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Courtesy, ...
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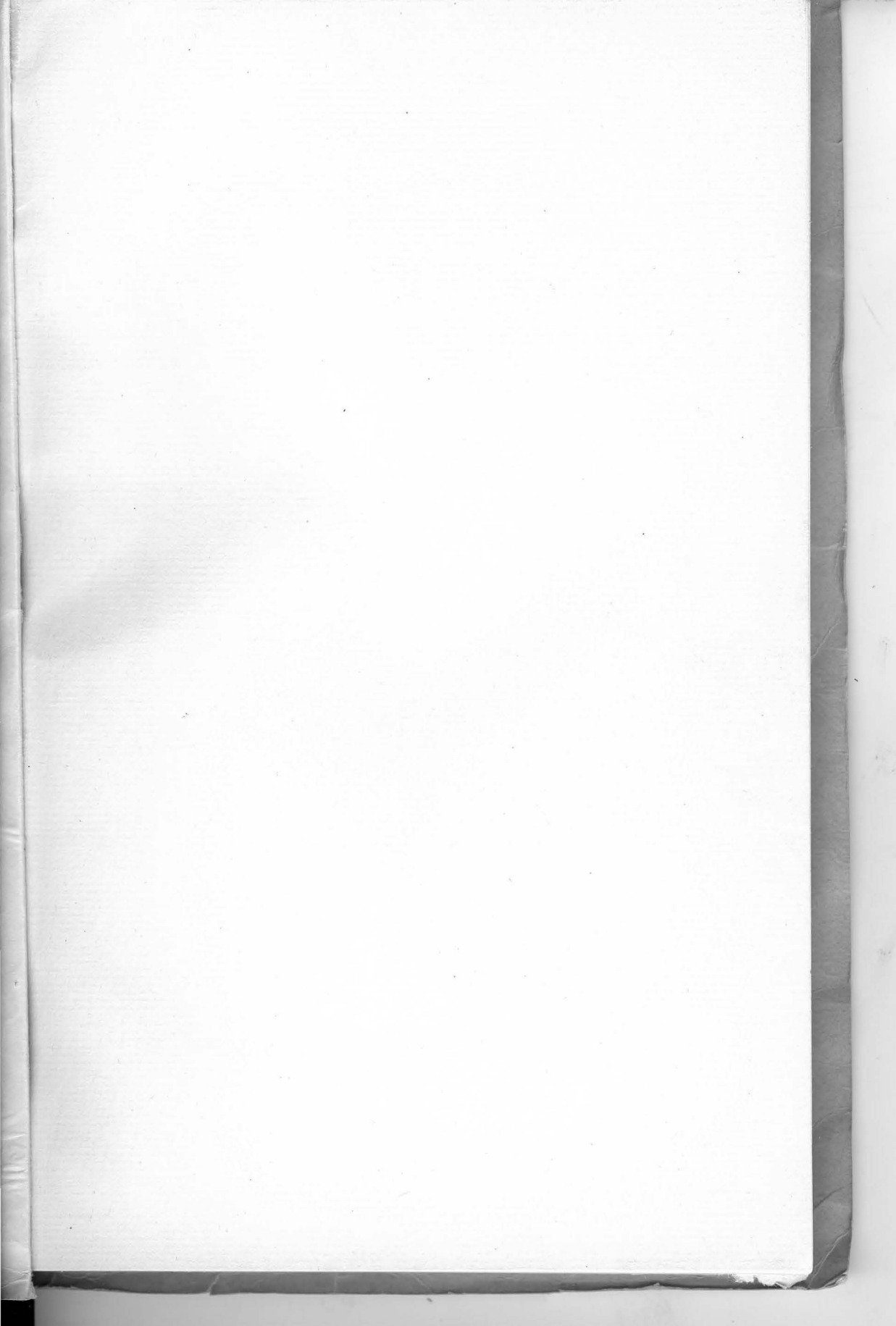
Courtesy, Courtship and Marriage

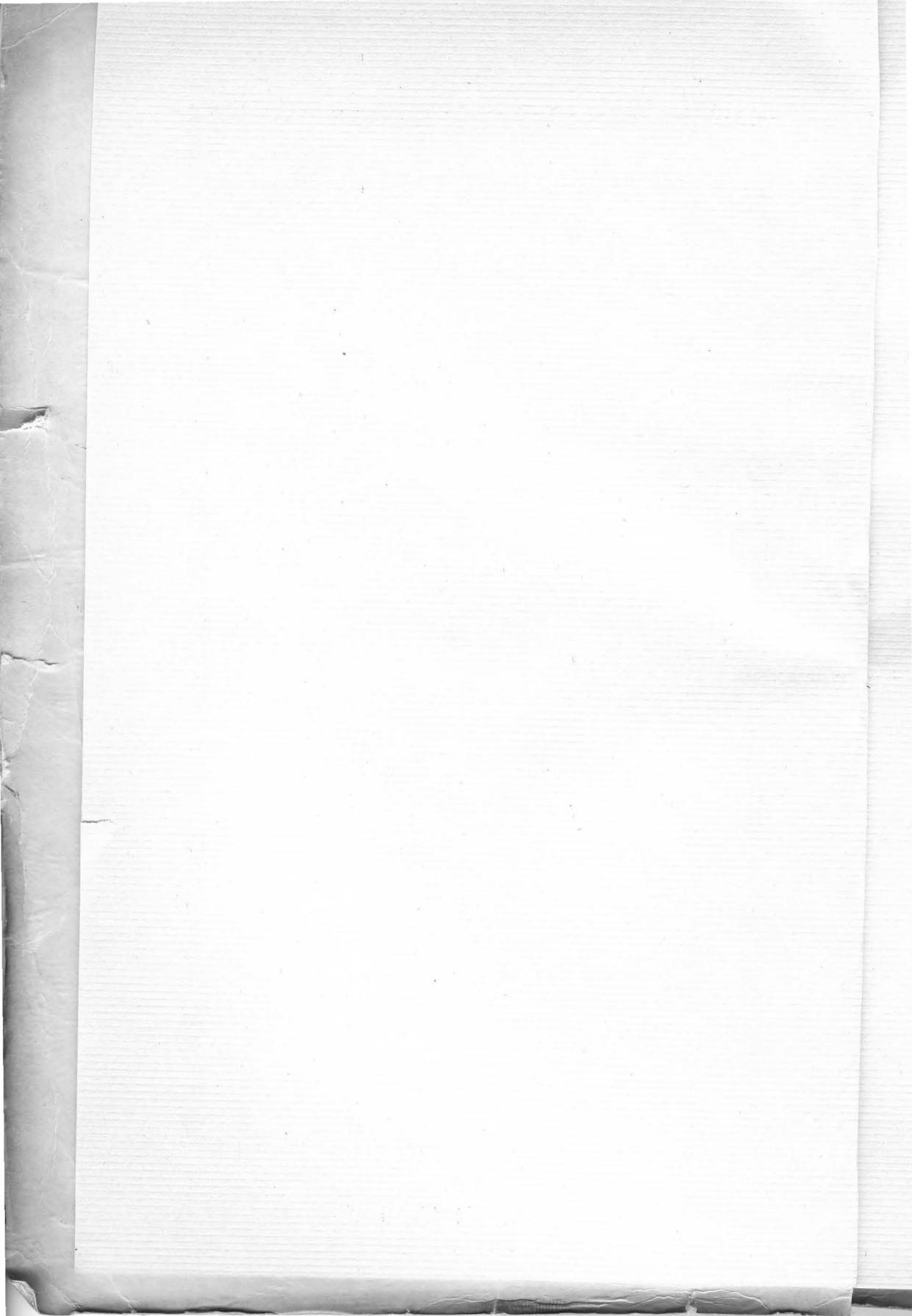


SEVENTEEN
COLLECTED
ARTICLES

By
Austin J. App
Ph. D.



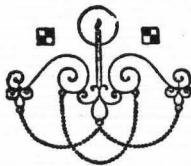




COURTESY COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

A Collection of Sixteen Magazine
Articles and a Commencement
Address

By
AUSTIN J. APP, Ph.D.



Published by the Author:

A. J. APP

San Antonio, Texas, U. S. A.

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AUTHOR NOTE

Until drafted into the army in 1942, the writer was head of the English department, University of Scranton, Scranton, Pa. He is now professor of English at Incarnate Word College, San Antonio, Texas. In 1939 he was awarded the University of Scranton Faculty Medal as "outstanding educator of men." Born in Milwaukee; B. A., 1924, St. Francis Seminary, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; M. A., 1926, Ph. D., 1929, The Catholic University, Washington, D. C. Spent four summers in Europe, 1927 (Spain and France), 1931 (Central Europe), 1923 (Great Britain and France), 1934 (Ireland). Co-founder and former associate editor of Best Sellers, bi-monthly review magazine. In addition to numerous reviews and some verse and fiction, has contributed over a hundred articles to various educational and Catholic magazines. In December, 1946, he published *History's Most Terrifying Peace*, Thirteen Reprinted and Original Articles, vii, 109 pages. This summer he is conducting the graduate courses in English for the Catholic University Summer Session, Southern Branch.

THREE REVIEW COMMENTS ON THE AUTHOR'S HISTORY'S MOST TERRIFYING PEACE

First Printing, December, 1946, 2500 copies

Second printing, February, 1947, 4000 copies

THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY: "Insofar as this is a vigorous, even vehement, demand for a just peace in Europe based on a Christian conception of the human rights which even the vanquished peoples possess, we say Amen!"

(February 12, 1947, p. 207)

THE CATHOLIC WORLD: "History's Most Terrifying Peace has provoked criticism both pro and con. While not exactly comforting, it is an excellent piece of work calling for widespread distribution."

(April, 1947, p. 95)

THE MAGNIFICAT: "The accumulated effect of this collection drives home with renewed vigor the author's main thesis: that there are no two rights, one for the victors, and one for the vanquished."

(May, 1947, p. 53)

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FOREWORD

As the Table of Contents outlines, COURTESY, COURTSHIP, AND MARRIAGE is the publication in book form of sixteen articles previously published in magazines, plus one commencement address. The fact that they were previously published in respectable magazines might be thought sufficient warrant for collecting them in book form. But some reason should be given for undertaking to publish them myself.

Because these articles were written for different types of magazines, they are uneven in length and varied in tone—from popular to scholarly. Furthermore they are not as mutually unified and coherent as one title and one book usually imply. For that reason, only much rewriting and expanding could have made them fully suitable for a regular publisher.

But I did not wish to revise them. I believe that in their own way and present form, they serve their purpose very well. Another time I will write another book on these themes, and then I will write it differently and in a different tone, and above all, more comprehensively. But now, possibly with an author's customary self-assurance, I believe these essays to be not only quite readable, but very much needed reading. I also think that they are sufficiently related in theme for most readers interested in any, to be interested in all.

Their greatest shortcoming as a unit is that they do not include articles on all phases suggested by the big title of courtesy, courtship, and marriage. For example, the thorny problem of love-making in courtship is not treated or that of "planned parenthood" in marriage. In short, it is a collection of essays on the themes of the title, not a comprehensive treatise. But that ought to make them more, not less, stimulating and interesting.



Publishing them myself in this book form came about as follows. For a long while the injustices committed by the victors of this war had outraged my soul. What, if possible, outraged me still more was the comparative silence about these injustices in the very press and publicity agencies which used to shriek to high heaven every real or invented and usually much smaller German or Japanese crime. About a year ago I could no longer watch the criminal Morgenthauistic peace policies in silence. Determined to do my bit for justice and truth, I began publishing things myself.

One of my earliest efforts, to my glad surprise, swept on to a circulation of 75,000 copies to date. Also, however, the mailing problems were not only overwhelming, but, as I soon noted with anxiety, continuous. No longer could I simply lock the doors and go off on a vacation trip when not teaching. I now had to make difficult provisions for taking care of my mail and orders and new printings.

And I soon found that the time and expense of taking care of any publishing was almost as great as taking care of more of it.

For that reason I am risking the present publication, in a field altogether different from my former efforts, which were confined to rectifying the crimes of this peace. Naturally, it is a financial risk. I hope that all those who are inclined to be sympathetic and who find the book valuable will do what they conveniently can to help its distribution.

Since the articles were originally written for Catholic magazines, non-Catholics must expect a certain Catholic flavor. They must, for example, expect a fixed attitude against re-marriageable divorce. But otherwise these articles are not polemic, they are culturally ethical. As the dominant aim of religion, according to Matthew Arnold, is to make "human nature perfect on the moral side," the general aim of these essays is cultural, which, according to Arnold, is to make "human nature perfect on all its sides." For that reason, they should on the whole prove as interesting and useful to non-Catholic as to Catholic readers. After all, Dante, the Catholic, is read by Protestants, and Bacon, the Protestant, is similarly read by

Catholics! One other reader qualification should be added, namely, that the articles in general are slanted more for girls and women than for men.

I want to express my gratitude to the editors of the following magazines for permitting me to republish these articles from their pages: To The Catholic Home Journal for five, The Magnificat for one, The Queen's Work for four, The Sign for one, and The Victorian Magazine for five. I am also grateful to Incarnate Word College, San Antonio, Texas, for having invited me to give the Commencement Address here published for the first time. It is important to emphasize that the preliminary introductions and the sub-heads are editorial additions to this book version, and were not in the first serial or oral version.

I also want to state very especially that I am grateful to many authors and publishers for incidental quotations and allusions. They are properly credited in every instance. Unfortunately, however, I absolutely lacked the time and money to write to the author or publisher of every incidental quotation used. I am sorry I could not do so. I never, however, quoted so lengthily as to offend the ordinary customs of copyright.

In conclusion, if I may be a little playful, I have taught thousands of college students in my life. Nearly every class of them at some time or other, when in the spirit of poetry studied I digressed a bit on "courtesy, courtship, and marriage," would say, half in jest and half in earnest, "Doctor, why don't you write a book about that?" Well, now I say to them, equally half in jest and half in earnest, "Here is the book. Go and read it. I hope you can get it at any book store. But if you can't, inclose a dollar to me and you'll get a copy—autographed!"

A. J. App

San Antonio, Texas
July 4, 1947.

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CHAPTER I

SAYING THINGS THE TACTFUL WAY

This article is reprinted from THE QUEEN'S WORK, January, 1945, where it was entitled, "A Soft Answer Turneth Away Wrath." Under the title, "Tact," subtitled, "Truth and beauty meet in unction," it appeared in THE CATHOLIC DIGEST, March, 1945. The article assumes that life is full of occasions when, if one has principles, one must say what is not naturally agreeable to another, but that it can usually be said in such a way that the heal is greater than the hurt. Tact in speech, like virtue, needs constant watching and practice!

"Just the Way a Thing Is Said"

ON one critical, diplomatic occasion, Queen Victoria showed her husband, Prince Albert, a note she had prepared to dispatch to some foreign government. According to Laurence Housman's play, *Victoria Regina*, Albert said to her:

"Alter a few words . . . Say it but say it differently. Often it is just the way a thing is said that decides whether it shall be peace or war. It is the same when two people quarrel. You and I, *Weibchen*, might often have quarreled, had we said the same thing that we did say—differently."

Every day, at home, at work, at play, we talk and comment and discuss and "Often it is just the way a thing is said that decides" whether our notes are sweet or sour, whether we make a point or muff it, whether we *force* our point or make it welcome.

Framing the "No" Softly

Life is almost a continual give-and-take. Often we want something of someone and the problem is how to frame our request so that it will make a *yes* easy and a *no* not painful. More often we are asked for something we cannot grant, and then the problem is to frame our no so it will fall soft and gentle, and still be honest.

In the give-and-take of life the softer word can make the "taking" easier. It can prevent a strained friendship or even a broken one. "Alas, they had been friends in youth," says Coleridge, but

"Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother:
They parted—ne'er to meet again!"

Usually it is not so much "words of high disdain" that strain friendships, but words of bad choosing. Once my best school friend was displeased with a club talk I had given. He came to me and said, "That speech of yours was mostly ranting." This hurt. Years have passed, and of course we remained friends, but even though he is now dead and I pray for him, I still unhappily remember that comment. I believe if he had said, "Your speech today sounded somewhat too loud and unrestrained to me," I would have felt no hurt at all and would have liked him more than ever for saying it.

People's Face Must Be Saved

In home and shop, in school and camp, virtually no trait is more valued and rewarded than the gift and habit of saying things the most pleasant, the least offensive way. Saving face is said to be the indispensable passport for social intercourse among the Chinese. But for real peace and good will it is important everywhere to help others save face as much as possible. Metaphorically speaking, the opposite of saving someone's face is slapping it. That is what the wrong word can do.

When we stop to think about it, it is really surprising how often even the meekest person has to try to influence people. During every meal we ask to have this passed and that, and the manner in which we do it is taken as some index of our breeding. Every invitation—to talk, or walk, or dance, or dine, or go to a play—in making or accepting or declining, is a matter for pleasing and tactful phraseology.

No Need for Contradicting Flatly

It is said that every virtue has a negative. The most important negative for tactfulness is, "*Don't contradict anyone flatly.*" This rule ought to be followed even toward one's closest friends and relatives and in the lightest matters. If he says casually, "This is a fine snapshot," and his wife replies, "No, it's vile," even in this case her flat contradiction leaves some little sting. If sister says, "Gee, that was a good (radio) program," and brother answers, "It was lousy," there is some little unnecessary hurt. If mother suggests that they all go to eight o'clock Mass this Sunday, and the children cry, "Gosh, no, that's too early," there is at least a little discomfiture. This could have been minimized or avoided had they answered, "Don't you fear, Mother, that it will be a little hard for us to make it that early?"

Among persons only slightly acquainted, and among large groups, and in important matters flat contradictions lead to serious embarrassments, ill feelings, and often ruptures. If a recent acquaintance invited you to have an ice cream and you declined bluntly with, "No, thanks," instead of, "It's nice of you to ask me, and I am sorry I can't go with you today," your new friend would not readily ask you again and in any case would feel pointedly rebuffed. As an important matter, if a man proposed marriage, and the girl answered bluntly, "No, I won't," he would not only be hurt but angry. Whereas if she emphasizes how honored she feels that he should propose to her, and how sorry that she cannot say yes, he will, of course, not feel happy, but he will go away feeling friendly. The story is told of an English writer that when he proposed to a lady she bluntly rejected him. Subsequently the lady exercised her feminine privilege and sent a servant who announced his message to the writer by saying, "Sir, the lady has changed her mind." The writer answered laconically, "So have I, boy, so have I."

Parliamentary Rules for Not Offending

The fact that it was thought necessary to erect elaborate indications in parliamentary procedure is pointed proof of the danger of sharp and flat contradictions in large groups. At class, club, church, and Sodality meetings, every speaker owes it to himself and the group to avoid sharp contradictions and to introduce his objections in the least offensive manner. Such openings as, "Mr. Chairman, I don't agree with the last speaker," or, "The last speaker is wrong in his estimate," or "The motion, made and seconded, is foolish," are entirely unforgivable. No matter how definitely one has to differ with, or object to, a matter proposed, one must somehow soften one's contradiction. The best and most honest way to do it is to open one's remark with a recognition of something favorable in the previous speaker or in his proposal.

How to Soften Opposition

Some such openings as the following are necessary: "Though the last speaker was very plausible, yet I think one can point out. . ." "The last objection is a sound one but, in my opinion, it is not so weighty as . . ." "The opposition's statistics are correct and representative, but I would give them a different interpretation." "The motion clearly shows a good intention. Nevertheless . . ." Surely, with a little bit of careful thought and analysis, one can find something to commend in every motion or suggestion before attacking

it. Doing so is not compromising our point; it is making it more effective by making it less painful.

