage at a much earlier age and rely upon psychological and co-operative remedies to lessen the economic burdens. In case the latter course is followed, there still looms the solid fact that with all modest housekeeping, with all economy, with all the

removal of psychological fears and disturbances, a young man at the age of twenty-five or twenty-seven finds himself handicapped as a wage-earner and of insufficient income as a business man to establish a home.²

Let us deal first with the situation in families of wealth. Rich parents have always considered it their duty to bequeath their riches unto their children. In the majority of cases they die at an age when their children have lived the better part of life, and are not in vital need of their parents' generosity. If rich parents were intelligent, they would look upon it as their privilege and their obligation to assist their children with their riches during the critical period of their life. A rich father ought to say to himself: "My son needs me most at this time, when he has inevitably to decide between vulgar sex experience with all its dangers, and abnormal sex restraint with all its unhappy consequences." He ought to come to his son and tell him: "I want you to set up a simple household, to start marriage on a modest basis. You will continue to work, cheered now by the happiness of your own home. Normally you could marry in five years. I shall give you an allowance for these five years so that you may be able to marry now." If the son is too proud to accept money, the father may lend it to him. The father may talk in similar terms to his daughter. Then he will know that his children will be free from the great danger confronting most modern youth. Sons and

² The begetting of children, of course, entails considerable expense, but it is to be hoped that increasing municipal and state hospitalization will provide for expectant mothers on a humanitarian and philanthropic rather than on a profit motive.

daughters can now very carefully choose their mates. Son and son-in-law will receive in the form of a gift or a loan that co-operation vital to their present needs. (This, incidentally, will be a revival of a time-hallowed custom in Jewish life.) The careful and extensive educational and practical preparation for marriage will prevent the young people from making a hasty choice. In this fashion, affluent or near-affluent parents will be able to solve for their children this life problem.

III

What about the children of the professional class, and what about the children of the workingman?

Humanity today is perturbed and unbalanced by the war and its aftermath, by the utter failure of society to supply the most elementary needs, to provide that fundamental right of man—the right to work. We look forward to far-reaching changes within a short time in the way of either co-operation between capital and labor or of increasing socialized control. Because of economic and psychological factors, there is scant hope of doing more than merely mending matters for the present generation. If the family is to be conserved, intelligent planning and daring are essential. The suggestion which I offer applies to present-day care for the next generation.

Young people who marry today must not only assume the responsibility of feeding, clothing and educating their offspring, but they should plan from the very outset for those vital years from twenty to thirty, during which their children will be faced by the

dilemma now confronting our age. They could solve the problem by insurance: an additional source of income would be provided for son or daughter at the age of twenty-five, to tide them over the first five years of married life. Such insurance (the premiums paid from the day of marriage over a period of twenty-five years) would entail little sacrifice, even on the part of the small wage-earner; the larger the income, the higher might be the insurance. In this fashion, the professional, the workingman, and all those with limited incomes will be planning with wisdom and foresight for the next generation. With the progress of education and with a general readjustment of economic conditions, this problem of the middle classes would be nearer solution.

One element has not yet been considered—the poor. The children of the poor are the responsibility of the rich. If they are assisted they are an asset to society; if they are neglected, they are a liability. The staggering sums which we now expend annually on the care of criminals and the insane would have been considerably reduced if we had had the common sense, the good will and the courage to turn our minds to preventive work.

In Israel, the community has assumed the responsibility for the dowering of poor brides. (Mishnah Pe'ah I). Through all the thousands of years of Jewish exile this cardinal virtue has been preached and practised. I make bold to propose to modern society the assumption of this responsibility, not merely on the basis of charity, but rather on the score of intelligent statesmanship. State insurance or federal insur-

ance to provide economically handicapped youth with the means of early marriage will prove a more potent factor in conquering all sorts of social vices and diseases than all the maudlin sentiment and the toothless vituperation and the more than futile preachment of our days.

The problem of problems in modern society is that of sex morality. The foundation of the home rests on the wise control of sex relations. Wholesome children, ready for the tasks of life, need a sound soil to supply them with the necessary sap and vigor.