The Humble and Modest Approach

Never contradicting anyone flatly is the great "don't" in the habit of saying things the most pleasant way. Being modest, presenting one's view modestly, is the great "do." Alexander Pope recommends that one "speak, tho' sure, with seeming diffidence." A humble manner makes people want to agree with you, whereas, according to Benjamin Franklin, "a positive, assuming manner, that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create opposition." Boys like to throw snowballs at a silk top hat and objections at a cocksure speaker. Lord Chesterfield says, "Be wiser than other people, if you can; but do not tell them so."

Franklin in his *Autobiography* presents the clearest case for the modest approach. He says he dropped his "abrupt contradiction and positive argumentation," and acquired and retained the habit of expressing himself "in terms of modest diffidence." His method is so well described and so practical for everyone that it deserves to be quoted. It is as follows:

". . . never using, when I advanced anything that may possibly be disputed, the words *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, or any others that give the air of positiveness to an opinion, but rather say, I conceive or apprehend a thing to be so and so; it appears to me, or I should think it so or so, for such and such reason; or I imagine it to be so; or it is so, if I am not mistaken . . ."

Such a habit of modesty in presentation becomes everybody and would help to make the family circle more amiable and international congresses more peaceful.

Saying Things as Others See Them

Modesty of viewpoint and avoidance of bald contradictions must in a really courteous and tactful person be supplemented by a regular talent and habit of saying things as others hear them. Secretary Lansing once related how a gallant French official, required to make out a passport for a lady who unfortunately had only one eye, wrote, "Eyes, brilliant, brown and expressive, only one missing." Here was a case of choosing the words which had the best possible sound for the other person. In like manner, a

shoe clerk will say to a lady who asks which of her feet is larger that her left foot is *smaller*.

A moment's thought as to the other's viewpoint will often enable one, without dishonesty, to change the emphasis so as to sound less harsh. A verse by Elinor Powell in the *New York Post* indicates this:

“. . . say I'm eccentric, but don't say crazy.
My nose isn't large—my features are prominent.
Oh, you can work wonders by watching your diction.”

It is more painful to be called too old for a job than not young enough for it; too fat for a part than not slender enough; too clumsy than not handy enough. A mother would rather be told that her child is backward than a moron. An English teacher was right in telling his pupils that “Horses sweat, men perspire, but ladies merely glow.”

The Compliment Is Mightier Than the Command

Nice words are more irresistible than good looks. Soft talkers win more hearts than rude Adonises. A mother, anxious for her daughter, fears more a man's so-called line than his wavy hair. Most of us recognize the power of the soft phrase in love. But we don't realize quite so well that in controversy, too, the fair analogy wins faster than the harsh syllogism. The Bible says of the serpent that tempted Eve that it was “more subtle than any of the beasts of the earth.” And the first thing the serpent said to Eve was not an abstract argument but something which touched her own personal vanity. “Why,” asked the serpent, “hath God commanded you, that you should not eat of every tree of paradise?” — as much as to imply that surely one should expect that a fair and wondrous creature like herself should have the right to eat of every tree.

In Words “Be Ye Wise As——”

The subtlety of the words the serpent employed for an evil purpose, good men will employ for good purposes. “*Be ye wise as serpents,*” said the Lord. The debater who instead of saying, “Your hospitals are only one third as modern as ours,” said, “Your hospitals are three times as backward as ours,” made everybody mad. When Louis XIV, instead of saying, “I speak for the State,” said, “I am the State,” he built the first steps up the guillotine that beheaded his successors. When Bethmann-Hollweg in 1914 referred to the

treaty guaranteeing Belgium's neutrality as "a scrap of paper," he unwittingly did a lot to change a European war into a world war. And some say that the farmers of Iowa have never been quite tractable since the late Vice-President Curtis said that they "were too dumb to understand national issues." Yes, Queen Victoria's husband was right when he advised her that "*Often it is just the way a thing is said that decides whether it shall be peace or war.*"

CHAPTER II

FORGIVING OUR FRIENDS AND KEEPING THEM

This article, originally entitled, "Don't Lose Your Friends: They Are Not Expendable," is also reprinted from THE QUEEN'S WORK, April, 1945. It describes what seems to me the very heart of the Christian moral order, that we must love even our enemies and forgive all human beings, not because they deserve it, but because they are our brethren in Christ and because it is necessary and good for us to forgive them. It maintains that forgiving our friends is the chief secret of keeping them.

Our Best Friends Sometime Let Us Down

One thing you can safely predict about your friends is that some time or other they will let you down. It may be only in a small matter. He assured you he would pick you up at such a spot exactly at five; you are there at five, and it also starts raining at five, but your friend doesn't come until five-thirty. In big things or small, it is a safe bet, your friends will sometimes disappoint you.

The best man in all the world, Our Lord Himself, was sometimes let down by his friends. One of the Twelve betrayed Him with a kiss, and the great Peter, in the hour of Christ's greatest trial, denied his Master three times.

Forgiving "Seventy Times Seven Times" Seemed Impossible

Whenever, as a boy, I thought of Christ's order to forgive an offending brother "seventy times seven times," I used to shudder. I felt somewhat like the little girl who, having been often warned that God didn't like this and the policeman would get her for that, said, "Wouldn't this be a jolly world if it weren't for God and policemen." It seemed to my boyish mind that Our Lord insisted upon this multitudinous forgiving of our brethren merely to beset the way to heaven with a lot of stiff hurdles. It was one of His especially ingenious devices, I thought, for making the already narrow path to heaven also bumpy.

A Fellow Who Wouldn't Forgive His Girl Even Once

It took the experience of a friend, years later, to make me see that the command to forgive is given us, not to make it hard to get to Heaven, but to make it easier to live on earth. This friend

liked a girl so much that, while not yet formally engaged, he had got her to promise never to date anyone else any more. One day he learned that she had nevertheless had such a date. It seems a former boy friend had simply dropped in one evening, and she had found it simpler to go to a show with him than to turn him out.

But my friend was furious. He denied that he was jealous. A principle was at stake, he declared. She had promised to have no other dates, and she had broken her promise. If a girl even before marriage can break such a promise, he told her, then obviously she cannot be trusted to make a good wife. No explanations, he argued, could alter the presumption that he who breaks a promise once will never keep promises.

Now the Happy Husband of the Girl He Long Couldn't Forgive

And so they broke off. Cutting his nose off to spite his face, he drove her into steady company with the man she would otherwise have seen only once or twice. For himself, he was self-righteously miserable and lonely. He met one girl, as if on the proverbial rebound, and dated her enthusiastically for two months, and then suddenly tired of her—almost to nausea. The girl, of course, was hurt and could not understand. The process repeated itself with another girl.

Since he was an honorable fellow, his fickleness added to his unhappiness. When, however, reproached for not trying to make up with the first girl, he still vehemently insisted that no making up was possible with a girl who had once let him down. It took him two more years along the hard and bitter road of experience to learn what Christ wanted to tell him in one sentence.

Luckily for him, though not for the men who had wasted their time on her, the girl had likewise not found another "To free the hollow heart from paining," as Coleridge says, and so was able to take him back. Today, he is the happy husband of the girl he long shunned as never to be trusted again because she had once under stress broken one promise. Three children now think the mother he picked is wonderful!

Our Happiness Requires That We Learn to Forgive

Observing the misery these two young people brought upon themselves and others because one of them self-righteously re-

fused to forgive the other's real if small offense made me see that Jesus told us to forgive "seventy times seven times" because He loved us so much and hated to see us go through life along a trail of bruises. The old Roman Stoic, Epictetus, I became convinced, was right. He said,

"If anyone will take these two words to heart and use them for his own guidance and regulation, he will be almost without sin and will lead a very peaceful life. These two words are *bear* and *forbear*."

We must learn to forbear, to forgive, if we want to be happy. Human beings are weak, and our nearest and dearest will often disappoint us. "To err is human," says Pope, "to forgive, divine." It is more than divine; it is a social necessity. St. Augustine spoke of mankind as a mass of sin. Just as we quite literally have daily cause to ask God to "forgive us our trespasses," so we also have frequent need to forgive one another our trespasses.

The Best of Human Beings Often Are Weak

The beginning of charity is realizing how weak and foolish and irresponsible human beings really are. "Know all," says Thomas a Kempis, "and you will pardon all." When an American said rebukingly that the French don't trust their wives, a Frenchman replied, "We trust our wives perfectly; what we don't trust is human nature."

A fine, religious girl was engaged to be married in a month to an equally fine man, a doctor. When an old boy friend came to town and called her up, she felt an irresistible urge to see him again. Telling her fiance she was attending club meetings, she had several dates with this man. After a few dates the novelty wore off, and she married the doctor on schedule—and was overwhelmingly happy. Yet who will gauge the tragedy that could have resulted if her fiance had discovered her deceit. Few would have blamed him for breaking the engagement. Yet here, too, the path of happiness lay along Christ's words and a patient understanding of human weakness.

Once I was shocked to learn from a girl that a most gentlemanly boy, a few weeks before he married his regular girl friend of years standing, had asked her for a date. Since he was handsome, this girl was attracted to him. But she was also an exceptionally fine

Catholic, and reminding him gently of his obligation to the girl he had gone with for years, declined the date. He then married his regular girl friend and now has a happy family. Had she learned of his attempted disloyalty, many would have justified her in discarding him. Yet here, too, their path of happiness lay along Christ's words.

Boys Disappoint Girls

It is often said one should hope for the best and expect the worst. Towards our friends and acquaintances, this is too strong, too cynical. Nevertheless, the sooner one learns not to expect too much of one's friends, the better it will be for everybody. Young people especially are inclined to expect idealistic perfection on the part of those they love. Every boy likes to think his father can lick every man coming, except maybe Joe Louis. Every little boy is hurt when his older sister suddenly seems to prefer some bearded stranger to him, and every kid sister is alarmed when her older brother brings some sophisticated "woman" to dinner. A girl who has met her first "one and only" is crushed to have him call for her late, is shocked when she learns that he, too, takes a strong drink once in a while, is humiliated when she finds him at times lying and boastful, is bewildered and sick when she is forced to realize that, when he sees someone else with a beautiful girl, he directly maneuvers, in spite of his regard for her, an exchange of dances.

Girls Disappoint Men

Similarly a boy who has just decided to devote his every sigh to the "one perfect and beautiful angel" is surprised to find her seldom ready on time, perturbed to have her often put him off with dubious headaches and too-busy pleas, disillusioned to learn that she has had dates with several other men in her life, shudders to think that she has possibly even been kissed before, is pained to see her dance almost cheek to cheek with precisely the handsomest of his friends, and finally burns with a jealous fury when during one exchange-dance she and her temporary escort walk out to the balcony for two minutes.

Both Men and Women Are Foolish

One young husband raised such a row because after a dance the escort held the wife's hand a moment longer than necessary that she vowed never to attend another dance—and kept it. The great Russian writer, Dostoevski, once stalked away angry from

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a reception because, he later explained, his wife had permitted someone to kiss her hand "too passionately." Between two college students a long friendship was forever disrupted because one of them as a stag failed to return the girl after two numbers, instead of the one, as had been agreed. One chairman of the picture committee and his classmate became permanently estranged because the classmate failed to get his picture taken for the yearbook. Every year hundreds of friendships are strained and even wrecked because the more ardent letter writer cannot forgive the one whose reply is late.

Don't Expect Perfection From Others

When we are young we tend to expect from our friends such love, attention, and devotion as angels could give us, but human beings are sure to fail in. In Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, Emily says to George, both in high school, "I always expect a man to be perfect," and George answers, "I feel it's the other way around. That men aren't naturally good; but girls are." Realizing that no one is perfect, and not expecting so much, is a sure sign that we are growing in wisdom. Samuel Johnson, a great and good man, needed age before he was wise enough to say,

"As I know more of mankind I expect less of them, and am ready now to call a man a *good man* upon easier terms than I was formerly."

Lucky is anyone who learns young as Addison phrases it, "how to wink at human frailty, or pardon weakness that he never felt." The poet George Herbert says still more wisely, "Pardon all but thyself."

Everyone should obviously try very hard never to disappoint others, should strive neither in big things or small to "let down" parents, friends, or sweethearts. He should not easily pardon himself. But toward others the mandate of the "Our Father" is clear, "forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." This is not a counsel of perfection; it is an elementary duty.

If a Sweetheart is Seriously Wrong

But the question arises as to what we must do if friend or sweetheart is guilty, not of a frailty, of a venial sin, but of a vice, of a crime, of a mortal sin. A girl, formally engaged to a man, discovered him to have had an affair with another girl. What was

her right or duty here? She had the right, it seems, to marry him anyway. But certainly she also had the right to break off the engagement, as she did. The meaning of forgiveness is difficult in such cases. She is required to forgive him in the sense of not wishing him ill or bearing him a grudge.

Forgiving Does Not Mean Marrying

But one does not need to marry everyone whom one forgives, or to take into one's home all the neighbors that Scripture enjoins us to love. If a girl finds that her boy friend is a chronic drunkard, surely religion permits and wisdom dictates that she refuse to marry him. If my friend slips from frailty into vice, into consorting with thieves, drunkards, atheists, libertinists, I ought to pray for him; I have no right to abuse him or break his neck; I ought to feel sorry for him, not hateful towards him. But certainly also I have a right to disassociate myself from his friendly company. I need no longer welcome him as a personal friend.

A good rule is to avoid people who are so wicked or so weak as to do the sort of things which objectively are mortal sins. If a friend or loved one sinks to that level, sorrowfully but firmly turn away and find someone better. But if the wrongs done, even if they greatly hurt your vanity or convenience, are really at worst only venial sins, not only forgive them, but forget them. Better still, take practically no notice of them. Let them not disturb the course of your friendship. Even a more serious trespass, if it is but a rare, an occasional lapse of weakness, had better be gracefully forgiven and forgotten.

A Girl Forgives a Fellow Who Got Drunk

One young fellow, after staying on the water wagon two years to establish his worthiness, was finally accepted. At ten Saturday morning the girl was to wait for him in the courthouse to get the license. The night before, his friends gave him a bachelor party. After two years, it happened. He had to be carried home. He had not told his friends of his all-important appointment. The girl waited for two hours. At three in the afternoon a sick-looking individual begged her mother to arrange that he might see her. I am happy to report that she agreed to repeat the appointment, on condition that he spend the preceding Friday night with her mother! They have two children now. He thinks that all this insistence on forgiving trespasses in the "Our Father" is exactly what the world needs!

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CHAPTER III

COURTESY AND KINDNESS BEGIN IN THE HEART

This article, originally entitled, "Is Your Heart In the Right Place," is reprinted from THE CATHOLIC HOME JOURNAL, July, 1944. It enforces the truism that the way to be loved is to love, (meaning affection, not romantic love, where luckily it does not always work). Most people about to meet someone important to them say to themselves, "I wonder, will he (or she) like me?" According to this article, that is exactly wrong, for it implies a kind of fear, and fear produces antagonism. The right approach is, "I don't know what he will be like, but from all I have heard about him and considering all his responsibilities, one would almost have to like him (or her)." So, being sympathetic ourselves, we ourselves can hardly help being liked.

Children and Animals Sense Who Likes Them

How, way down deep in your heart, you *feel* towards people has more to do with making them like you or dislike you than what you say to them and often even what you do to them. A mother with a heart full of love can spank a child, and the child in tears and pain will yet throw her arms lovingly about the mother.

Children by instinct or intuition will not take to a person who acts very nice but who is really callous and indifferent at heart, yet will at the same time take to an apparently gruff person who really has "a truly kind mind hidden beneath the rough surface."

Everybody has this intuition to a degree. Even animals have it. We have often seen children abuse a pet dog most cruelly and yet to our amazement the dog, though howling with pain, will not bite the children. The reason is that he instinctively sees that the children love him. And even an animal doesn't bite someone who really loves it.

True Kindness Tamed a Lion

When Androclus in the old story saw the lion suffering from a thorn in its paw, he felt sympathy for the lion. And the fierce beast, recognizing this sympathy, submitted gently to Androclus' pulling the thorn out. Later in the arena, this same lion, starved and maddened, was let loose upon Androclus to devour him. But the lion, catching the same kindly look in Androclus' eyes that it saw there when Androclus pulled the thorn out of its paw, grew gentle, too, and refused to attack the saint.

Fear Makes Enemies

Scientists say that when a person encounters what he is afraid of his adrenal glands will give off an odor perceivable by any animal and arouse it to attack. The psychology of this seems to be that whatever we fear we dislike or hate. Fearing an animal, we hate it and the animal, instinctively perceiving this, dislikes, too, and sometimes bites.

We Must Not Merely Act Kind But Try to Feel Kind

But just as an animal intuitively perceives that someone dislikes it, so human beings intuitively and often unconsciously feel that someone really likes them or really dislikes them. Human beings have the same basic intuitions animals have. Only with us reason has often overlaid intuition.

No matter how nice we act towards people, if way down in our heart we do not really like them, they will intuitively feel it and dislike us, too.

This fact is constantly giving rise to perplexity and grief. Many a mother-in-law says, "I don't see why John's wife is so nasty to me, when I am trying so hard to be nice to her." The question to ask is: Way deep down in your heart did you really want your son to marry her, do you really like her? If you do, you won't have to try to be nice to her, and if you don't you can't be *really* nice to her.

Love Sinners the Way a Mother Loves a Sinful Son

The place to start making friends is in your heart. If you can really get yourself to like people, to disapprove of their sins but to love the sinners the way you disapprove of your son's swearing yet love him in spite of it, then people will like you. And they can't help liking you.

A man famous for friendship is Big Jim Farley. When on his fiftieth birthday he was asked how he was able to make so many friends, he replied: "*I have made friends because I couldn't help it. I like people, and I like to meet new people, and the older I get the more convinced I am that on the whole the human race is pretty good.*" In that statement we have the essence of the matter: "I like people." He has many friends—because people just can't help liking someone who deep down in his heart likes them.

In Dorothy Canfield Fisher's novel, *Her Son's Wife*, a mother is upset because her son married what she thought a too ordinary and uncultured girl. But she determined for her son's sake to be nice to her. She was mortified and shocked when the daughter-in-law, though treated "nicely," was not grateful and nice in return. She need not have been surprised. What the young wife wanted was love, the mother's honest-to-goodness kindness of heart. Had the mother converted her heart, instead of merely her external manners, so as to feel toward the wife's faults the way she felt towards any of her son's shortcomings, then the young wife could not have helped liking her.

Love Does Not Necessarily Beget Love But It Does Beget Affection

One can say that it is almost impossible for people not to like someone who sincerely likes them. If you really like someone it becomes almost a psychological necessity for her to like you. As far as friendship goes, the expression, "Love is mutual" is true. As regards romantic love, of course, though it is often true, it is not essentially true. John's falling in love with Mary does not necessarily make Mary fall in love with John. It would be unfortunate if it were true, for John might be a married boss that has fallen in love with Mary! Love and sex are something over and above friendship, and should be. Romantic love should be for one, and only one person, and one should want it returned by only one person.

It's Important to Learn to Like Certain People

But friendly love we should feel for many people and should want it returned by many people. Ideally we should feel it for everybody and want everybody to feel it towards us. Practically we can make everybody like us whom we, deep down in our heart, sincerely like.

Very often, however, we don't like precisely the persons whom it would be more happy and fortunate for us to like. In school life it happens over and over again that the child that finds grammar hard will, even before she gets into the English class, dislike the new English teacher. Thousands of potentially happy jobs are soured by the fact that the new employees go to work the first day with a sort of fear and consequent dislike for their new bosses. A new recruit gets himself two strikes right off by feeling certain that the sergeant will mistreat him and that somehow he won't take it lying down.

How to Learn to Like Your Future Mother-In-Law

A boy asks his best girl to meet his folks. She exclaims, "Oh, Tom, that's darling. Your mother, I bet, is a most charming woman. I am dying to meet her." So says Mary, and what she says she wants to mean. But actually, what begins to happen inside of Mary?

What Mary Did Do

Something deep down in her heart begins to speculate unhappily. "I wonder what Tom's mother is really like. I bet she thinks Tom is marvelous. But I do hope she isn't like so many mothers who think no one is good enough for their sons. I'll have to behave extra well and be very, very nice to her. It would be terrible if she did not like me." And even now the evil seed is sown. By this time Mary deep down in her heart is no longer anxious to meet Tom's mother. Deep down, she now fears the mother, and whom we fear we do not like.

When she meets Tom's mother, (who is just an ordinary human being with all the virtues and faults of ordinary people, not a saint or a wise and patient psychologist) the mother will intuitively sense that Mary doesn't really like her even though she tries hard to act as if she does. And so a mutual dislike, silent of course, suppressed and frozen over, has nevertheless been born. Both will suffer from it, and poor Tom will be bitterly perplexed to note that two such good people, both of whom love him so much, should somehow not like each other.

What Mary Should Have Done

However, if Mary had instead allowed herself to daydream somewhat as follows, everything would have been different:

"I am glad to have a chance to meet Tom's mother. But naturally it will be a little difficult for both of us. Even though she is Tom's mother, I must expect her to be after all just an ordinary woman. Just like my mother, she will be worried whether the girl her son picked is worthy of him. Without her realizing it and though she would never be able to admit it even to herself, she will tend to be a bit fearful of anyone who is threatening to take her son from her. My mother would be the same way. Possibly she will even be a little afraid that I

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won't like her, just as I tend to be afraid that she might not like me, and harden on that account. I'll just do the best I can do to sympathize with her unconscious feelings—they are natural. I ought to be glad she is a natural mother, and I'll not be fearful or resentful about it. I'll keep remembering that but for her there would be no Tom, so what if she does hate to give Tom up. Heavens, how difficult my mother has often been. But somehow in the end she usually gives me what I have a right to want, and that's just the way I'll think of Tom's mother."

And magically, Mary deep down in her heart would have begun to like Tom's mother. She would be glad, not afraid, to meet her; she would look forward joyfully to the little strategies for getting the mother's real consent to Tom's release. On their being introduced, this feeling of deep-down kindness would shine out of her eyes, and Tom's mother would feel it intuitively, and in that moment the feminine peck would be transformed into the motherly kiss.

Don't Scold Anyone When Angry

Parents are told not to punish a child in anger or scold in anger. But the reason is not that while angry one might hit too hard or scold too loud. The reason is that in the moment of anger one doesn't love. In that one moment of anger the parent doesn't really like the child. And therefore such angry punishment arouses hatred and bitterness and sullenness. Untold grief comes from the tendency of people to "speak their minds" precisely when they are irritated and angry. If a husband doesn't like his wife's hat, the one moment he shouldn't pick to tell her about it is when he is angry with her because she burnt his supper.

When we want to correct someone, the right time and setting for doing it is a moment when there is sunshine in our heart for him and when the shadow of his fault is at its noonday smallest. If this rule is observed, then, like the pet dog whom the children abuse, it is astonishing what scoldings and punishments people will take from someone who sincerely likes them. This is so true that some scoldings and punishments have been accepted as tokens of love.

Let Your Hard Words Never Hide Your Soft Heart

A custom (not recommended to American husbands) is practiced among some Siberian tribes which makes pain a token of

love. Husbands are said to keep leather tongs hanging on the bed post with which they administer weekly chastisements upon their wives, and the wives are said to consider this as proof that their husbands still love them as much as ever! In other words, just as scolding born of jealousy is taken to prove sexual love, so any scolding, if the heart is in the right place, can give the impression of genuine regard. The way Jesus said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan," made Peter a disciple forever.

When that genuine regard shows through the eyes, the hardest words fall soft, and the hardest blows are merely physical. Even Isaac, we gather, because he saw how deeply Abraham loved him, did not hate his father even when his father was placing him on the sacrificial altar. When Jephthe in the Old Testament told his daughter, while rending his garments from grief and love, that he would have to sacrifice her, "*for I have opened my mouth to the Lord, and I can do no other thing,*" his daughter, feeling his great regard, told him not to hesitate, for, in the poet Byron's words,

*If the hand that I love lay me low,
There cannot be pain in the blow!
. . . forget not I smiled as I died!*

When a Loyal Soldier Called Lincoln a Fool

During the Civil War a young Lieutenant Colonel, Oliver Wendell Holmes, was very proud to show his Commander-in-chief about the fortifications. But at an exposed point, the Commander-in-chief somewhat recklessly got up from the trenches to see the enemy lines. In a second there was a flash of enemy musketry. In excited and affectionate urgency, the young officer grabbed the Commander-in-chief by the arm and pulled him under cover, crying, "Get down, you fool!" A moment after he was appalled by what he had said. But Abraham Lincoln looked at the young officer, and said, "I'm glad to see you know how to talk to a civilian." Even a Commander-in-chief can't really be resentful when someone rebukes him but rebukes him justly and with his heart in the right place!

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CHAPTER IV

THE REAL REASON, OR MERELY A "GOOD" REASON

This article originally appeared in THE QUEEN'S WORK, May, 1944, as "Do You Give Real or Phony Reasons?" Everybody sneers at the person who cheats at solitaire. Yet one of the most prevalent vices is self-deception as regards our true reason for doing things. Whole nations deceive themselves as to their true reasons for going to war. They make themselves think they fight to make the world safe for democracy, and recognize too late that they fought selfishly to crowd a capable competitor out of the world markets. Recognizing real as against phony or secondary motives would have prevented many wars.

In individuals it would prevent many of life's greatest blunders and sins. This article, however, does not so much instruct as to how one can come to recognize one's real reasons, as that, recognizing them, one should give one's real reasons to others, rather than one's secondary ones. Secondary reasons often are "good" reasons, and it is not always wrong or dishonest to use them. Nevertheless, they are in effect usually phony. They are not the real honest-to-goodness reason why we did a thing. It is strongly suggested here that telling others our honest-to-goodness reason for our assents and for our refusals is generally by far the wisest course.

Among Several Reasons One Is The Real One

People, especially young people, could save themselves much trouble if they made clear their real reasons and buried their merely good reasons. People too frequently confuse good reasons with the real reason.

A lady and a recent acquaintance chance to have lunch together on Friday, and she orders fish. The friend asks casually, "Why are you ordering fish today?" Instantaneously several reasons spring to her mind: that as a Catholic she may not eat meat on Friday, that fish is a wholesome food, that she likes fish, that fish is not rationed, or, playfully, that fish is brain food. From among these reasons she produces this one: "Oh, I like fish."

Psychology on Good and Real Reasons

Her answer represents what psychologists call giving a good reason instead of the real reason. James Harvey Robinson, in the classical *The Mind in the Making*, says,

date, she said that she was staying in another city and couldn't go. When he saw her that Sunday in church he felt she had evidently not liked him at all and put him off with a lie. During the next few years their paths crossed several times but they never spoke again. Years after and too late these facts transpired: She had said no to him because she was younger than she looked and her mother had absolutely forbidden her to have dates; she had actually been staying a few weeks with her aunt in another city and gave that as the good but not the real reason; she had then and for several years after been as much attracted to him as he to her, but she was too bashful and he too deceived to brush away the phony reason for the first refusal. One can easily imagine the happy, if sensibly delayed, romance that would have developed had she said: "My mother says I am too young to go out on dates. But thank you for asking."

When a Married Man Asks for a Date

The hedging girls will do when a married man asks for a date is pathetic. Every one of the good reasons suggests a smarter counter-reason to him until she is virtually committed to say yes or look naive and dishonest. He asks to take her to lunch Thursday. She answers she regretfully has an engagement for Thursday. This may be a fact but it is not the real reason for her no. He is therefore invited to say, "Too bad. What about Friday?" Finally she either has to say yes or shift her ground. She again sidesteps the real reason and says she prefers to lunch alone or with her girl friends. He naturally counters with, "But I saw you have lunch with Sam Harris last week," or, "Surely you can do without your girl friends for one lunch." So she is cornered again and tries to escape with, "Well, the fact is, I don't like you that way." He correctly answers, "But you don't have to like me that way. It's just a lunch. I am not asking you to love me."

Her Phony Excuses Corner Her

By this time she is dangerously cornered. Her predicament will now stimulate a dozen good reasons for perhaps saying yes after all. It's only a lunch; many girls go out to lunch with married men; it doesn't mean anything; she really needs the good lunch he would undoubtedly buy her; there is really no sin in just having lunch with a married man, etc., etc. If she says yes, she has merely postponed the day for the real reason and has taken her first hesitant step towards scandal and adultery.

One sentence containing the real reason would have saved her all this fencing on the losing side and would have won her instant respect, too. She simply ought to have said immediately and gently and firmly:

"If you weren't married I'd be glad to go to lunch with you. But no matter how well you may mean it, I do not go out with married men, not even to lunch."

If he is a particularly bad sort, some more side-stepping reasoning is possible. He may now say, "Why not? What's wrong with going to lunch with a married man?" If she now grasps for a good instead of the real reason, she will say, "Oh, your wife wouldn't like it," which corners her again when he says, "Oh, she doesn't mind at all," or, "She and I have been separated for months." In this, as in all cases, there is only one reason one can stand on and stand by and that is the real reason: "You are a married man and even a luncheon date starts something that can't honorably be finished. We won't start it."

Phony Reasons May Get a Girl Into Sin

A girl is asked for a date by a man whose character or intentions she doubts but whom she otherwise likes. If, giving the real reason, she says, "Thanks for asking. But because I don't know you well enough or what you are like, I can't say yes," she gives him a chance to try to prove himself decent and worthy of an eventual glad yes. But if she sidesteps the real reason and says, "We haven't been properly introduced," he can produce a casual introduction and so virtually commit her to go out with him. If she says she is busy, he will either leave her as hopeless or persist in naming alternate dates until both feel resentful and humiliated.

A Catholic girl, learning after some dates that an otherwise fine and attractive fellow was divorced, wanted to break off with him. This proved to be difficult to do. The chief cause was that she kept giving reasons which after some reflection (and another date) the man could logically brush aside. She said, "I'm not really in love with you." He answered, "After enough dates you may come to love me." She said, "We belong to different religions." He answered, "Even your church recognizes that some mixed marriages turn out well." She said, "I don't know anything about your family." He answered, "I am making arrangements to have you meet them." More and more cornered, she said, "I could never be happy married to a man who had been married before." He an-

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swered, "Some of the happiest marriages on record have been second marriages."

At long last, repeatedly and ignobly forced to shift her ground, she produced the real reason:

"For a Catholic like me, marrying a divorced man is absolutely out of the question, and therefore even going out with a divorced man is pointless. That's why, no matter how I might like things to be otherwise, we won't date each other any more."

The Real Reason When She Just Doesn't Want the Date

If a girl is simply unable to like a worthy boy for no reason whatever, even then it is best courteously to say so frankly, as Olivia in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, speaking to the Duke's page, does:

"Your lord does know my mind; I cannot love him.

"Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble. . . .

"A gracious person: but yet I cannot love him."

She should say, "You seem to be nice and all that, and I feel flattered that you ask me, but I simply don't like you romantically at all and therefore please don't ask me any more to go out with you, for I will have to say no." Most men have often enough felt just like that towards girls who liked them and will therefore easily understand and go away, if they are reasonably civilized, still being friendly.

When It's a Sin One Must Say No Because It Is a Sin

Giving the real reason is obviously important where serious danger or sin hang in the balance. If he insists she drink or she drink more, such refusals as, "It doesn't taste good," or "You have spent enough on me," or "It's getting late," or "I have a headache," can all be argued down and leave her almost committed to take the drink. If she doesn't drink at all and doesn't want to, she should say frankly, "No, thanks, I never drink," or if truer, "No thanks, I make it a practice not to drink on dates." If she drinks moderately but feels she has had enough, she should say, "No thanks, I have had as much as is good for me." These positions she can defend and in fact she does not need to defend them. She can simply stand on them and gentlemen will accept them. But phony reasons no one need accept.

The more serious the temptation, the more important it is to state and insist on the real reason. Does he want to park the car in a lonely spot? Is he urging going to his apartment or to a hotel room? Is he attempting dangerous familiarities? Only the real reason for refusing stands the healthy chance of succeeding.

Is he saying, "We can't get married now. But why must we wait to have fun? Everybody is doing it"? At such a point, when her own flesh would betray her soul, phony reasons would be her undoing. Answers such as, "I don't feel like it," or "Somebody would find out," or "There might be a baby," or "We might get sick," or "Afterwards you would loathe me," or "I don't love you enough," or "Let's wait for a better time and place," all such good reasons are little more than the front-line pawns to sin. The tempter will logically brush each of them aside. Their weakness will even make him feel justified—and, alas, sometimes her too.

The Real Reason Is The Only Final Reason

There is only one unassailable reason. One reason by which she can live and by which she can die, and which no man can argue down. And that real reason is:

"Some things are right only in marriage. When I'm married I will do them, and not till then. I am sure this is the last time you will make any such dishonorable suggestion to me."

Yes, there are good reasons and there is the real reason. The good reasons are phony reasons and they finally make a person either look silly or be sinful. Sensible people will stop long enough to know their real reason and then they won't side-step it—to lean on a mere good one.

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CHAPTER V

WHEN A GIRL WANTS TO DECLINE A DATE

This article, too, first appeared under the above title in THE QUEEN'S WORK, May, 1946. It assumes that the truth is always desirable, even where it is most difficult, in matters of love and romance. It gives examples and illustrations which should help girls turn down unwelcome dates honestly and openly, yet not offensively.

I know that girls feel that they simply cannot get out of unwelcome dates except by subterfuges and lies and petty dishonesties. They feel they have to say that they are busy or sick or taking care of their grandmother, when, if the boy calling were the captain of the football team, they could say "Yes" immediately. I also know that many parents and even teachers and clergymen justify these methods and say they are not really lies. But I insist that they are lies, however small the fault of them may be. I also maintain that if God is the Truth, then any sort of dishonesty, however necessary it seems, cannot be the wisest procedure.

This article tries to help girls to be honest who do not feel happy about their subterfuges and "white lies." The Americantype of unchaperoned, free courtship is something comparatively new in the world. It brings with it a world of ethical problems. That of conducting it honestly is one of them. It has not been achieved. Courtship is still generally conducted in a web of dishonesties and deceptions. It is not an easy problem to solve. Nevertheless, when marriage finally forces the truth, the marriage often goes sour. This article contends that honesty is the best policy—though a difficult policy—and should begin with the very first date, or attempt at one.

One of Shakespeare's "Sweet Young Things" Tries to Sidestep a Date

The other day in my Shakespeare class I got myself into a totally unexpected bushel of trouble. I was trying to explain the ideals and attitudes of *Twelfth Night* to a class of junior college girls. Usually I stand by Shakespeare, come what may. But on this occasion I accused him of a false, a negative ideal. Ordinarily whenever the old Bard is discovered to have nodded, or is accused by some rash critic to have done so, the whole class rejoices at my expense in mischievous glee.

But this time there was an immediate and spirited rush to his defense. In this play Lady Olivia, though she admires and respects Count Orsino, feels that she cannot love him. However, he loves

her very much and keeps trying to see her, and, not being admitted himself, sends messengers. When there is a knock at the gate, Lady Olivia orders the servant to see if the messenger is from Count Orsino, and if so, to say, "I am sick, or not at home; what you will, to dismiss him" (Act II, Sc. iv).

"Here," I said sadly, "Shakespeare makes it seem right for Olivia to lie in order to get out of an unwelcome date. How unfortunate," I continued, "that this great poet, usually every bit as ethical as St. Thomas, should promote the universal vice of girls, that of lying when they don't want to go out with a man who calls them for a date!"

My Students Defend the Lie to Evade a Date

The spontaneous cry of protest that arose from every part of the classroom practically blew me behind my desk for safety. What was a girl to do, they exclaimed, when some drip calls for a date! Surely I didn't want them to say brutally, "I don't like you. I won't go out with you." After all one must save the boy's feelings. And the only way to do it, they protested, is by telling him that one is sick, or busy!

After the first wave had subsided slightly, one very conscientious girl confessed, "I have trouble all the time when I try to be honest with boys. Even my mother gets disgusted with me and says, 'Why don't you tell 'em you're sick, or let me answer the phone and tell 'em you are out, or something!'" I looked horrified and cried, "What! Can it be you girls even get your mothers to lie for you to get out of unwelcome dates?" Now they were just a bit discomfited, but it was clear their mothers did sometimes help them lie out of dates.

They Ask How a Girl Can Possibly Evade a Date Honestly

In a second, they were re-formed for battle. Seriously, they wanted to know what I had to suggest. What should they say to a boy who asks for a date but with whom they do not want to go out?

Now I was discomfited. After some obvious confusion I suggested haltingly, "Well, why don't you say to him, 'It's nice of you to ask me. But though I think you are nice too, I do not feel in the mood for a romantic friendship with you at this time.'" An avalanche of laughter and protests greeted this. One usually quiet

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girl asked archly, if I didn't think myself that that sounded somewhat stuffy. Another said, "He'd hate you for the rest of his life if you said that." A third said, "A boy would answer, 'Don't give yourself big ideas. Who said anything about romance. All I asked you is to go to a show with me.'"

We Admit That It Is Seldom Easy to Deny Any Requests

At this point, happily, the bell rang. On my way home I had a chance to do some good hard thinking on the subject. Soon I came to my first conclusion. It is that no matter how you face it, getting out of an unwelcome date is not as easy as accepting a welcome one. It's not as easy as falling off a log. It's harder than telling father you got another "F" in department, or mother that you don't like the type of dresses she always picks for you. Yes, I realized, it wasn't easy to tell a boy you did not want to go out with him.

Better a Painful Truth Than Any Kind of Lie

But I felt more certain than ever that using Olivia's method, lying to him, deceiving him, could not possibly be the right way. I cannot believe that deceiving a person is being charitable with him. I remember Goethe's saying that he preferred a painful truth to a painless lie, because, he argued, the lie will sooner or later do harm and the truth cannot but be the best policy in the end.

A Boy Put a Lying Girl On the Spot

For one thing, in many cases, lying either fails or provokes a really devastating rudeness eventually. One girl complained to me one time that she had had a date with a foreign student towards whom she felt a particular dislike. I asked her why she was so foolish as to accept a date with him if she did not like him. She explained that when he asked for a date on Thursday, she glibly answered that she was busy, whereupon he said, "Well, what about Friday?" She, of course, declared that unfortunately she was busy Friday too, and hoped surely that would end matters. Her continued account was amusing. It seems this boy was determined to put her on the spot—to make her either own up or put up. Pretending to take her at her word, he suggested Saturday, and then Sunday, and so on until he got around to another Thursday. For her to go on saying that she was busy would have been ludicrous. Finally to own up and say that she just did not want to date him would have proved her a liar. Consequently, she was on the spot where to put up was easier than to own up.