The mighty empire of Rome, like its predecessors, had fallen partly because Roman civilization had degenerated so far as to disdain the house-wife and to look upon the hetaera as the only woman worthy of the company of men.

Armies, navies, treasuries, all the paraphernalia on which the empires of the past had rested their hopes of immortality, crumbled to atoms when their foundations—the home and the family—turned to clay.

American civilization, indeed the whole of Western civilization, is threatened by the same danger of looseness in sex matters, with the inevitable consequence of the disintegration of home and family. The rich and the poor, Jew and Gentile, the learned and unlearned, are alike threatened by this plague. The people of this country should arouse themselves to an appreciation of the problem. Constructive steps must be taken to educate young and old. Our best minds must gather in a national conference to occupy themselves with this matter and to set up a machinery for realizing the suggestions contained in this paper or to carry into

effect other practical plans that may be formulated. There is no time to lose.

II

The Moral Aspect of the Family

Let us start with the trite observation that, like most of the institutions of the world, the family is no end in itself, but a means to an end. The end of all human institutions should be the happiness and the goodness of man. The end of the family as an institution should therefore be the happiness and the goodness first of its own members, then in a larger concentric circle the happiness of other families, involving in the largest circumference the happiness and goodness of the family of families, the human kind.

Like many other good works, the family must start at home. The ultimate unit is the group formed by parents and children. The first task then of the family is to promote the goodness and the happiness of parents, of children, and of parents and children in their relation to each other.

Some form of marriage is the basis of the family. Marriage in our country as a rule implies a ceremony expressing or symbolizing a mutual appreciation of responsibility and opportunity. There are at least three conceptions of the significance of marriage. Some hold that marriage fulfills its task by teaching youth and maiden to abandon the egocentric attitude of pre-nuptial days by expanding each "I" into the new "we." Thus marriage is viewed as the deliberate

espousal of unselfishness, of mutuality, of co-operation. The moral value of marriage is made independent of, and comes earlier than, the actual establishment of the family. A second conception is that the chief function of marriage is dependent upon the begetting of children. Maturity, it is claimed, is a sad chapter in human life. In maturity we achieve for the first time a clear glimpse of the true, the good, and the beautiful. Simultaneously, from the point of view of these cognitions, we see ourselves as the victims of school and milieu with all the deficiencies and faults ingrained in us by our environment. Thus maturity is tragic. It dangles before us life's values, like Tantalus, when we can no more obtain them. For at maturity we are a hopelessly finished product. Hence this group maintains life would be futile but for the challenge of our children that we pour into their hearts and minds those values, intellectual, sentimental, physical, which our maturity has revealed to us as the genuine goal of intelligent activity. We compensate ourselves for the relative failure of our youth by bestowing the advantage of our knowledge and experience upon our children. In this manner marriage is the ladder upon which generation after generation rises from the solid ground on which parents live toward the height which should be the possession of the children. Parental self-fulfillment is to be the instrument or means for the self-realization of our children. Not what parents *have*, but what they *are*, is contributed to their children as their inheritance. The third group has felt that marriage and the family mean still more in the human scene. Marriage is more than training in

unselfishness, more than an instrument for the melioration of the next generation. The task of the family, according to this view, lies in the example of human unity, in the freedom and co-operation, in the guardianship of spiritual values, in the microcosm of moral conduct, in the holiness of the home. The task of the family includes unselfishness and the self-realization of the next generation, but above all the interpreting of the reciprocal parents-children relation so as to achieve within the confines of the family a unity that expresses the individual and the collective values of social ethics.

I

What does the family offer, in moral value, to parents?

The highest love is that between people serving the same goal. Inasmuch as in marriage man and woman are to serve one ideal together, they are starting on the basis which enables them to develop the finest relations. Modern people are haunted by a sense of helplessness, resting in turn on a sense of loneliness. The increasing noise of life, the hardening influence of cut-throat competition and unesthetic scramble for a place in the sun—all of these result in a feeling of unhappiness, in a sense of being continually hunted, crowded out, confined, and cribbed, so that one may not speak aloud, for fear of betraying one's interests, nor enjoy things from fear of jealousy, nor criticize the ills and uglinesses of the world for fear of hostile comment.