Because Most Girls Are Not Frank, Men Doubt All Excuses

Then there was the modest and considerate boy who asked a girl to a very fine Sunday afternoon concert. He had picked a particularly refined occasion to bring about their first date. When she answered that she had to take her parents out for a Sunday afternoon drive, he quite logically concluded that she had given him a typical feminine "white lie" and that a date with him was undoubtedly disagreeable to her. Being gentlemanly and sensitive to others' wishes, he never called her up again. Years afterwards he learned that the girl had not lied, did not consider his invitation unwelcome at all, but was in the habit of taking her parents, who were not very well, for a drive every Sunday afternoon and did not want to fail them just for what looked like a casual date. But when girls so generally get out of unwelcome dates by lying, how is a gentlemanly boy to know whether a girl's no is sincere and honest or is just a dishonest, and therefore really insulting, way of putting him off? Declining an invitation with a lie is really an insult because it implies that one does not consider the boy gentlemanly and cultured enough to accept and respect an honest no.

When a Girl Is Engaged

Somehow girls must find an honest way of declining an unwelcome date. Obviously, if a girl is married and a man invites her, she should, if he did not know her married, thank him for the honor and directly tell him that she is married. To a gentleman, no more need be said. If a girl is engaged to be married her answer should be similar. She should say, "I feel flattered that you should invite me. But because I am engaged, I do not accept other dates. Thank you for calling."

When a Girl Is "Out of Circulation"

If a girl is going steady with a boy under an agreement that neither is to date anyone else, but if nevertheless the possibility exists that they may shortly "break up" and that then she may very much want another invitation from the boy calling, then her answer should be negative but not quite final. She should say, "It's nice of you to invite me. But since March (or whatever time) I am going steady with a boy and we agreed not to date anyone else. Otherwise I should like to go with you. But for the present, you understand, I am sure, I must say no. But I do want to thank you for asking." Such an answer, honest and to the point, will raise a man's respect for the girl and also make him want to call her again

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should he ever learn or suspect that she is again in circulation. Instead of using the words, "going steady," some girls simply say they are out of circulation just now, and the man understands—and for the time being files her name away for future reference.

When a Girl Doesn't Like to Sacrifice Tried Boyfriends For a New One

It seems to me an almost similar answer is honestly possible in most other cases of unwelcome invitations. Occasionally a man calls a girl with whom she would not want to go out even if he were the last man on earth. More often, however, someone calls her with whom she would not particularly mind going out if there were no other men around, but in whom she is not interested enough to crowd into a sufficiently full schedule or to give the place of one of her better-known friends.

When such a boy calls, it seems to me, she could honestly and tactfully decline his invitation as follows: "Why, John (or Mr. Jones), it's good of you to call me. Ordinarily I'd be delighted to accept your invitation. But I am going out as much now as I have time for (or as mother allows me to), so that just now I prefer not to start going out with anybody new. But I do want you to know I appreciate your calling, and I hope we'll meet now and again somewhere or other."

A Frank "No" Hurts Less Than a Lying "No"

I am convinced that the average boy would understand and appreciate such an answer. While to a boy who likes the girl, any *no* cannot bring joy, yet this answer would keep him as a friend and potential date much better than putting him off with lies. Lies either fail in preventing the unwelcome date or are finally recognized by the boy as lies, in which case he will feel humiliated and angry. It is practically impossible for a man to find that he has been lied to without becoming angry and losing respect for the girl.

When a Married Man Calls

Finally, what will a girl say when a man calls with whom she wouldn't want to go out even if he were the last man on earth? Fortunately such cases, it seems to me, are rare. Obviously, if a married man invites her, she should firmly and not apologetically

tell him that she is shocked that he as a married man should ask her for a date and that of course she does not go out with married men. Nor should she suggest that his wife wouldn't like it. That is ultimately largely beside the point. A married man has no right to date other women, and a girl has no right to date him—no other consideration is necessary.

When a Divorced Man Asks for a Date

If a divorced man asks her for a date, her negative should be firm but kindly and sympathetic. She should thank him for the honor of his invitation. Then she should add firmly: "But my religion (and my family) forbid my dating a divorced man, and consequently, even though yours is just a friendly invitation, I prefer not to go out with a divorced man, even if he is very nice." Such an answer insults no man. Should he act insulted, he proves himself not only divorced but unrefined and unworthy as well.

When a "Bad Egg" Calls

If a notoriously fast or wicked fellow asks a girl for a date, I think she can well say, even should say, "I might be flattered at your interest, but unfortunately, you know your reputation is not such as any girl's mother should approve. So I am sorry I can't at all consider accepting your invitation." I don't think a girl should feel honored when a rake asks her for a date, and I think she should in declining make it clear that she does not feel honored and why. I am presuming that a girl knows the difference between the bad repute from immorality and the false social stigma a person sometimes suffers for his race or color or pacifism.

When Her Girlfriend's Boyfriend Calls

If a boy calls her who is going with her girl friend or is supposed to be going steady with some girl, she should say frankly, "John, you are going out with my girl friend (or you are supposed to be going steady with a girl). Under the circumstances my going out with you would cause ill feelings. Otherwise I would be glad to go with you, but this way, no." She should not say this, however, unless were he free she would like to go out with him. If not, she should say, "John, you have a girl friend, and my feelings for you are not such as would make it right for me to give you or promise you a date." This will discourage the boy from breaking off with the other girl under a false hope.

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When a Good Boy Calls Whom She Nevertheless "Can't Stand"

But what will a girl say to a man who is perfectly all right morally and socially, only she can't stand him or absolutely does not want to go out with him. He is, let us say, too short or too tall or too stupid or just not good-looking enough. In such a case honesty is difficult. Most girls insist that only by lying can they keep from hurting the boy's feelings. Nevertheless, I cannot look with favor upon any social intercourse that can only be kept smooth by lies. Olivia's way cannot be the right way.

When such a boy asks a girl for a date, and if she is sure she does not want to go with him, that she never will want to go out with him, she should say gently and sympathetically: "John, it is awfully nice of you to ask me to go out (or to invite me to a show). But I am sorry, John, I just don't feel toward you the way a girl should feel for accepting a date. I don't think it is right (or smart or wise) for a girl to start going out with a fellow, when she doesn't happen to feel like it at all. I would just be wasting an evening for you. For that reason I must say no. But, really, it was nice of you to call, even though I don't accept."

Saying "No" Honestly and Gracefully Requires Effort and Training

This said, she should stand by it firmly and say "Good-by" or "Good night" and not "Call again!" My Shakespeare class to the contrary notwithstanding, I don't want any girl to protest that such an answer or a similar one won't work until she has tried it! And before trying it, she should imagine the situation and rehearse her answer a bit. After all, every girl rehearses how she will say yes when the right man proposes. Why shouldn't she also rehearse for the times when she must say no, when she must deny, yet should not hurt or insult. Saying no honestly and tactfully is a hard and an angelic thing. It needs effort and study. Yes requires no study, and Beelzebub himself prompts the lies.

CHAPTER VI

HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY — ALWAYS

This article first appeared in THE VICTORIAN MAGAZINE, June, 1942, under the title, "Are We A Nation Of Liars?" and sub-titled, "Truth Takes a Beating Every Minute of the Day at the Hands of the 'Every-Day' Lie." This short article really applies the principle of never lying to all the affairs of life, whereas the previous one considered merely one phase of courtship.

Everybody says that honesty is the best policy. And everybody gets angry, very angry when anyone says he lied. Yet, I beg the readers of this article to pause a moment now and ask themselves whether there aren't some things about which they habitually tell, if not big, at least petty lies. Then after they have read the article, I should like them to make the same review. They will probably find that they have been habitually telling petty lies but have taken them so much for granted that they did not even recognize them as lies.

Honesty is one of the hardest virtues in the world. Just as no one ever attains complete sinlessness, so very few people ever reach a point where they never tell lies. But this article begs them at least to try not to lie—to try never to lie about anything—because "Honesty is the best policy"!

Most People Lie But Who Calls Them Liar Offends Them More Than If He Called Them Murderer

Even "a just man shall fall seven times," says the Bible. It has always seemed to me that the greater portion of these falls must be against the Eighth Commandment — Thou shalt not lie. For sinful though mankind is said to be, the only sin I see people commit frequently, every day as it were, is that against the truth.

"Mother, you answer the phone. If it's that Jones boy again, tell him I'm in bed with a cold." "Oh, there is that insurance collector coming. Susan, go tell him I am out for the afternoon." "Got in at three this morning, ugh. Sis, go call the office and tell them I'm sick and can't come to work today." "Oh, that bridge party. I hate it. Darling, you simply must call and tell them I have a headache and we can't come." And so it goes — the whirling round of small, everyday lying.

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Of course, these are not grave matters. Quite probably they are only the smallest kind of sins. But Cardinal Newman says, "... there is a way of winning men from greater sins by working for the time at less." And that seems especially true of lying. Surely if people will lie for so unimportant a thing as an hour of sleep or an escape from a bridge game, one must expect them to lie to save their life — or their job, or to keep their wife or their husband. If a student will lie about coming late to class when a mere scolding is involved, how can I expect him not to lie when I suspect him of having cheated in a final examination involving expulsion?

Wicked People Need The Lie to Escape the Law

Obviously, who will lie for a penny will much more likely lie for a dollar. The husband who will lie to his wife about that quarter which should have gone for cough medicine but went for beer, would certainly also lie to her if his "important business meeting" one evening had been with a blonde instead of a broker! "Sin has many tools," says Oliver Wendell Holmes in the *Autocrat*, "but a lie is the handle of them all."

The truth is so precious a thing that the bad simply cannot afford it. The lie is the indispensable passport for all evil-doers. The murderer that told the truth is in the electric chair. The adulterer that told the truth is paying alimony. The unfaithful wife who told the truth is a divorcee! One simply cannot be seriously bad and honest at the same time. One can be a thief without being a murderer; but if one is a thief one must be a liar also.

It Is a Pity When Decent People Use the Gangster's Stand-by

That is why honesty is really the guarantee of goodness, and that is why one simply cannot expect honesty from really bad people. People that break the law will have to lie to try to keep out of the clutches of the law.

That, too, is why it is somewhat pathetic and demoralizing when people who are not really bad, like those quoted above, prevaricate. It shows them stooping in unimportant and even innocent matters to the same tool that is, after the gun, the first weapon of the criminal. Use of the lie in everyday matters is as if

the ordinary citizen were caught walking about like a gangster with a tommy gun.

The Small Lie Paves the Way for the Larger Lapse

It isn't that the common house lie, as it were, is so black a sin. But neither is snapping "damn" or "hell"; yet it is crude. Neither is the common cold a dangerous sickness; yet it sometimes slips into pneumonia. And so the everyday lie is at least cheapening. It is a slow poisoner of self-respect. It is a weakener of mental and moral fiber. It may be a way-paver for graver sin. The girl who lies to her mother about smoking during a week-end visit will also one day expect to lie to her, if during another week-end party, she drinks too much! The little lie does not produce murder, but it makes the way easier. It prepares the pit if the great temptation should come!

The Quakers So Honest They Don't Need an Oath

Charles Lamb, in his charming essay, "*Imperfect Sympathies*," says that the Quakers were known to be so truthful in all the affairs of life that no oath was required of them in the law courts. By contrast people of other denominations, he says, were wont to indulge in a double second-rate sort of honesty in everyday affairs that one had to put them upon oath to be reasonably assured of the truth. This is a great compliment to the Quakers. I should like Catholics to acquire the reputation of being in all matters the most honest imaginable people!

Honesty Is Said To Be Not a Conspicuous Virtue Among Catholics.

They are not thought to be so now. Catholics are thought by many to be using the teaching about mental reservations as a cover for white and other lying. This accusation once inspired a famous book. A brilliant English clergyman and novelist, Charles Kingsley, once wrote, directing himself to the great Newman:

"Truth for its own sake had never been a virtue with the Roman clergy. Father Newman informs us that it need not, and on the whole, ought not to be . . ."

Newman, to refute this charge, which reverberated throughout the British Isles, wrote his famous *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*. I should

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Honesty Makes For Quick-Wittedness

Being honest in the everyday questions of life brings with it a reward right here and now. To cite Charles Lamb again. He says that the Quakers, because they are scrupulously careful not to lie on any occasion, acquire a unique mental quick-wittedness, for as it were, they have to be quick on the verbal trigger not to have to lie.

"The admirable presence of mind," he says, "which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies, might be traced to this self-imposed watchfulness" never to fall into a lie! In a way, only the cowardly or the stupid need to lie — and the Quaker has disciplined himself so that he is too smart to lie!

If God is the Truth, the Lie Cannot Be His Recommendation For Not Giving Pain

People often use the lie as a device to avoid giving pain. This of course cannot really be right. God could not be so cruel as to make the lie wrong on the one hand and on the other hand make it necessary to avoid hurting fellow beings. Nevertheless, not to lie and yet in certain instances not to give pain requires a great amount of verbal tactfulness and of nimbleness in side-stepping dangerous questions.

One reward of habitual honesty in the small things of life is a verbal tact and mental quickness which nothing else can give one so well. But most of all, avoidance of the everyday lie gives one a distinctive self-respect. It is a great thing for one's personality when one no longer needs to slap God in the face with a lie in order to spare a neighbor a dig in the ribs!

CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST THING A GIRL SHOULD ASK

This article was reprinted from THE VICTORIAN MAGAZINE, September, 1943, under the same title. Though it will seem somewhat simple to the sophisticated and meaningless to those who believe in divorce, it has important implications for the better conducting of the chaotic American manner of courtship. It is well to caution that what here is declared to be the first thing the girl should ask does not thereby become something the parents need not ask. It always remains the duty of parents, when and how they can, to keep their children from being courted by improper persons through ignorance.

Girls Now Usually Must Find Out for Themselves What Parents Used to Find Out for Them

In the good old days, if a fellow dropped in of an evening and seemed more interested in the daughter than in the table talk, the father promptly asked him what his intentions were. Before there was ever one date between boy and girl, parents found out for the girl if the fellow was eligible — free, married, or divorced.

But times and customs have changed and girls often live alone and far from home, and now it is a girl's duty to do for herself what parents did for her in those good old days. Yet, the one and first thing a girl should find out before considering a "date" she usually does *not* do. The modern girl who is not too bashful to wear the scantiest bathing suit is apparently too bashful to ask the one needful question, "Are you free, good, and single?" Only a few, mostly college graduates, have the poise to ask it.

A Girl Feared to Ask a Salesman If He is Married

For a whole year a seemingly nice salesman kept asking one of the best and most intelligent of girls for a date. Though she wanted much to go out with him, she kept declining because she did not know if he were single or not. Finally one day, after she had just about decided to say "yes," she overheard him long distance telephoning his wife. When she then asked him about a wife, he simply said, "Yes, I am married. But what difference does that make?"

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This very fine but foolish girl could so easily have brushed every thought of this fellow aside right at the start had she simply asked the first time he suggested a date if he were free and single. Politely she might have said, "I am inclined to say 'Yes', but I don't know enough about you. Are you sure you don't have a girl in your home town — or perhaps even a wife? Married men, you know, sometimes do ask girls for dates?"

The Quickest Way to the Truth Is to Question

A girl can follow up such a question until she gets a satisfactory answer. It also serves useful notice to a man that she is decent. A married man could, of course, lie. But he won't like to and probably won't do it well. A philandering husband prefers a girl to know he is married, if he thinks he can get away with it, for then there won't be a "comeback" afterwards. He can be expected to say, "Yes, I'm married, but what of that?" At any rate, she will get the truth sooner than otherwise.

The country is full of tragedies resulting from girls going out with men and learning too late that these smooth fellows are married. Some girls, whom we need not consider, for they are shameless, don't care to know if a man is married. They want a dance and a cocktail — paid for, no matter what the man. But most girls, I hope, want to go out only with decent, marriageable fellows.

A Good Man Does Not Fear The Question, A Bad One Doesn't Count

Then why don't they find out from a man as soon as he angles for a date if he is married. I believe it is a queer sort of bashfulness and lack of poise. And also a fear that they might scare away a worthwhile man. The latter is precisely where girls are wrong. Shrewd girls will have observed that every kind of man nearly always wangles from them early whether they are single or not. Somehow men make it a point to find out. And the right kind of man also wants a girl to use her wits and caution even against him. If she doesn't, he tends to feel that the girl who went out with him without having learned if he is free, good, and single, would just as naively have gone out with him had he been married — or with any ingratiating scoundrel.

And he shudders — is almost angry. A man hates to think that

it was merely the grace of God, not her own sense and caution, that kept the girl he would like to admire from dating a married man as readily as him.

Girls nowadays are on their own. Perhaps too much so. But while they are they have to do for themselves what parents and brothers did for them then. Before they go out with any man, they must take reasonable means to find out how proper and eligible a man is. This is not only a right; *it is a duty*. And the right man will respect and love her the more for it — and the wrong man be hanged!

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CHAPTER VIII

HOW NOT TO CHOOSE A MATE

This article, entitled the same, is reprinted from the THE CATHOLIC HOME JOURNAL, September, 1946. It playfully but with a serious undertone suggests that if all people insisted on marrying only such physically and morally perfect mates as the marriage counsellors prescribe the human race would quickly die out. What worries me here is that in Chapter II, "Forgiving Our Friends and Keeping Them," first published way back in April, 1945, I wrote, "If a girl finds that her boy friend is a chronic drunkard, surely religion permits, and wisdom dictates that she refuse to marry him" (p.12). If the present article seems not to support that sentiment, my answer is, first, that I myself, having aged another year, have become more charitable and kindly, secondly, that, as far as mere wisdom is concerned I still think it USUALLY wise for a girl to jilt a chronic drunkard but am glad that all girls do not exercise that wisdom, thirdly, that writers and preachers, even the best ones, like of course myself, should never be taken too seriously!

That also goes for the example I here make of myself in describing how ideas of marriage counselling have kept me a bachelor! The reader is invited to suspect some fancifulness among the real facts. Also when I say that I have given up, one must suspect some poetic exaggeration, (which I rise to explain merely because the previous chapters on lying have committed me never to deviate in the slightest from the truth)! As to giving up hope, I am reminded of the lady I met at a Writer's Conference. She was gray, seventy-five, and used a cane. Asked, why she came there, she said she was interested in writing. Asked, Had she ever written anything, she replied ingenuously, "No, I have never had time. But when I get it, I want to become a novelist!"

It's Natural to Want the Best "Bargain"

In building a house, buying a farm, choosing one's job, buying a horse, or "picking" a wife or husband, a person naturally looks for the best "bargain." And so those who teach prospective choosers quite naturally teach them how to choose the best.

In the matter of houses or horses this may do no harm at all, and may be productive of much good. If the teacher for example says, "Don't buy a house unless it has a full basement, at least two bedrooms, a modern bathroom, and rock wool insulation," the net result might be improved housing all over the country. Builders would simply add the features, and everybody could have the kind of house the teacher recommends.

When it comes to horses, the advice presents more of a problem. If the teacher says, "Don't buy a horse unless it is strong, gentle, tall, and healthy," the result may not be unmixed good. What about the horses that aren't tall, or strong, or healthy? The seller can't add an inch to them, or make them stronger. If everybody follows the teacher's advice, then these horses may be sent prematurely to the soap factory. Still, in the end the country might be full of good horses, and even more full of horse soap.

What Is The Best Bargain In Marrying?

A bitter social revolution, however, would occur if the teachers who teach us how "to pick a mate" were hundred per cent effective. Recently, in a most interesting article entitled, "Who Shall It Be? What Youths Want in Their Mates," a professor acquaintance of mine described the results of a "choice-of-a-mate" questionnaire in a marriage instruction course (Gerald J. Schnepf, S. M., *Family Digest*, June, 1946).

It was in a Catholic high school. The boys rated in the order of importance the following qualities they wanted in their future wives: Domesticity, Intelligence, Education, Beauty, Health, High Moral Character, Similarity of Religion, Cultural Similarity, Similar Recreational Interests, Similar Economic Background, Wealth, and Affection. They presented their rating *before* instruction, and then again *after* a week's instruction.

First and second time, the boys rated Similarity of Religion first, and High Moral Character second as most important in their future wife. After a week, the boys were even stronger for these than before. In third place, the boys ranked Affection on the first try. They used such expressions as, "Beauty is only skin deep; what is needed is love to hold marriage together," and "two people should be in love with each other if they expect the marriage to last."

Is Health More Important Than Love?

After a week's instruction, Affection dropped to fourth place, and Health jumped all the way from seventh to third. In other words, the teacher had impressed upon them not to marry an unhealthy girl. He had warned them of "hospital and doctor expenses," and of the "possibility that continence might have to be practiced."

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If in the Christian era all teachers had taught that one must not marry anyone not healthy, and if all students had strictly heeded that teaching, one or two pleasant little romances the world sings and writes about would not have occurred.

For Love Browning Happily Married a Sickly Woman

Exactly a hundred years ago, Poet Robert Browning, healthy, successful, thirty-four, met Elizabeth Barrett, invalid, spinally injured, forty. She was somewhat neurotic; she was not rich; she was not beautiful; she was probably too sick and too old to make any man a father. But handsome young Browning felt an "Affection" for her, as the Questionnaire would put it.

If ever a man, according to all recipes on how to pick a wife, ought to have grabbed his hat and run out of the sick room all the way to a Scotch Loch, that man was Browning. Since her fifteenth year, the girl had been sick, most of the time in bed. She couldn't even walk! When he spoke to her of love, she answered truthfully, in Rudolf Besier's great play, *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, that he is foolish to think of her that way, that love and marriage have "no place, and can have no place, in my life."

"Why?"

"For many reasons—but let this suffice. As I told you before, I am a dying woman."

Browning, passionately, answered, "I refuse to believe it!"

Instead of believing in health, Browning believed in love, and Elizabeth, though sick, really loved him too. Browning surely must have had the most wretched instruction in how to pick a wife. Consequently, sick though Elizabeth was, and elderly, and even a bit neurotic, since he loved her and she loved him, he had her carried off to the church and married her. The biographer in *British Authors of the Nineteenth Century* says briefly, "Their elopement followed in September, the beginning of sixteen years of the happiest marriage on record."

They had one son, and as was to be expected, he was sickly, and as was to be expected, Elizabeth died long before her husband. But they had "sixteen years of the happiest marriage on record," and the poets and dramatists are still singing that courtship and marriage!

Some Other Great Men Married Happily, But Not "Wisely"

Another very stupid but very happy marriage was that of

twenty-year-old Snitkina to Widower Dostoevski, a very unfortunate epileptic and passionate gambler besides! But she loved him, and he her, and it was a very successful marriage. Another happy marriage was that of Samuel Johnson, but the widow who married him was foolish, too, for poor Johnson had a chronic face-distorting case of Scrofula. Another woman very happily but very foolishly married the consumptive Robert Louis Stevenson. If the how-to-pick-a-husband manuals had their way, these sickly fellows would all have had to die in "single blessedness."

The Author's Bitter Choice Between Love and Tone Deafness!

In playful sadness, I sigh when I think of what can happen to a fellow when he has been taught not to marry anyone who isn't "healthy"! Once upon a time it happened to me for the first upsetting time to feel for one particular damsel that "affection" the Questionnaire speaks of. At the beginning she seemed to have all the twelve qualities on our list. But lo and sadly, it developed that she was tone deaf, that she not only could not dance in rhythm, but that she could not carry a tune—and what was infinitely worse, that her children probably would not be able to dance or carry a tune either! Imagine a man growing old with five daughters who could not dance or carry a tune! So, better instructed than Browning in choice-of-mate matters, I sadly but resolutely turned the other way.

The Author Meets a Perfect Creature Who Asks If He Is Perfect!

The second time I felt that "affection," (for it can come several times in one's life) it was for someone apparently even more perfect than the first time. In fact the better I knew her, the more obvious it was that she was a perfect specimen, someone every marriage councillor would recommend. So, seeing a good bargain, I made my bid. But now the unexpected happened. It was completely discountenancing. Apparently this creature had also had some courses on how to choose a mate. I had told her a good many things about myself. Most of them were not bad to tell. But one thing I hadn't told her. However, it seems one day when she kept insisting I tell her which of her several evening dresses I preferred she discovered it.

The Perfect Creature Finds the Author Not Perfect

The fact is: I am color blind. Perhaps she thought it would be terrible to grow old with five sons, none of whom could compliment her on the shade of her dresses. Anyhow, I came out of that courtship, fully and safely single.

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The Author Has a Third Disappointment

So unfortunately, after a suitable withdrawal from public occasions following my discomfiture, I again met someone who aroused that certain "affection" in me. Surely, if ever anyone seemed to have all twelve of those choice-of-mate requirements, she had them. We knew each other merrily and happily through the months of spring. She had evidently not had proper instruction herself, so she lightly overlooked my migraine and colorblindness, which was very fine with me. All in all, this time, hope really began to surge violently in my breast.

When along came the fifteenth of August. When I saw her that evening I hardly recognized her. Her eyes were swollen, her nose was red. Violently fighting an ugly suspicion down and out, I cried, "Annie, dear, has someone made you cry? Have I perhaps sent you a wrong letter in a right envelope or something? What can it be? What have I done wrong?"

But in this world things are seldom better than expected, they are worse. Never suspecting what it would mean to me, she cried out almost happily, "Oh, you! it's nothing at all. It's just my hayfever. Always comes on the fifteenth of August. I have real powerful hayfever, I have. Got it from both my grandmothers."

Convinced That the Human Race Is Too Imperfect to Marry the Author Gave Up Hope!

Well, there I was again. This time I gave up. I figured that if one could only marry anyone who was healthy, not even mentioning High Moral Character or Intelligence, why certainly not more than half the people in the world could ever marry. If even the Army rejected one out of every four as a 4-F, and when after that one looks at those the Army accepted, the fellows with "corrected" eyes, and "corrected" teeth and with boils on their face and kinks in their brains, clearly more than half the men in the world could never pass the choice-of-a-mate health test!

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And from what I could guess, and from what doctors told me that they get rich only because so many women have chronic illnesses, the percentage of healthy girls must be still lower. It would therefore be only a man who was very lucky who could find a girl really "healthy" enough to marry, and since luck was my particularly weak quality, I just gave up. So I am still single.

Too Late, the Author Now Thinks Differently

At long last—and too late—I have now wisely come to the conclusion that the human race would long ago have died out, if teachers had succeeded in making all people choose their mates selfishly, for their good points, such as health and character, as one chooses a horse. But now it is too late. "Gather ye flowers while ye may," and one may not very long!

Everybody Can't Even Marry Someone With a High Moral Character

Among those selfish good points, I mention even character. Of course it is great to marry someone with High Moral Character. But what about all the people in the world who do not have high moral character? They need marriage more than the saints. They need it particularly. Must people be taught not to marry them? Then what will become of them? Did Saint Augustine's father have a high moral character? Lincoln's father "seems to have been without sustained industry . . . Some hint that he drank." Bernard Shaw's father "was a ne'er-do-well and a notable drinker." Had the girls who married them refused to do so because they lacked high moral character, the world would have lost a great saint, a great statesman, and the greatest modern dramatist. And if no girl had married these men, they might have become great criminals, not merely drinkers and ne'er-do-wells.

Most People to Marry Must Finally Marry Someone Not Very Well or Not Very Good

No, the world is so full of sickly girls and sickly boys, and of not very moral girls and not very moral boys that most boys will have to marry either sickly or not very moral girls, and most girls will have to marry sickly or not very moral boys. The points to stress, therefore, in a marriage course would seem to be, first, that each who takes the course develop in himself as much as possible all the desirable qualities rather than expect them in a

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mate; secondly, that the most important thing for marriage is mutual love, such as Browning had for sickly Elizabeth and she for him; and finally, that each who takes the course learn rather how to get along with an imperfect mate "for better or for worse" than how selfishly to avoid such a one.

Everybody can selfishly refuse all bad houses and bad horses. But half the people must either remain single or marry someone not very healthy or not very moral. So, let them rather be trained to make the best of it, should that be their lot. Everybody can't be selfish in choosing perfect mates. Somebody must be noble and generous like Browning and marry the sickly, and even the morally weak. To make that easier, God invented love, and if He did not quite make love blind, at least He gave it rose-colored glasses!

In Cultural Matters Similarity Is Possible

One may well, however, lay stress on such choice-of-mate qualities which God distributed in equal proportions and which, if matched wisely, benefit everybody. There are as many bright, medium, and stupid men as there are such girls. Let the bright ones get together, and the medium, and the stupid. That will be good for everybody. The same is true of economic and cultural background, recreational interests, and religion. There are as many Catholic boys as girls. It is possible and beneficial for them to seek each other. And it hurts no one.

In General, Mates Should Be Selected Generously, Not Selfishly

In moral and health matters, this is not so. If Browning had been as sickly as Elizabeth, their chance of happiness would have been much less. If two heavy drinkers marry, it is much worse than if a sober one generously marries a drinker whom she loves. We assume, of course, that people too sick or too immoral to marry are under medical or institutional care. But for the less extreme cases, of which the world is full, let healthy and good people be trained to get along with them in marriage.

We aren't all big enough to be Brownings. Let no one expect it of me, for example! But we can at least teach and admire in boys and girls of our own generation, what we want them to admire in Browning: It is just as "cheap" to turn a girl down because she is sickly as it is to turn her down because she is poor, or homely!

CHAPTER IX

IF HE DOESN'T PROPOSE

This article first appeared under the title, "Why Doesn't He Propose?" in the VICTORIAN MAGAZINE, February, 1942. In courtship, as in other matters, problems fluctuate. During the depression, men had plenty time to court and not enough job to propose. During the war they had plenty work and very little time, so they proposed more and faster than they should. During the war this article could have seemed silly. If hard times come again, and especially with the quota of men somewhat cut down by the war, it will again be pertinent.

Parties in power use all kinds of swindles to suggest that horses should not be changed in mid-stream. So men throughout the ages have used all kinds of superstitions to maintain their dominance over women. One is that it is the man's prerogative to do the courting and the choosing. Shakespeare, the greatest genius Christendom has produced, had his chief romantic heroine, Juliet, do otherwise, and Desdemona is represented as "half the wooer."

What of a Fellow Who Calls on a Girl for Ten Years

Today a senior asked me what I think of a man he knows, who for almost ten years now has called on a girl every single evening of every week, has a bit of cake and coffee, and after two hours or so trudges home again. His question reminded me of a story a colleague tells. A couple had been going with each other for years and years and years. Finally one day in a desperate moment she said to him, "John, don't you think it might be best if we got married?"

He looked up at her innocently and said, "Yes, Susan, I suppose it might. But who in the world would have either of us now!"

Romantic Dating Must Envisage Marriage

My answer to the senior above was that the man is a fraud and the woman a fool. Courtship, I said, must be a front porch to matrimony, not a back porch for fun. Boys and girls do not have the right to continue to go with each other just to have a good time, even if it be not a grossly sinful good time. They have a right to go with each other romantically only to discover whether they might some day make a good husband and wife for each other. And some day does not mean ten years from now.

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When and How Long May Persons Date Each Other

Boys and girls do have the right to date each other occasionally even when they do not have any very serious inclinations towards one another, in order to attend school, club, or sodality dances or chaperoned parties. But they may not date each other romantically when they can't, or know they won't, every marry each other. And they may not date each other steadily and frequently when they know they can't consider marriage for another eight or nine years, as is often the case with high school students.

And even more difficult than that is the obligation to stop going with each other if and when they find that they cannot or will not marry. The Church in general, while it has not proclaimed any timetable, suggests that two or at most three years of steady association are enough to find the altar—or the gate.

If the Girl Is Willing, But the Boy Seems Blind

It is to the credit of most girls that they realize the sense of this attitude of the Church. And most girls when they have gone with a boy for two or three years realize that they ought to do something about getting married.

But what if the man does not propose? Should a girl hope and hope and wait and wait? Should she wait and wait until the Church must more and more frown upon their courtship and until the pedestal upon which he said at the beginning he was putting her stretches more and more into a shelf?

To me the answer is very plain. She has no right to wait unduly long for his proposal.

Should she then just refuse to see him any more without saying anything? Or abruptly take up with someone else? That, it seems to me, would be childish and unreasonable and unfair.

Shakespeare's Juliet Puts Romeo on the Spot

Instead, I think, she should for one instance in her life act like a man. Or, rather, she should act like Juliet in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. When Romeo keeps on protesting his vast love for her, Juliet finally says: If you mean what you say, if you really love me as you say you do, then let's look up the friar together!

In other words, the girl to whom my senior alluded should long ago have talked to her Romeo somewhat in this wise:

"We've seen each other for several years now. During this time I have come to like you more and more. And *like* is hardly the right word. What about you? Have you come to feel more and more that way about me, too? Do you think we could be reasonably happy together for the rest of our lives? Or do you think we ought to celebrate a *last* date together?"

That's the way that leads up the aisle in the proper time—or to a friendly parting. And if it's the latter—take it "like a man." It is still much better than waiting and waiting—and hovering ever more nearly along the edge of sin.

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CHAPTER X

THE HELPMEEET FOR LIFE

This article is reprinted with its original title from THE CATHOLIC HOME JOURNAL, July, 1945. It might have been entitled, "How a 'date' grows into a partner for life." It is the ideal picture of what courtship and marriage should be--and, we hope, really is for a good many people. It is what we like to think of our mothers and fathers. The article in a manner is simply an interpretation of one of Wordsworth's poem. If some of the readers are teachers, I hope they will recognize this as the way every poem should be creatively read, and taught. Girls and boys who are still milling about, or anxiously waiting, for a life's partner can in this poem of Wordsworth and its present interpretation find all the problems and temptations of courtship suggested--and also feel guided and strengthened in weaving through them honorably and clean.

What She Is to Him When He Asks for the First Date

A "phantom of delight"—that, according to the poet, William Wordsworth, is what a girl looks like to a boy when he is trying to make the first date with her. In "She Was a Phantom of Delight" he describes beautifully and correctly how a girl grows from this phantom of delight into the helpmeet for life—and for eternity. In three stanzas he pictures three stages.

In the first, the girl gleams upon the boy's sight as "A lovely apparition." From among a number of girls one overpoweringly begins to fascinate him. This experience is sometimes called love at first sight. But what is it really? It is a fascination for externals. He "loves" her eyes, her hair, her teeth or her ankles—not her. He does not *know* her.

When a man begins to feel this queer attraction for a girl, it really starts as something quite superficial. Wordsworth says that at this stage her eyes seem like stars to him and her hair like the twilight.

*"A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay."*

She is his perfect prescription for a "good time." Rightly the poet says that she is only a "lovely apparition" to him, "sent to be a moment's ornament."

At this point the burning urge of the boy is not to attach to himself this apparition until death do them part, but to have a date with her. He may not even think of two dates or three. What he wants immediately is a date. He rushes to ask her to go to a movie with him, or a dance, or even just a coke—anything, just so he can see her again.

Why the First Dates Are Especially Critical

And his first date is a dangerous and critical one. Or better, all the earlier dates are. For, psychologically, the girl is still just "a moment's ornament" to him. He will of course want to kiss her as much as if he had known her for two years. But if she lets him, she will almost automatically switch herself into the lane of girls that men forget. She will remain—just a moment's ornament.

His reverential love will be nipped in the bud. *Sex will begin before love has got a good start.* She will become pleasure for him instead of contentment. She will 'startle, and waylay' him. And really any "dancing shape" can do that—and very probably soon will.

How to Become More Than a Moment's Ornament to a Man

But if she is courteous to him and sympathetic, even grateful for his fascination, but modest and "nice," then the boy will "upon nearer view" see in her "*A Spirit yet a Woman too!*" If from the very first conversation, she will suggest Christian modesty, he will grow to think of her not merely as a "lovely apparition" but as a lovely presence.

If the "lovely apparition" has him think of her as having mother, father, brothers and sisters who value her, if she has him meet them, and if she knows where he is going before she agrees to go, and if there is no parking where parking is suggestive, then she turns herself and him into the lane that is long as life, and just wide enough for two.

He will develop a fixed habit of respectful desire for her. She will more and more be able to trust him and enjoy, as Wordsworth says, "steps of virgin-liberty." A time will come when she can lean her head on his breast, and he will know it is both love and trust—and he would rather die than abuse it.

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Courtship as a Way from Modesty to Matrimony

This developing trust is the flower and fruit of a true Christian courtship. During this period each man can say of the girl what Wordsworth said,

"I saw her upon nearer view,

A Spirit yet a Woman too!"

Courtship is the delicate trying time when a girl must remain both angelic—sugar and spice, and everything nice—and also

"A creature not too bright or good

For human nature's daily food."

Christian courtship really requires the constant sublimation of sex to romance, of a physical urge to a postponed hope, of a passionate desire to a sweet promise. That sweet promise is a happy marriage. After dozens and dozens of dates—of movies, and dances, and picnics—it is the hope fulfilled.

A man in an advice article in a secular woman's magazine wrote,

"Despite all the foolproof arguments my sex is wont to hand out on why you should pet, I consider petting one of the deadliest enemies of romance" (R. H. Reed, "The Low-down on Kissing," Woman, April 1942, p. 8).

It may seem paradoxical that courtship, which is supposed to develop sexual partners for life, must as its most difficult and important duty constantly keep sex restrained. Yet, there is a good psychological reason for this. The marriage, which courtship is to prepare for, must last for life.

Love Grows on Desire Restrained

If courtship is largely sexual pleasures, these long-as-life qualities are never called forth or developed—simply because they are not needed. At the courtship stage sex is so powerful, and sexual attractions are so active, that with any false indulgence they will easily black out all the other qualities and possibilities. Young people then think they are in love when in reality they are merely enjoying sex gratifications — essentially not much different from similar pleasures among animals. And as we know, after the mating season animals part again, and go their separate ways. If courtship is to make a girl the helpmeet for life, courtship must be romantic, not sexual. There will be, as Wordsworth says, "love, kisses, tears, and smiles," but always within the "steps of virgin-liberty," always far short of sexual fulfillment.

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His reverential love will be nipped in the bud. *Sex will begin before love has got a good start.* She will become pleasure for him instead of contentment. She will ‘startle, and waylay’ him. And really any “dancing shape” can do that—and very probably soon will.

How to Become More Than a Moment’s Ornament to a Man

But if she is courteous to him and sympathetic, even grateful for his fascination, but modest and “nice,” then the boy will “upon nearer view” see in her “*A Spirit yet a Woman too!*” If from the very first conversation, she will suggest Christian modesty, he will grow to think of her not merely as a “lovely apparition” but as a lovely presence.