Partly to counteract the pessimistic modern spirit so honestly and thoroughly described by J. W. Krutch in his "Modern Temper," partly also to fulfill their aspiration for happiness, man and woman unite in marriage to plan and hope in common. They are to build together for one identical purpose. They are to pool ideas, forces, means for one common end. What life from without has taken from modern man—self-confidence, trust, ease, worthwhileness—marriage restores to him. He may in the home shed the artificial conventions, the real fears and misgivings. Co-operation begets not only hope, cheer; it begets a healthy self-consciousness, a sense of worthwhileness. To one's wife, to one's husband, one may speak aloud without mental reservation, without circumlocution, awaiting co-operative thinking. Parents then in the modern home should find the great compensation for the hostile aspects of our life, for the unfriendliness stirred by fear of competition, for the prejudices due to ignorance; should regain poise, peace, happiness.

In addition to this moral value, one should recognize the biological value of marriage. A normal outlet for the major urge of healthy persons is a biological value. Family life provides the partners with a way to satisfy normal appetites, with an outlet for pent-up energies. Marriage de romance brings tremendous emotional energies; marriage de convenance offers a plan for the satisfaction of personal ambition, for gradual growth of power, for extension of sphere and intensification of co-ordinate labor. And, of course, upon fellowship and co-operation depend the healthy activity and the normal progress of the whole family.

II

What does the family offer, in moral value, to children?

The tragedy of individual and corporate life is attributable to a great extent to the fact that we are unwilling or unable to benefit from the accumulated experiences of man—that is why we still think of war, that is why class struggle, civil conflict, religious intolerance, still darken the horizon of man. One of the major tasks of parents is to convey to their children the meaning and power of their routine life experiences. Richer experience enables parents to aid children to avoid waste, pitfalls, impossible plans—if the reasons are made understandable to them. It should not be forgotten that the initial helplessness of the young has been recognized and resolved not only by human parents but by some parents of the animal jungle. I make reference here to the Spencer-Fiske theory (the substance of which can be found in Alexander Pope), according to which the length of human infancy not only solidifies the familial feeling, but is of especial effect in protecting the helpless child from the menace of human depravity. Vicarious experience is helpful, indeed.

What sun and air are to the young plant, tenderness is to the child. There is no substitute for the care of the intelligent mother. Another thing: personality, though often hampered by excessive affection, has been found to burgeon gloriously within the four walls of parental co-operation. The child thus receives essen-

tial physical and practical benefits in the bosom of the family. Nor is the moral aspect to be undervalued. Although some people would have their children stray according to will, and suffer in accord with their roaming fancy, thus receiving a never-to-be-forgotten lesson, we feel that a mother, preventing such disaster, has solved the problem at least as well. It is of incalculable value to children to develop in an atmosphere where standards of right conduct are always in evidence. To orientate ourselves in the world and in life, we need a starting point—certain directions, certain axiomatic mores, certain instinctive possessions. With them as a basis, we go on experimenting, adding our own note, perhaps our own improvement to the inheritance received.

In the normal family the ego receives sufficient personal attention to become conscious of itself as a microcosm and sufficient restriction to realize the conflicting interests and claims of others. The favorable air of the average home should enable the child to receive physical and moral nourishment without disturbance or retarding emotional strain or any complex-begetting experience. Full and extensive unconscious growth is essential to normalcy in the child in early years just as conscious activity is required for its adolescent period. Left to itself, or to an imaginary state boarding-school where for lack of individual tuition the less-controlled combative impulses would be aroused in childhood, the element of struggle, ingrained from the beginning, would undoubtedly create some twist, some abnormalcy, some callousness, which in the restful youth of the family-reared child are avoided.

The parents of tomorrow will, we hope, improve upon today's record by initiating their children into the facts of life, which for some mysterious reason seem incomprehensible or inexpressible to them. However, let it be posited that these instructions should come from people who are respected and beloved, and who have the proper attitude, for to convey information on the origin of life is to convey not merely knowledge, but attitudes as well. Cynical medical practitioners, or old women of either sex enmeshed in the web of ignorance and superstition, can add to bewilderment and generate legions of devils by filling the receptive mind of our youth with false and weird tales. What distinguishes utter beastliness from sacred beauty in marriage is not knowledge, but attitude.