If the “lovely apparition” has him think of her as having mother, father, brothers and sisters who value her, if she has him meet them, and if she knows where he is going before she agrees to go, and if there is no parking where parking is suggestive, then she turns herself and him into the lane that is long as life, and just wide enough for two.

He will develop a fixed habit of respectful desire for her. She will more and more be able to trust him and enjoy, as Wordsworth says, “steps of virgin-liberty.” A time will come when she can lean her head on his breast, and he will know it is both love and trust—and he would rather die than abuse it.

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Courtship as a Way from Modesty to Matrimony

This developing trust is the flower and fruit of a true Christian courtship. During this period each man can say of the girl what Wordsworth said,

"I saw her upon nearer view,

A Spirit yet a Woman too!"

Courtship is the delicate trying time when a girl must remain both angelic—sugar and spice, and everything nice—and also

"A creature not too bright or good

For human nature's daily food."

Christian courtship really requires the constant sublimation of sex to romance, of a physical urge to a postponed hope, of a passionate desire to a sweet promise. That sweet promise is a happy marriage. After dozens and dozens of dates—of movies, and dances, and picnics—it is the hope fulfilled.

A man in an advice article in a secular woman's magazine wrote,

"Despite all the foolproof arguments my sex is wont to hand out on why you should pet, I consider petting one of the deadliest enemies of romance" (R. H. Reed, "The Low-down on Kissing," Woman, April 1942, p. 8).

It may seem paradoxical that courtship, which is supposed to develop sexual partners for life, must as its most difficult and important duty constantly keep sex restrained. Yet, there is a good psychological reason for this. The marriage, which courtship is to prepare for, must last for life.

Love Grows on Desire Restrained

If courtship is largely sexual pleasures, these long-as-life qualities are never called forth or developed—simply because they are not needed. At the courtship stage sex is so powerful, and sexual attractions are so active, that with any false indulgence they will easily black out all the other qualities and possibilities. Young people then think they are in love when in reality they are merely enjoying sex gratifications — essentially not much different from similar pleasures among animals. And as we know, after the mating season animals part again, and go their separate ways. If courtship is to make a girl the helpmeet for life, courtship must be romantic, not sexual. There will be, as Wordsworth says, "love, kisses, tears, and smiles," but always within the "steps of virgin-liberty," always far short of sexual fulfillment.

The Problem of Restraint and Losing Interest

Courtship on the hope-deferred-sweet-promise level will force young people to develop and produce all their personality powers in order to make such courtship pleasurable enough to carry over a year or two into the liberty of matrimony. Of course, sometimes it doesn't carry through. And even in the best-suited couples it should not be expected to be enough for unreasonably long courtships. Mrs. Gibbs, the mother in Thornton Wilder's beautiful play, *Our Town*, says when her son wants to marry Emily rather than spend four years at college,

"He might get into bad ways. It wouldn't be enough fun for him to come and sit by our stove,—and holding hands with Emily for a year mightn't be enough either. He might lose interest in her."

Mother Gibbs here suggests a real problem and difficulty. Courtship must never be considered a substitute for marriage. Over too long a period any courtship will degenerate into sin or evaporate into disinterest. But as the only proper Christian link to marriage, a modest courtship, from one to four years, is practically the only way to store up enough romance to last for life.

When He Wants to Make the Date for Life

However, if the love-at-first-sight was the real thing, was more than "a moment's ornament," then this modest courtship has made the girl the climax to all the man's dreams and hopes the one thing that gives meaning to his life. He has found himself so reflected in her, and her in him, that he wants her for himself alone and forever. Of the billion other women in the world, all of them having some of the things she has, he has found only in her some unique magical partnership for which he is willing to say no to all other women. From the moonlight and roses of courtship he now urges and begs his girl, his phantom of delight, into the daylight and duties of marriage. He wants to convert his first date of an evening into a final date for life.

They Pledge Each Other the Only Life They Have

To the tunes of the wedding march, he takes her for better or for worse till death do them part—and she takes him. The wedding is a glorious and an awe-inspiring event—two people pledging to spend a life-time together, the only one life-time they have.

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The girl who first burst upon him as "a moment's ornament," has now become for him "A traveler between life and death." The "phantom of delight," whom he first nervously asked to share an icecream soda with him, has now become his wife, with whom he will share the next forty thousands meals. It takes an awful lot of love and romance to face that. But during their brave-modest courtship they have banked enough romance to make even a million meals together look few.

Together Among the Problems of Life

And only now that he walks hand in hand with her down the lane of life, according to Wordsworth, does the real, the full and final appreciation of her grow upon him. Now he learns to see "with eye serene, The very pulse of the machine." Every day brings its little problems, its things to talk about, its tears and smiles. What to eat, where to live, how to dress, and where to get the money for everything! And there are big worries—child-bearing, sickness and grief.

Slowly they grow old together. The gold or brown of her hair is turning to gray, and the white of her skin to wrinkles. But he doesn't really see all that. He only feels curiously that the fragile moment's ornament he dated years ago is an amazingly strong, resourceful, firm creature. Whenever sufferings come he finds that she who seemed so weak and gentle can carry on where he would falter. When he courted her, he was the strong one; he did all the planning; he was the oak and she the vine. But now, in sickness and in health, the whole household seems to revolve about her.

The Moment's Ornament Has Become His "Tower of Strength"

As they travel together down that lane just wide enough for two and for their children, this strong man more and more feels that without her he would be lost, that he needs her more now, when the bloom of her cheek is gone, than he did when she was the belle of the ball.

What makes the home a home is she. If he were to die, he feels, there would still be a home. The home would go on. But if she died, it would be the end. He would then be merely a helpless,

lonely old man. And so, as they go together into the last turn of the lane, he prays that God Who so kindly gave him this helpmeet for life may now add this further kindness—to let her be there to close his eyes when they must be closed for the last time, and to straighten things out after he has gone to the Reward she helped him deserve. That is the helpmeet for life:

*“A perfect Woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command:
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel-light.”*

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CHAPTER XI

THE UNIQUE FUNCTION OF MARRIAGE

This article, originally entitled, "Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery," is reprinted from THE VICTORIAN MAGAZINE, June, 1944. Marriage is here represented not merely as a union for creating and rearing children, but as a mutual-aid partnership for getting to heaven. Marriage, rightly considered, of its own momentum tends to perfect two human beings and make them fit for heaven. It also makes them unselfish, in a sense, cultured beings here on earth.

Giving this civilizing function of marriage more emphasis than the child-bearing one is unusual. But it finds direct support in the following paragraph by Pope Pius XI, in his famous encyclical "On Christian Marriage" (Casti Connubi), December 31, 1930: "This mutual inward moulding of husband and wife, this determined effort to perfect each other, can in a very real sense, as the Roman Catechism teaches, be said to be the chief reason and purpose of matrimony, provided matrimony be looked at not in the restricted sense as instituted for the proper conception and education of the child, but more widely as the blending of life as a whole and the mutual interchange and sharing thereof."

A Burlesque Song Suggests the Unique Quality of Marriage

The other day, after having suffered a long time from the *Pistol Packin' Mama* song, I finally let myself hear it through just once. I was surprised to find under its burlesque, a recognition of the unique quality of marriage. It seems that a husband was carrying on with other women at a cabaret when his wife came along with a pistol to remind him of God's injunction, "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

Marriage as an Alliance with God to Get Both to Heaven

The unique and usually overlooked quality of matrimony is that it throws each spouse into an alliance with God to keep the other good. In marriage the wife finds it as much to her interest as it is to God's that the husband live up to the Ten Commandments. Likewise the husband finds it as much to his interest as it is to God's that his wife live up to them. Consequently in marriage husband and God become allies for keeping the wife good. Thus marriage helps both to get to heaven more surely—and easily. Marriage is a vocation in which the spouse has the help, not only of God, but of another vitally interested human being in getting to heaven.

In the burlesque song, the Pistol Packin' Mama is as anxious to keep her husband free from adultery as God is and therefore she proceeds, (though of course in an unorthodox manner), to keep her husband straight. Which is what God wants, too. St. Augustine says that it's God's will that no wife on any account allow a husband to have another woman besides her. If the wife had gone to disport herself in the cabaret, the husband, though possibly quite a disbeliever otherwise, would suddenly have recognized clearly and overpoweringly God's law in the matter of adultery, and would have carried his erring wife angrily back into the arms of the Ten Commandments.

In Marriage Each Prescribes the Ten Commandments for the Other

In marriage nearly every broken Commandment hurts the spouse. When an unmarried person, unless young enough to affect the parents, breaks a Commandment, it often seems to hurt nobody directly except God. But when a married person breaks a Commandment it nearly always definitely hurts the spouse—that's why marriage throws God and the spouse together to help keep the other good.

When a bachelor at a party meets a girl who attracts him he is glad if she is flirtatious and not very loyal to her escort so that he can make a date with herself himself. As soon as she is his wife, however, he is the greatest enemy of her flirtatiousness and wants her to be proper and loyal at all times—which is just what God wants. When an unmarried girl meets a man at a party who attracts her, nothing makes her more happy than when he is flirtatious enough and forgetful enough of his girl friend to ask her for a date. But as soon as she has him married, and if at any party he is again trying to be flirtatious with anybody or everybody, she promptly develops a fierce headache and makes him take her home. She and God have now become allies for keeping him decent.

What Is Funny Before Marriage Becomes Painful After

A man who spends all his money on cars and drinks and flowers is a girl's dream—but a wife's agony. A girl who spends all her money on gorgeous evening gowns and glamorous hairdoes and ravishing perfumes is a bachelor's creme de mint, but a husband's castor oil. "Oh, come on, another little drink won't hurt you," coos the bachelor, who wants to make "headway".

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"Now, be careful, Annie, don't you think you've had about enough?" says the husband, who doesn't want her to droop on anybody's shoulder, not even his own in public.

A busy, hard-working bachelor has too little time for dates; an industrious husband provides a comfortable home. An industrious maiden washes the dishes while the bachelor is entertained by the father; but the industrious wife provides the husband with a good table and a clean house.

He May Like a Frivolous Girl But Never a Frivolous Wife

A frequent communicant is not a bachelor's pick for a lively and adventurous Saturday-night date. But a frequent communicant is a husband's guarantee of a faithful and loyal wife. Marriage makes God and the former bachelor of one mind—that it is good and beautiful for the wife to go to the Sacraments often and to live up to the Ten Commandments as God wrote them.

She Wants a Good Religious Husband

Likewise, as to the wife, she is never more content than when she walks her husband into Church on Sunday, and when the preacher by a happy chance accidentally hits that particular nail right on the head which marks the spot wherein her hubby is still in need of a wee bit of reforming, she ecstatically knows (and looks to see if her husband knows too) that God is on her side. And He is—and He is on hubby's side, too!

CHAPTER XII
THE FIRST SPOUSE IS THE BEST SPOUSE

This article is reprinted with the same title from THE CATHOLIC HOME JOURNAL, November, 1944. It was literally suggested to me by a soldier who, married to a second woman, wished he could undo it all and be with his first wife again. I do firmly believe that psychologically, as well as morally, the first spouse is usually man's greater, as well as better need. However, I do not want to give the impression that from a personal standpoint some marriages are not mistakes and mis-matches and second ones never more satisfying psychologically. Sometimes they are, though not as often as those seeking divorce to remarry like to think. In the final analysis, it seems to me, divorce to remarry is an evil and a wrong, not because it cannot serve the individual, personal welfare, but because its acceptance tends to destroy the essential social value of all marriage, namely, its security. If any new attraction can dissolve any old marriage, then the stability of all family life is undermined, and all of life can become a perpetual scramble for better and better (richer and richer, or younger and younger) mates. All of life would become the "shopping about" for a more desirable mate, or the jealous, frightened securing of one, which now characterize and agonize the customary years of courtship.

**A Soldier, Married to a Second Woman, Wants to See
His First Wife**

One day, in an army casual detachment where men were waiting for their discharges a soldier turned to another and asked, "Say, you are a Catholic, aren't you? Tell me, according to you Catholics, isn't it true that even though a man is divorced from his first wife and married to another, he is still really married to the first wife?"

Somewhat surprised at the unexpected question, the Catholic soldier said, "Yes, I guess that's about it. *'Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery.'* But how do you come to ask me that? I didn't know you were interested in Catholic doctrine."

"Oh, it's not exactly that," explained the soldier. "Only I'm in sort of a mess. In a few days I hope to have my discharge, and my wife and two children will, of course, expect me to come right home. But she is my second wife. My first wife and child live in Chicago."

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"Well," said someone, "what of it? You got rid of her, and no doubt still want to stay as far away from Chicago as possible."

After Seven Years of Marriage He Thought He Met His Affinity

"That's just the trouble," answered the soldier, "I don't. I was happily married to Sarah for seven years. And then one day I felt I had fallen in love with Louise (that is my second wife). She was a bit younger, seemed prettier, and the way we felt, well, all I could think was that this was the mutual affinity I'd heard so much about. I like Louise and the children a lot."

"Well, then what are you griping about?" said several.

"Well, the blasted luck of it is, I wasn't married to Louise more than a few months and happily rid of Sarah, when the goldarnest yearning to be with her began coming over me. And it kept getting stronger in spite of my desire for Louise."

"What did you do about it?"

Soon Wanted His First Wife Again

"What could I? I was now legally married to Louise. And I didn't want to be a heel to both women. I had hopes that getting away from it all, joining the army, would kill that yearning to be again with Sarah."

"Did it?"

"The deuce take it. No, it didn't. It just made it almost unbearable. I feel I've just got to see Sarah or die."

"Boy, you are in a mess!"

"I'm just thinking. If I won't wire my wife, that is, Louise, the time of my discharge, I can go home by way of Chicago and spend a few days with Sarah."

"In other words," laughed one of them, "you'll cheat a little on Louise the same way you formerly cheated on Sarah."

"Isn't that," said a more serious one, "what you before called being a heel to both of them?"

"Yes, I'm afraid it is. But I've just got to see Sarah again, heel or no heel. I'll go crazy if I don't. No matter how nice Louise has been, I know now I loved my first wife. I know now I wouldn't

have married her if I hadn't loved her. And after you live seven years with a woman you love, a dozen other women can come between for a while, can come disastrously between, but no woman can permanently take the place of the first. That's what I know now. I was a darn fool."

"But it's too late now. You made your mistake. Now you've got to suffer for it," said one.

He Wishes His Religion Had Kept Him From Divorce

"Well, I suppose so. But I was just thinking that as long as according to Frank over there, the Catholic Church says a man is never really divorced from his first wife, it won't be so awfully wrong if I see Sarah a couple of days. She too is still in love with me. I feel that maybe ethically it's just as wrong to be with the second wife."

"You poor devil," said several. "I'm glad I'm not in your shoes. You're between the devil and the deep blue sea."

"This is one time, isn't it," said the Catholic smiling sympathetically, "when it's too bad you weren't a Catholic. Had you been a Catholic you would have had to keep your first wife and no fooling. And wouldn't you feel happy now!"

"You ain't just sayin' that, fellow. And how, would I be happy! If religion had made me stick to Sarah, I would have forgotten Louise in a month. But my first wife I can't forget ever."

"Secretaries come and go," laughed one, "but a wife goes on forever."

Well, if the Church and the Bible have anything to say, the last witticism holds—a wife goes on forever. But what this soldier learned too late is that in spite of all temptations, in spite of divorces, she goes on forever.

People Must Realize That After Marriage Other Attractions Are Temptations, Not Affinities

Psychologists and writers are discovering that, too. One of the most successful plays in recent years was Clare Booth Luce's *The Women*. After Mary and Stephen had been married twelve happy years, Stephen suddenly finds himself infatuated with a gorgeous blond perfume girl. For the time being, like our soldier's Louise,

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she seemed his affinity, his "manifest destiny," until he is divorced from Mary and married to the blonde. After several years of a miserable awakening, he wants Mary again at any price.

What these people learn too late is that the so-called "affinity" is just an old-fashioned temptation dressed in decollete. It is just the old sting of the flesh St. Paul worries about. It is the sort of thing to run away from, not to get a divorce for.

In the Best Marriages Other Attractions May Arise

The most important thing to remember is that in the best regulated marriages, in the surest mutual love, sooner or later for him or for her, or for both, some such temptation is likely to arise. Love and marriage are no insurance against other attractions. Such attractions do come, can come any time. But they are not affinities; they are temptations. They are the things that make getting to heaven hard work. They are the things that make us pray every day to the Lord, please, not to lead us into temptation!

The great Catholic convert author, Sigrid Undset, was asked by a so-called "emancipated" woman whether she believed a woman can be faithful to a man in marriage. Sigrid Undset's answer was very outspoken. She said, "*I not only believe but know that a woman can be true till death, if she has an ideal which demands her fidelity.*" And then she distinguishes between keeping one's marriage vows and being true to a person in the sense of never desiring another. And she says, "It's an unreasonable thing to ask that a woman can be true to a man—seeing what men are. Or a man true to a woman, seeing what women are."

Temptations Should Be Expected as the Natural Hurdles to Heaven

She then continues: "Everybody must of course arrive at this result: if his marriage were built upon no other foundation than mutual affection and respect, there would be nothing unreasonable in his partner preferring at any rate now and again, almost any other man of their circle of acquaintance."

This is outspoken language. Yet I believe a clear understanding of it on the part of every husband and wife would prevent much misery. Love and marriage are not violated because at some time or another a husband is violently attracted to some other woman, or the wife to some other man. Such things are a part of the natural and to-be-expected obstacles on the path to heaven.

But when it happens, the partner should immediately recognize the feeling as simply an ugly temptation which must be fought. In fighting it, it is better to give up one's residence in a certain street or city, than to lose one's wife or one's husband, or more directly, one's virtue.

**When the Temptation Becomes Critical One Might Best
Ask One's Spouse for Help**

Ordinarily, it is wise to fight it out alone, and not to mention the temptation to one's spouse. But when the danger becomes extreme or critical, then I think a partner should frankly appeal to the spouse for help. And the latter should then be understanding and sympathetic. And helpful. The spouse should realize that marriage is not violated by a temptation. It is only violated by giving into the temptation. And each should and must help the other in preventing this.

The great novelist Dickens married one of two sisters. The other sister lived with the young couple. As one child after another was born to Mrs. Dickens, the unmarried sister-in-law by comparison looked more and more attractive to Dickens. This was quite a natural possibility and a reasonable temptation. This was the time when Dickens should have explained it to his wife and asked that for the good of their marriage she should arrange to have the sister live elsewhere.

Naturally, Mrs. Dickens would not have been happy to learn from her husband that he is attracted to her sister. But she should immediately have joined forces with him sympathetically to overcome this temptation. Actually Dickens said nothing until he couldn't stand living near both women anymore. Then the whole household broke up.

Whenever in any marriage such a temptation arises all sentimental and other considerations must be ruthlessly subordinated to these two: adultery must be prevented, and divorce or separation. And in that, the Church by flatly forbidding divorce and remarriage really proves the loving mother implied in the words Our Holy Mother the Church.

**What the Church Commands Ethically, Psychology
Often Enforces Emotionally**

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does its people by saving them from the blunder of a second marriage was noticing a surprisingly large number of news items in which someone divorced his second spouse only to remarry the first. They were doing exactly what the soldier wanted so badly to do.

Some time ago a divorcee wrote, as digested in *Reader's Digest*, "I Would Not Divorce Him Now." "And I Wonder," she wrote, "how many other divorcees wish that divorce had never been invented." Speaking of the virtual impossibility of getting over one's first marriage, she explained, "*Roots of common experience, of shared days and nights, of mutual parenthood are not shallowly planted. Separation imposed by death has the dignity of Fate. We bring divorce upon ourselves.*"

It is a kind mother, the Catholic Church, which keeps Catholics from bringing divorce upon themselves. Temptations come and go, but our nature demands that the bond of matrimony go on forever.

CHAPTER XIII

PARENTS ARE THE BEST MODELS

This article is reprinted under the same title from THE VICTORIAN MAGAZINE, January, 1945, where it was subtitled, "Children Imitate Whom They Love." The editor prefaced the article with this note from my letter of submission: "I got the idea for this article listening to Pearl Buck talk at Antioch College. This was... July 5th, 1944. After her talk I shook hands with the speaker and asked if I could quote her remarks about children." This note still applies.

Chinese Parents Take Their Children Along

Some time ago I heard Pearl Buck say that American parents do not make children feel their love enough. Pearl Buck grew up in China and won the Nobel Prize for her great novel on Chinese life, *The Good Earth*. She said, "A person should not merely be born, but should be born into a family."

In China, she said, a child is constantly made to feel that it is part of the family, that everybody wants it and wants it near. "A Chinese woman wants children. If she hasn't any of her own, she adopts some," she continued. "And when a Chinese woman goes visiting, she wants her children along. If she isn't a mother, she borrows a neighbor's child to take with her."

American Parents Give Children Things to Keep Them Away

In contrast, it seemed to her, that American parents, of course, value their children just as much, but show their love more by giving the child things than by giving it affection. They give it a roller coaster and forget the kiss. When a mother goes visiting, she leaves her child in a nursery. American parents, she felt, shower their children with material toys, and at the same time think up more and more ways of keeping children from getting in their way.

She thinks children need and want the companionship, the physical affection of the parents and older brothers and sisters more than they need fine dresses and many toys.

Why Poor Children Often Seem Quite Happy

Hearing Pearl Buck, mother of two daughters, say this made

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me recall how the apparent happiness of the children of poor people had often puzzled me. Their clothes were simple and often worn, and their food was certainly not dainty and there were no elegant toys, yet they seemed collections of happiness.

Thinking of them now, a few characteristics stand forth. These children always knew where their mother was and indeed most of the time one or the other was hanging on her skirts or sitting on her lap. When the father came home, the whole crew charged at him, and he did not brush them aside but more or less lifted the whole pack to his shoulders. Later while reading his paper after supper, he managed to let one sit on his knee or tug at his leg.

And in this way parents make their children happy, though they cannot give them department store toys or fine clothes or educated nurse maids. Bismark seems to have been right when he said, "*You can do anything with children if you only play with them.*" Our Lord, too, knew what children needed to be happy, for He said, "*Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not. For of such is the Kingdom of God.*"

Children Learn from Those Who Love Them and Play With Them

When parents suffer their children near them and take them along when possible, they make them feel that they are loved and wanted. They spare them the aching loneliness children easily feel. But more than that, they help their children learn more easily and quickly most of the things one really needs to know. The English poet and clergyman, George Herbert, wrote, "*One father is more than a hundred schoolmasters.*"

Children are imitative. They learn faster by imitating than any other way. They learn better by seeing than by being told. They particularly imitate whom they love, for they want to be like anyone whom they admire and love and who loves them. A French writer, Joubert, said, "Children have more need of models than of critics." Parents who keep their children about them are the most irresistible models.

It Is Usually Best When Children Learn from Parents

It is also probable that they are the best models. Even the most sinful people do not want their children to learn anything bad from them. Others may give a child scandal, and as the Bible

says of the scandle-giver, "*It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck.*" The mother and father, however, will always want their children to see only their good side, so that the good side becomes a habit and both children and parents look beautiful before God.

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CHAPTER XIV

FAMOUS WRITERS FROM LARGE FAMILIES

This article is reprinted with its original title from the SIGN, January, 1932. While teaching literature, I noticed that some of the writers were younger children in large families. I began keeping a record of any I came across. The result was this article, among the first I ever had published. It gained quite a bit of favorable notice at the time. THE COMMONWEAL for February 17, 1932, summarized its findings in an editorial of two paragraphs. Since it was written, many more instances of famous people from large families have come into my file, and I really ought to rewrite the article and embody them. But I partly lack the time, and partly the inclination. So I reprint the article as originally written. In its present form it is enough to show that the more children a couple has, the greater the likelihood of a genius being among them. But being myself the oldest, not the youngest, of a large family, I hasten to add that among many brothers and sisters the oldest has every bit as good a chance of being a genius as the youngest, but also, alas, not at all a better chance!

Many Geniuses Had Many Older Brothers and Sisters

News, they say, is not a thing, but merely the quality of a thing: a letter found in an old trunk would hardly be news, but a Shakespearean letter found in an old trunk, that is, a letter with an interesting personal adjective before it, would certainly make the first page. So it is with certain facts. They may be quite unimportant and unexciting in themselves, but link them up with Napoleon or Lincoln or Dante, and everybody's ears prick up, and solemn lessons are drawn from items which otherwise no one would stoop to notice. Hence certain random facts about the families to which some of our great writers belonged, showing how many brothers and sisters, especially older ones, they had, ought to be of interest, especially nowadays when we have all sorts of people going about telling us about the dire effects of having large families.

Many Catholic Saints Came from Large Families

Catholics, of course, when this subject of large families and great men is brought up, readily think of a number of their saints and religious who had many older brothers and sisters. Pere Marquette, for instance, whose statue is in the Hall of Fame in our

Capitol, was the youngest of six children. Ignatius of Loyola, nobleman and saint, founder of the greatest teaching order in the world, was the youngest of thirteen children, and his follower, St. Francis Xavier, another nobleman saint, was the youngest of at least six. Joan of Arc, about whom everybody sang a fiery war song during 1917, was the youngest of five children.

Then there is the Little Flower. When her mother, a young French girl, was about to marry, she prayed to God, saying, "I beseech thee to make me the mother of many children, and to grant that all of them may be consecrated to thee." God gave her nine: four of them went to heaven in infancy, the other five became nuns. Of these the youngest, or ninth child, is honored throughout the world today as St. Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower. And, of course, everyone remembers Catherine of Siena, the twenty-fifth child of a Sienese dyer, and wonders how many first and only children ever attain to the fame and prominence that was hers.

Coleridge Was the Thirteenth Child

Of these holy people from large families we know; but few of us realize that many famous English and American writers were also born of large families and had many older brothers and sisters. Most striking of these is the man who wrote:

*"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things, both great and small."*

Coleridge was a thirteenth child. His father, a scholarly English minister and schoolmaster, and his mother were not rich in a worldly way, though, good people that they were, they probably felt themselves rich with so many children. At any rate they had the satisfaction of seeing their thirteenth child so precocious as to be able to read at three and so gifted generally as to become the most brilliant man of his time, the best conversationalist, the best critic, and a rare poet. When he died at sixty-two, he had left a deep impress on English philosophic and literary thought.

One Seventh Child Is the Sanest and Greatest

His friend and contemporary, Charles Lamb, who wrote the well-known, "All, all are gone, the old familiar faces," was the youngest of seven children. Only three of these survived. Of the oldest of the three, John, not much is known. But the one surviving sister, Mary, was gifted and distinguished. She contributed the

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comedy tales to the popular *Lambs' Tales of Shakespeare*, and wrote the well-known *In Memoriam*, beginning,

"A child's a plaything for an hour."

But unfortunately she was subject to fits of insanity, in one of which she killed her own mother. It was Charles, the youngest of the children, who remained Mary's supporter and protector, and who lived the most normal and distinguished life. With his *Essays of Elia* ("A Dissertation upon Roast Pig," "A Chapter on Ears," etc.) he became one of the most beloved English authors, certainly the best loved essayist.

An Irishman Is the Sixth Child of Mine

Another universally beloved writer is Oliver Goldsmith, the irrepressible Irishman whose heart was always larger than his purse. It is he who in his "Deserted Village" somewhat appropriately wrote

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

Goldsmith was the sixth of nine children. His father, an Irish farmer-parson "passing rich with forty pounds a year," was in reality not rich in anything except his children, a wealth which probably even in those days few would envy him. Yet now, looking back, who would not gladly have fed nine such mouths if a Goldsmith was to be sixth among them!

The Author of "Rip" Was the Eleventh Child

Even more worthy of enrollment in this paper is Goldsmith's biographer, our own good-natured Diedrich Knickerbocker, Washington Irving. He was the youngest of eleven children, the youngest of eight sons. For many years the family regarded him as somewhat of a failure, yet when the Irving cutlery firm failed in 1818, it was upon this youngest boy that the family could best lean for support, since the very next year he published his *Sketch Book*, with its "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of the Sleepy Hollow." It made him celebrated both here and abroad. But of the eight brothers, Irving was not the only prominent one. At least two, Peter and John, went to Columbia, and Peter later established a newspaper, the "Morning Chronicle," to which Irving made his earliest contributions, the Jonathan Oldstyle letters. Again it was

the oldest brother, William, and a relative, James K. Paulding, who with Irving started the Salmagundi papers. But capable as his brothers were, it was Irving, the youngest of the eleven children, who was the first American to achieve international literary fame.

Franklin, Cooper, Bancroft, and Jack London

Another American writer not to be omitted here is Franklin of Poor Richard's Almanac fame with its, "Early to bed, early to rise," and many like it. He was the fifteenth of seventeen children of his father, ten of whom were of the second wife. He was, therefore, his mother's eighth child. He became his country's earliest outstanding son,—famous as a statesman, a scholar, and a writer. His father was a poor candle maker whose country is happy that he was not too selfish to have a large family.

Along with Franklin, our first great almanac and magazine writer, and Irving, our first short-story writer, we must list our first great novelist, James Fenimore Cooper, whose *Deerslayer*, *Red Rover*, etc., are known to every American and, one can almost add, every European boy. Everybody knows several odd facts about him, that, for instance, upon his wife's entreaties he resigned from the navy to take up farming, and that he subsequently started novel-writing because his wife mischievously retorted to his criticism of some novel with the challenge, "Why don't you write a better one?" Few, however, happen to know that this genius so oddly thrown into literature was the eleventh child of his Quaker parents.

To these three pioneers in American Letters, coming from large families, we must add also the earliest of our great historians, George Bancroft. He started his life's work, the *History of the United States*, at twenty-three, published the first volume eleven years later, and the final revised edition of twelve volumes fifty years later, in 1884. The man who showed such industry and perseverance was the eighth of thirteen children. His father was a clergyman and the author of a *Life of Washington*. Hence each of these four great pioneers in American Letters, Irving, Franklin, Cooper, and Bancroft, had at least seven older brothers and sisters.

Here, while we think of it, we hurriedly skip to a very recent American writer, to Jack London author of perhaps the best dog story ever penned, *The Call of the Wild*. He was the youngest of ten children.

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Some English Women Novelists From Large Families

Among the English novelists to be enrolled here is Jane Austen, the clergyman's daughter, who, when only twenty-one years old and without formal education to speak of, wrote one of the great classics of English literature, *Pride and Prejudice*. She was the seventh child of the Anglican rector of a little village church.

Similar to Jane Austen are the Bronte sisters. There were six children in the Bronte family. The two oldest died in their teens. The third girl, Charlotte, became the famous author of *Jane Eyre*. The fourth child, Patrick Branwell, was artistically capable but morally weak, so that he died young of delirium tremens. But the fifth child, Emily, is commonly regarded as "the most enigmatical and perhaps the greatest of the Brontes," who "alone of the sisters possessed a true poetic gift" and who wrote the most powerful of the Bronte novels, *Wuthering Heights*. The sixth child, Anne, was likewise possessed of unusual talent. She wrote graceful verse and two novels, *Agnes Grey* and *The Tenant of Wildfell*, which are still readable. The Brontes, therefore, present a noteworthy example of a fairly large family in which from among five sisters and one brother, the three youngest sisters achieved international literary distinction.

Carew, Herrick, Herbert, and Cowley

To return to the English poets. Thomas Carew, Cavalier poet, remembered for his

"He that loves a rosy cheek,
Or a coral lip admires,"
and,

"Hearts with equal love combined
Kindle never-dying fires,"

was, like Charlotte Bronte, a third child, but a third child of eleven. But more noteworthy is Robert Herrick, also a Cavalier, and the greatest pastoral lyricist in English. Everyone likes his, "Gather ye rose-buds while ye may," and his

"Fair daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon."

He was the seventh of eight children. Though his father, a London goldsmith, died when Herrick was still an infant, the boy, begging

help from an uncle, managed to get to Cambridge and eventually became a contented bachelor, a well-liked clergyman, and the great lyricist we still love. In 1857 a collateral descendant of his put up a monument to him in Dean Prior, the parish of his labors.

Then there is Herrick's contemporary, George Herbert, who ranks with Crashaw and Thompson as one of the chief religious poets of England. Some popular expressions attributed to him are:

"Hell is full of good meanings and wishings,"
 "His bark is worse than his bite,"
 "God's mill grinds slow but sure."

Before dying, he sent the manuscript of his poems to a friend, asking him to read it, saying, "if he can think it may turn to the advantage of any dejected poor soul, let it be made public; if not, let him burn it, for I and it are less than the least of God's mercies." He was one poet, therefore, who knew the right spirit in which to publish his work and he was of a comparatively large family—the fifth son of Sir Richard Herbert.

Abraham Cowley, another contemporary of Herrick, too, belongs here. He is little read now, but in his day he was considered a fair rival of Milton, and a recent biographer calls him "the most precocious English poet, excepting none." His poems began to be published when he was ten, and his first book of poems appeared when he was only thirteen. He was also one of our essayists. This man who throughout his life held a leading position in English Letters "was the seventh and a posthumous child of one Thomas Cowley, probably a stationer."

Tennyson Was a Fourth, Shakespeare a Third Child

Another poet one is especially glad to introduce is Tennyson, one of the most pleasant and edifying poets of the world. Every heart responds to his "Sunset and evening star" and his "Tis better to have loved and lost." He was the fourth of twelve children of a scholarly English clergyman and a mother "not learned, save in gracious household ways." All of these children were poetically inclined, though only the fourth became the first poet of his age.

Before concluding, just a word about the prince of poets, Shakespeare. We know quite definitely that he, too, was of a large fam-

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ily, one of at least eight. At least two of the children were born before Shakespeare, but died in infancy. As far as we know, therefore, the great dramatist was the third of eight children.

"The Holiest Thing Alive"

And now with not the least pretense to completeness, we bring to end this little sketch of famous English and American writers born of large families, whose mothers, like the Little Flower's, were willing to take the full responsibility of their state and who eminently deserve the words of Coleridge, the thirteenth child of one of them:

"A mother is a mother still,
The holiest thing alive."

CHAPTER XV

A CULTURED PERSON AND A CULTURED NATION

This article is reprinted with the same title from THE CATHOLIC HOME JOURNAL, September, 1945. It was an article requested to fit an illustration consisting of a tree whose stem was marked "Education," whose roots represented books, magazines newspapers and freedom of religion, speech and press and whose branches represented health, invention, enterprise, arts, and sciences. The result was something I hope every woman who sees this book will read.

Some of its implications are too far-reaching for a short article. It suggests, for example, that nations and races do not have different cultures, but merely a higher or lower culture. At any given point in history some races and nations have a definitely higher culture than others. Since the Christian era those nations and races have the highest culture which have made the best attempt at trying Christianity. But in addition to this not-yet-understood concept of culture, the article has many practical suggestions for becoming a more cultured person one's self and for helping one's country to become more cultured.

Perfect Culture Is Where Reason and the Will of God Perfectly Prevail

To be a fine person and to have a fine nation, each and all must be in the habit of making reason and the will of God prevail. Making reason and the will of God prevail is what the great English critic, Matthew Arnold, calls culture. Some of us think of culture as plays and operas and highbrow books. This is confusing the engine with the car. These things are not culture—but they are the engines of culture. They are the things that help each of us individually and all of us nationally to become cultured.

Points of Culture

Cardinal Newman defined a gentleman as one who never inflicts pain. To act and think so as to give a minimum of pain and a maximum of contentment to oneself and others is the aim of culture. To do so one must bring the natural impulses under the control of right reason and the will of God. The word culture etymologically means tilling, systematic training. *Culture is the degree to which anyone or any group has developed the habit of acting so as to offend least and please most.* When we speak of American culture

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we mean those habits and tendencies and customs which make life among us most pleasant and agreeable for everybody and least distasteful. Political justice, economic efficiency, public courtesy, marital fidelity, courtship habits, trade honesty, table manners—all are part of the American way of life, of our culture. They determine our personal and national comfort, convenience, and contentment.

How One Can Know That a Country Has a High Culture

We think we have a high culture. But actually we need not merely think so, we can know so. A country where, for example, a woman can go places alone is more pleasant than where it is unsafe for a woman to go shopping or visiting alone. A country where a girl can with moral safety go to a show with her boyfriend without a chaperone is more pleasant than where she cannot. Where in stores prices are fixed and where not being swindled does not depend on being a good bargainer; where drivers follow established signals and rules; where instead of elbowing and pushing, people line up and first come first served; where jobs are granted on merit and tests rather than an color, creed, or old school ties—these and hundreds of similar things are marks of a high culture and contributions to the conveniences of life.

The Yardstick of Culture: Doing Unto Others . . .

If in a fire people form a line, rather than a stampede in which the strong trample down the weak, they display a high culture—a cultivated control of their natural impulse to stampede to safety regardless of others. "Everybody for himself and the devil take the hindmost," is the slogan of barbarism; "Consider the other person" is the slogan of culture. Culture is really the habit of the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have others do to you.

Though mankind everywhere needs this habit, a democracy simply cannot get along without a high degree of it. In a democracy the majority rules. If this majority is not considerate of the rights of the minority, there would soon be chaos and violence. An unjust majority could keep Catholics out of government jobs, could keep Negroes out of schools, could force all Jews to live in Ghettoes, could confiscate the property of the rich, could force clergymen and Quakers to kill in wars, could even take the churches away from the churchgoers. When a majority still kept a minority as slaves, our political culture was so much lower than it is now that it finally resulted in the worst violence in our history.

When a few years ago the majority without trial or conviction put all Americans of Japanese descent into relocation camps, our political culture took a sudden dangerous drop. State universities which do not admit Negro students reflect a great depression in our national culture. Every law or custom which is unjust to someone is a blemish in our culture, in our American way of life, whose ideal must be not to inflict unjust pain or inconvenience on anybody and to offer a maximum of comfort and contentment to everybody.

Unnecessary Nuisances Are Defects of Culture

Everything, big or little, personal or national, which unnecessarily disturbs or inconveniences others is a cultural defect. Honking the auto horn too loud, talking ungrammatically or coarsely, playing one's radio too loud or too late, letting one's city yard grow weedy or littered up, pushing and jostling in streetcars—these and thousands of other things, in which is some preventable offence, are defects in culture. In some countries men still turn and stare at a woman passing by. In this, many smokers are careless as to where the smoke blows or the ashes fall. A person publicly drunk has not only committed a sin but has also made a nuisance of himself—by failing to control his natural impulses he has made life uglier than it need have been. By so much he has lowered the cultural level of his country.