Adolescent children receive in a well-conducted family invaluable suggestions on perennial problems. As they grow older, they learn to appreciate the need for co-operation and adjustment, for the assumption of responsibilities in marriage. At the same time, they catch a glimpse of the supreme joys of the home—harmony, parental sacrifice, unquestioned devotion, bottomless confidence between husband and wife.

Moral values are derived from the contemplation and more or less conscious imitation of the parental conduct pattern. Here again, because of deep personal interest in the happiness of the child, the average parents are constantly aware of the necessity of creating and maintaining an atmosphere which may be expected to promote a love of truth and goodness and beauty in the growing youngster. Hence, because of the possibly selfish desire of seeing the child develop into a satisfactory human specimen, if not because

of attachment to the principles of satisfactory moral conduct, the parents are led to exemplify truthfulness, fairness, consideration, courtesy. They thus surround their offspring with a texture of life, the warp and woof of which expresses and promotes a *Weltanschauung* that is likely to advance the truth, goodness, and beauty of this globe; they thus accept the challenging task of training children into a world and preparing them for a partnership wherein some of the age-long dreams and visions of man may be realized.

III

The family is the foundation of society—it is at the bottom of every civilization. The Book of Daniel has a fine message on the subject of the family: the passage in question relates the dream of the King of Babylon. It seems that he had been comparing in his mind the fate of earlier dynasties, and he may have been wondering about his own realm. In a dream the vision was vouchsafed to him. "As for that image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass, its legs of iron, its feet of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them." (Daniel 2, 32-35.) This dream does indeed present the major claim of the family. Empires with all the gold of the treasury and the silver of art and

education and the brass and iron of commerce and industry depend ultimately for their survival not on these, but on another base. Empires are divisible into provinces, provinces into states, states into cities, cities into families. The family is the ultimate unit. Wherever the family has functioned unimpaired, the gold, silver, brass, and iron of the state have endured. It has been noticed that the disintegration of the family has often foreshadowed the doom of the state. Where the family as an institution is safe and sound, states seem built in firmness and security, for in the strength of the link the chain is strong. Wherever the family has become even partly clay, the unseen hand of historical justice has flung against the state its stone, casting down the family and destroying with it the gold, of the treasury and the silver of art and education and the brass and iron of commerce and industry.

It is because of this basic importance of the family that its welfare is not only a private, but indeed a vitally public concern. The family has not been functioning with absolute perfection; it has been shaken by the assaults of industrialism, by the religious and political and emotional unrest of today. Hence the need for an Institute of Family Relations, hence the many efforts on the part of Synagogue, Church, and Society to promote the welfare, to improve the quality, to extend the benefits and intensify the service of the family, not only as the reservoir of the hidden treasures of the nation, but as a laboratory of social ethics.

IV

There is an enormous sex literature, bewildering in its confusion, unsettling and resetting the values of

yesterday. Yet, after all is said and done, it remains true that the best solution of sex problems is to be found in a healthy, normal, kindly family life. The emotional illiteracy of the average unwed, their lack of preparation for the co-operative tasks of the family, are generally recognized. What is to be done? The most important thing is to establish a proper balance between the two schools of thought now in vogue, one of which would reduce or explain everything in terms of sex, while the other would, apparently, ignore sex completely. The family, inasmuch as it assumes responsibilities not only in terms of housekeeping, but of home building, emphasizes the essential fact that sex is neither everything, nor nothing, but a great impetus and factor in life. Our youngsters, in an intelligent preparation for marriage, would be shown how love embraces enjoyment of art and literature, of co-operative building, how sex differences are freighted with potent implications in the different manner in which man and woman react to the influences of work and recreation.

In the home, the problem of feminism is solved. The whole trend of the feminist movement has been toward minimizing or even denying the existence of differences, because it was believed that these differences reflected an inferiority of the female. It ought to be clear by this time that differences do not necessarily imply an inferiority on either side. They merely imply a difference. In the family is seen the equal importance of man and woman, their fundamental difference and yet their fundamental equality in the concerns of life. In a recent article, Dr. Popenoe, Director of the California Institute of Family

Relations, remarked, "Proper education of young people would prevent a large majority of the family maladjustments that arise later."

It is here that the task of the clergyman begins. Unless religion can guide the fumbling steps of today's youth, adherence to it on their part will become still weaker than it is already. The challenge goes out to every serious minister to teach his flock that in a normal family there must be equality in married love. This means that the husband must not force his attentions on his wife, that consent is a *sine qua non* even in marriage. The crime of violating one's wife³ by an approach without her consent ought to be brought home to every husband, ought to become an axiom in the set of principles which should govern the conduct of married people. Equality in the home remains a pretence as long as there persists any form of sex enslavement. It is needless to say that enslavement deprives the family of woman's free genius for harmony and beauty. To him who violates his wife by approaching her without her consent, apply Dryden's lines on his notorious adversary:

With all his bulk there is nothing lost in Og
For every inch which is not fool, is rogue.

One need not fear that such freedom may result in the cessation of all marital relations in any given case. Nature takes care of that.

Dickens' famous lady, who is profoundly disturbed by the yet unbaptized East African heathen but is

³ See Talmud, B. Pesahim 49b and *ibid.* Tosaf.s.v. Mah Ari; Ketubot 4a, Rashi s.v. Kān; Erubin 100b, Baba M 59a; M. Kallah R. 82, 86; Shulchan Aruch Eben ha-Ezer 25, 2.

profoundly undisturbed about her hungry husband and her neglected children, reminds us of the other aspect of the family. The normal mother loves her children and endeavors to promote their welfare. We must realize that today's schools supply tomorrow's fathers and mothers, and the more the training for the career of marriage looms up as the major task of all education, the better will tomorrow's parents be able to care for and rear their children. It is obvious, then, that the family, to function better and better, will always be dependent on outside major influences in the pre-married state.

It is recognized that the family, so far as our best knowledge and experience goes, is the only institution in which mankind can translate its choice sentiment and best planning into best possible actuality. Thus, from a moral point of view we ought to devote ourselves individually as well as collectively to the cultivation of the interests of the family. This is not to deny that there do exist in the sphere of the family outrageous wrongs, inequalities, abuses, foolish attitudes, ad infinitum, but such exist in every social institution. Let us be fair, let us be constructive and helpful. We should try to improve the status of the family by placing at the disposal of the unmarried all the findings that the intelligence and conscience of present-day humanity have mined out of medical, psychological, and sociological research—all this, of course, in careful selection.

Society is full of the cries of the oppressed and the sobs of the forlorn and the angry revolt of those who are shut out from light and air, yet the bravest men of today do not think of scrapping society, but of remov-

ing its excrescences, of stopping its abuses. The same applies to the institution of the family. All the iconoclastic energies should go to the uprooting of the brutality and folly of those who, in the phrase of Kipling, have too much ego in their cosmos. All the reconstructive ability should be devoted to the ignorant, prejudiced, or maltrained minds which are to operate in tomorrow's homes.

With all that, if I may return to an earlier theme, situations may arise in which the very same set of moral principles and considerations which propel us toward strengthening and improving the individual family may impel us to consider breaking it up. Even the family is only a means to an end, that end being the worthwhile life of its members. Even the family is to guarantee a decent minimum of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to its members. From Popenoe's report I learn the staggering fact that fully ten per cent of our population are psychopaths. Surely there is need for re-education, for painstaking endeavor to undo the damage of heredity, home, and school. We must face, too, the possibility of cases in which no human agency can repair the damage, so that human suffering and deterioration is to be expected from a continued partnership in marriage. Yes, it cannot be gainsaid that the moral aspects of marriage and the family may occasionally demand a breaking up of the family. In each denomination there are definite laws governing these contingencies. The clergyman's task in such situations challenges his intellectual honesty, calls for the display of all the tact, the fairness, and the intelligence of which he is possessed.

One more thing is necessary. John Erskine has laid stress on the moral obligation to be intelligent. With all the seriousness of the problem in mind, I draw attention to an even more emphatic obligation—the moral duty of having a sense of humor, even when dealing with the family and its fundamental import to all humanity.

IV

THE JEWISH WOMAN IN THE HOME

BY

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