Men and Women Compared Culturally

Women, until a hundred years ago, were culturally neglected. Only the churches were as open to them as they were to men. They did not get the schooling men got; they could hardly attend plays; books, magazines and newspapers were kept from them as too deep and strong for them; and of course they could not vote. Now women have more cultural opportunities than men. While the men work or, after work, talk shop, women can spare some time from their housework to read, attend book circles, see shows, and belong to clubs and roundtables.

In some respects, women have culturally outstripped the men. They are more refined in speech, less coarse and more grammatical; their manners and etiquette are better; and they seem to talk less shop. On the other hand, men say they still talk too much about what creeps, crawls, or marries, and too seldom talk ideas. Their talk is too often disorganized, rather trivial and silly, and strung together with interminable *ands*. All these things detract from the general pleasantness of life.

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Where Men Think Women Are Weak Culturally

Men furthermore insist that women have not learned to take a jilting, an unsuccessful love affair, as gracefully as men; that they cannot take criticism as good-naturedly and profitably; that they are more unfair towards people they don't like; that in business and politics they act on emotion and hunches rather than on reason; that they think too well of their own children and too ill of other people's; that their compliments of other women usually end in *buts*; and finally that they think too much about personal beauty, try too long to stay young, and indulge in far more little vanities than men. Men admit that plenty of men have a good share of these faults, too, but insist that their beloved womenfolks have them to a greater degree. In general there is much room for improvement on all these counts in men and women. A fine culture is the fruit of Christianity, and like Christianity, it can and must always get better.

True Culture Starts With the Ten Commandments

In truth, the cornerstone of culture, of every really high and humane culture, is the Christian religion. The structure and frame of culture must be the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. Morals are the prerequisites of manners. The most Emily-Posted dinner guest is unacceptable if he spills the silverware into his pockets. The most loving husband who equally loves his neighbor's wife is worse than a boor. A charming voice is pleasing only after it has learned not to lie. Culture, in a person and in a nation, begins with the control over the powerful natural impulses, to kill, to lie, to steal, to get drunk, to seduce each other's mates. And this beginning is everywhere made only under the urgings and sanctions of religion. Religion not only tells us the first things we must do to get along with one another, but it also enlists the mighty arguments of heaven and hell to make people live up to these rock-bottom rules.

Freedom of Religion Needed to Make Sure a Faulty Religion Won't Forever Prevail

Freedom of religion is indispensable for a happy nation. Only religious revelation, in Bible and Church, can tell people effectively what is forever right and good to do. Freedom of religion is necessary so that all people can strive to find and to adopt the true religion. Many religions are imperfect, some are almost more bad

than good. Only where religious freedom exists can even Catholics be sure that a majority or a mistaken government won't some day make a false or imperfect religion mandatory. Just as true religion is the foundation of a fine culture, so a false religion is the most certain and tragic check to it. Sooner or later a nation saddled with a false religion falls culturally behind nations with the true religious concepts.

Cultural Help Besides Religion and Ethics

Religion and ethics indicate and enforce the first fundamentals of culture, of a satisfactory human society. But much that is not specifically comprised by the Ten Commandments is needed for full pleasantness and happiness. Cleanliness, efficiency, good manners, tact, knowledge, health—all these and others are needed to make a person or a nation really fine and agreeable. A good wife whose dinner is always late, a fine husband whose shoes are never polished, a scholar whose smile is warped—all these are culturally deficient. In addition to Church and religion, people need other cultural helps.

Cultural Wisdom Is Carried from the "Prophets" to the People in Books

Of these, books are first, because they are the viaducts of culture from generation to generation, from nation to nation, and from scholars to the people. Good customs and good ideas never happen all of a sudden to all the people. They always start with a few prophet-like persons and then through books reach all localities. The Ten Commandments started from Moses (through God); we read them in the Bible. This is how all good things develop. Only sin is everywhere: all wise and good things start with one or two and usually spread in books. This is not only true of ideas but also of things. It was a novel by Bulwer-Lytton that introduced and popularized the tuxedo for men. To advance culturally people must read. And some of this reading should be from books. Everybody, certainly every modern woman, should find time for at least a few books a year. Almost any book in a good library is better than none. Any librarian can advise one as to the best books.

One Must Read or Barbarize

In addition to books, a person and a nation need magazines and newspapers. Through them we learn what's going on in the world.

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To be a good neighbor to people in other states one must know what they do and think and what is happening to them. What happens to our family and the neighbors in our village we can see for ourselves. But if we know only that, we remain narrow and trivial. Obviously, unless we live in the White House, great and important things cannot often happen in our immediate circle. To learn of important things, we must increase our vision—we must see what is happening all over the country and the world. It is magazines and newspapers that give us this telescopic eye.

My own mother used to say, "I must read or barbarize." Every person ought to glance through at least one daily paper, one weekly, and about two monthly magazines. For a Catholic, at least one or two of these should be Catholic.

Freedom of Speech Is Necessary So That Truth Can Win Over Error

Cultural progress is dependent upon books, magazines, papers, lectures, sermons, and meetings. To have them plentifully and truthfully, freedom of speech and press are absolutely necessary. Only if all thinkers can express themselves freely and honestly can the people be sure of finally getting what is best and true. Truth and error do not come from the people; they come from the experts and specialists, from the scholars and philosophers. But the people, while they do not discover truth, readily embrace truth or error largely as it is presented to them. If any party or government controls knowledge, the results are dangerous. Truth is not the infallible gift of any party or government. Governments are as often wrong as right. Sooner or later a government that dictates ideas will dictate errors.

The human race arrives at truth only by thorough pro-and-con investigation and discussion by all the best minds in the country. Ordinarily the people will believe what their leaders tell them, unless the contrary view is developed by an opposition. If there is no freedom of press and speech, a democracy simply cannot function because then people are in no position to vote for anything except what their government tells them is right. For example, if the government asks for peacetime military conscription, the majority of the people, if asked to vote the next day, would vote in favor. It is only if clergymen, educators, philisophers, historians rise to argue against the government view, and if enough time is given for their opposing views to be weighed by the people, that the people can and probably will render a wise vote. Consequently,

whatever else people allow, they must on no account relinquish their freedom of press and speech—not even in a war, for precisely during war are these freedoms most needed and valuable. Even the present wartime ban on conventions should not have been tolerated and ought to be revoked. [*It was revoked soon after the war. Yet freedom of discussion is most necessary during a war—whether it is just or not, when and how a peace should be negotiated, etc.*]

If there is freedom of religion, press, speech, and if there are enough books, magazines, and newspapers, the people have the tools to become educated towards a constantly higher, more Christian culture. Though in these tools there will be many errors and heresies, nevertheless, when all the best minds in the country argue points and write and speak about them, the truth will surely if slowly rise to the top. The people will just as surely and definitely come to recognize and adopt it.

Truth Permeates a Country Gradually

Some will do it quickly. Others will be slow about it—these are called backward. When young Lincoln, two hundred years after Galileo had proclaimed it in Italy, said to his school mates that the earth is round, not flat, they walked away twirling their fingers against their temples and shaking their heads. Lincoln, the first in his village to hear and adopt the correct theory about the solar system, was also the first to realize that slavery is wrong. Everybody should strive to be like Lincoln in this respect.

Everyone Should Try to See and Accept the Truth First

Especially should every Catholic woman, like Lincoln, strive to be progressive and alert to all moral and cultural developments. For many centuries Catholics were so poor and oppressed that they could not go to higher schools or read the better books and magazines. But in this country Catholic women now have as much time and talent to read and learn as anyone else. One hopes earnestly that they are doing so: that in the arts, the sciences, in health and enterprise, in manners and morals, in ideas and justice, they are taking their places in the very front ranks of culture.

With the security of the right religion to guide them, they can avoid the errors and heresies that one cannot blame others for stumbling into. If now they show the same energy and thirst for the way, the truth, and the light as others show, Catholic women will be the best and finest cultural leaders that their country and the world—and God—can ask for.

CHAPTER XVI

WOMAN, WHERE CHRISTIANITY IS NOT

This article is reprinted from MAGNIFICAT, November 1941. It was condensed in THE CATHOLIC DIGEST for January, 1942, pp.25-29. It gives citations largely from contemporary sources showing that only where Christianity is established are women treated as human beings who have the same moral rights men have. Naturally, since it was first written some new and even better evidences of this observation have come to light. But the old ones are incontrovertible, and powerful enough for their purpose

A central thesis of my life is that literally and really the only hope for the world is Christianity. Christianity not only makes nations decent, it also makes them strong. And more than that, it even gives them their superiority in plumbing! Paganism and all branches of it are immorality and dirt. Christianity, though still nowhere perfectly applied, is the only creator of justice and cleanliness.

I furthermore thoroughly repudiate the propaganda that the "classic" and pagan Greeks and Romans had a civilization that could compare with that of the Christian nations of today. What they had was fleas, slavery, concubines and temples of immorality. Fallen man, even in Christian countries, is still much of a beast, even an atomic beast if you will, but he is no longer on the average a flea-bitten, slave-holding polygamist. From that Calibanistic state, Christianity, and Christianity alone has elevated him. I want you to read this article.

A Pagan Girl Has No Wedding March

When young King Farouk of Egypt married pretty Farida Zulficar in the non-Christian city of Cairo, a few years ago, the sixteen-year-old Farida was not present at her own wedding. While "her man" was saying, "I do," she was stationed at a distance to watch her own wedding through a latticed partition.

Instead of receiving a ring and a kiss from the bridegroom, poor, non-Christian Farida had to be content with being allowed to see from afar how her father married her off with a symbolic handshake between himself and the groom! According to a newspaper report, "The two pressed upright thumbs under a silk cloth, and the bride's father said, 'I betroth to your majesty my daughter, Farida.'" Thereupon the groom thrice intoned the words, "I accept her betrothal to myself from thee." In another building through a lattice, the bride watched. For her, Mendelssohn's Wedding March could have no meaning!

Only In Christian Countries Do Girls Marry, In Others They Are Married Off

That is the nearest a non-Christian, Egyptian girl comes to her own wedding. How would a sweet American young thing, or a European girl tolerate being cheated out of her parade up the middle aisle? And what would a young wife say to her husband, once she got him alone inside, if he had made her stand in the rectory while he married her by shaking hands at the altar with her father? Only in a Christian country would she have anything to say in the matter. Where Christianity is not, men marry, but women are only married off,—and it is not theirs to say to whom, or when, or how.

Even the Greatest Pagans, Aristotle and Plato, Thought Women Not Quite Human

One often hears it said that it was the medieval Christian reverence for the Blessed Virgin that raised the modern woman to her present level of respect and freedom. But few who glibly say that Christ, through his Mother, put woman on a pedestal really understand what they are saying. They do not really grasp the great fact that Christianity did literally raise women from a chattel to a partner, from a beast of burden to an equal, from a lot worse than slavery to one but little less than angelic. They do not grasp really that Aristotle, the greatest of the pagan philosophers, declared woman to be an inferior order of being, that Plato said it was beneath the dignity of a man to love a woman! And furthermore, they do not realize that even now, where Christianity is not, there women are still chattels and slaves.

Africans Strike Because the Rich Grab All the Pretty Women

Recently, the Negroes of some pagan African tribes went on a sort of strike because their elders were owning all the desirable women. But these pagans did not rebel because each chief had more than one wife. They rebelled only because the rich had "hogged" all the desirable women. That is the typical situation of paganism in all times and all places. Where Christianity is not, there the strong and rich men have harems and the poor men share scarlet unfortunates. And the women have no more to say which they shall be than the cattle in an American barn,—except that our cattle are never abused!

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**Among the Non-Christians, Men May Divorce Their Wives, But
Wives May Not Divorce the Husbands**

Do you, Christianized American wife, realize that were you a native of much of Asia and Africa, Mohammedan and pagan territories, your husband could come home tonight and say to you, "I met a beautiful dancer today. I divorce you. Leave tonight. I'll bring her home tomorrow!" Yes, that is what he could do. And you couldn't collect alimony, either. Nor, of course, had you espied a fine fullback that day, could you have divorced the husband and brought home the fullback. As you know, even among the ancient Hebrews, it was only the man who could divorce the wife, or, because of the "hardness" of his heart, marry two or three, but the wife could not divorce him, or take unto herself an extra helpmeet or two!

Men and women in Christian countries do not realize how directly and specifically Christianity has raised the men from the level of cavemen brutes and women from the level of domestic kine.

**Even in the Most Civilized Pagan Country, Japan, the
Women Are Still Chattels**

In 1938 the Baroness Shizue Ishimoto, editor of the *Women's Cyclopedia*, shocked Japan, the most advanced of the pagan countries, when she declared that Japanese women are treated with no more respect than idiots and lunatics.

Ernest O. Hauser, former staff member of the Institute of Pacific Relations, in the *Survey Graphic* of October, 1938, states that for \$4.50 to \$10.80 a month, Japanese women have been working thirteen to fifteen hours a day, and that even after the Japanese Welfare Ministry recently ordered stores to close at 10 p.m., the sales-girls' working day is still eleven hours.

If you were the average young Japanese girl your father would arrange to marry you off to someone whom, probably, you had never seen. After marriage your husband would customarily keep you confined to the house. If he wanted a "good time," he would not share it with you but with a Geisha girl. And if he were to buy any luxury for a woman, it would be for the Geisha, not for you. Customarily Japanese men do not take their wives to parties. They go on stag parties, and if they need women, they get paid

ones. Of course, what with the influx of Christian trade and Christian pictures from Europe and America, things are changing somewhat. Father Clarence Burns, Maryknoll missionary, who in 1936 was dragged about China for nine and a half months by bandits, says that more and more one can see Japanese husbands escorting their wives down town. Although the war, he says, is again checking this tendency, it has at least made a beginning. Nevertheless, a Japanese wife is still socially confined to the house in the manner of a servant or a chattel.

Husbands in Japan Can Bring Prostitutes Home

According to Father Burns, it is still possible for a Japanese husband to bring a prostitute home with him and require his wife to wait on her, to do even menial tasks for her. And furthermore the wife must do it graciously and not seem resentful. Otherwise he can simply tell her to get out—which in Japan would be equivalent to divorce. Such a dismissal or divorce is particularly pathetic for a Japanese woman because by marrying she has forever given up and lost her family and cannot return to her former home. This does not happen often, of course, but that it is socially and legally possible is sufficient proof of the horribly degraded status of women in even the most advanced of pagan countries.

The Geishas Are Girls the Parents Sold Into a Life of Sin

And where do the Geishas and brothel women come from? They are the young daughters of Japanese mothers, whom the father and husband has sold for from fifty to two hundred and fifty dollars to a Geisha broker, touring about quite legally to do such buying! This broker will, if a girl be very pretty and clever, make a Geisha out of her, to die soon enough of syphilis; or, if she isn't clever, he will send her to a mere licensed brothel, to die still sooner. Though you were the girl's mother, it being a non-Christian country, you would have legally nothing to say as to what your husband does with her. Dennis McEvoy, for several years newspaper correspondent in Tokyo, says in *Coronet*, January, 1941, that Japanese Geisha brokers buy approximately 10,000 girls annually from the poverty-stricken northern provinces of Japan. That's what woman's life is like, where Christianity is not!

In Pagan China Women Are Treated Even Worse Than in Pagan Japan

Nor are things better in vast and sprawling China. Here too,

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fathers sell daughters into slavery and immorality, price possibly two hundred dollars. These slave girls then work from 6 a. m. and have "only duties and no rights." And those girls whom their fathers do not sell into slavery are bartered into marriage. In a pagan country girls are simply not allowed to choose a husband. According to an item in *Catholic Missions* (April-May, 1940), "Girls are promised in marriage at the age of two or three, sometimes even before birth with the proviso that it be a daughter."

There Is No Courtship in Pagan China

In pagan China, and in pagan countries everywhere, people simply do not have the privilege of courtship and of marriage for love. If a Chinaman loves his wife, it is an accident, not a previous condition. A Catholic missionary, seeing a Chinese farmer looking sad because his wife had just died, was deeply moved to think how much this fellow had loved his wife. Consolingly he said, "Don't take it so hard, my man. Time heals the worst of wounds. And in time you will surely be able to find and to love another wife."

"Oh, it isn't that at all," exclaimed the Chinaman ruefully, and somewhat startled by the missionary's romantic sentiment. "It is only that I will never, never get so strong and good a worker again." Where Christianity is not, that represents the ultimate of a man's appreciation of "his woman!"

Adultery Is a Man's Glory in China, a Wife's Death

And as Benjamin Franklin once wisely remarked, where people marry without love, they love without marriage! Even Lin Yutang, the celebrated interpreter of Chinese culture to Americans, says blithely that the Chinaman wants some woman who understands him, if not his wife, "then one of the sing-song girls." Adultery in China and in all pagan countries is a sin a man glories in, but which his wife dies for!

Everybody knows of China's Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. As a pagan "he was married to his first wife in Chinese fashion, at the age of sixteen." She became the mother of his two sons. He kept the sons, but put her away. And as a recent article says, "There were three concubines to be disposed of when Chiang assumed Mei-ling [the present Madam Kai-shek] and Christianity." Now, having become a Christian, he recently "proclaimed in the presence of Madame Chiang his undying Christian love and complete mono-

gamy" (George Moorad, "Chiang Kai-shek," *American Mercury*, June, 1947, p. 673). Pagans are bigamists and concubinists and the more concubines they have the more respected they are for it. Only among Christians is monogamy the accepted, if still often violated, order of things. [This paragraph was not in the original *Magnificat* article.]

Pearl Buck, in her novel about Chinese life, *The Good Earth*, shows that in this pagan country it is the accepted order of the day for the mother to be put aside by her husband in favor of one or more concubines, and for her sons, even in their teens, to be furnished with slave girls. His wife has made Wang Lung rich, and in reciprocation he established a brothel girl in the house. That is how a mother may be treated where Christianity is not. That is how she was treated also in Europe before Christianity made all men bow reverently before the Mother and her Child!

In Hindu and Moslem India a Wife May Not Talk to Her Brother-in-Law

In India with its 350,000,000 pagans and Mohammedans, woman's lot is as shameful as in China. You Christian wife, how would you like to be forbidden to mention your husband's name? Or how would you like to be forbidden ever to speak to your brother-in-law? Those are but two of the rules prescribed for women in the Indian Civil Service textbook, *Social Service in India*, by Edward A. H. Blount, issued by the British Stationery Office in 1939.

The head of a school for girls in Calcutta reported a few years ago that she was spending five thousand rupees a year for teachers, and only two rupees for the library, but a full seven thousand for transporting the girls to and from school. And why this money for their transportation? Because among these people a girl may not walk on a public street. That means that in that Moslem country, where Christianity is not yet, your daughter could not walk to the store for you or walk to high school, nor for that matter could you—even you—her mother. Your son, of course, and your husband could go anywhere they pleased at any time.

In All Mohammedan Countries Men May Have Four Wives and Replacements

In Persia and Arabia and Africa, in all of these non-Christian

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territories the lot of women is abominable. When the King of Arabia, Ibn Saud, was eighteen years old he already had three wives, at thirty-seven he had married and divorced an even hundred, according to Richard Halliburton in the *Baltimore Sun*, and recently, at fifty-five, he has had one hundred and sixty wives. He had twenty-seven sons and a great many daughters, whom he does not bother to count, for women are not worth counting, in this non-Christian country! Ibn Saud may have only four wives at a time, but whenever he finds a girl he fancies, he says to one of his wives, "I divorce thee. Get out." And he brings in the new wife. As a matter of fact he usually keeps only three wives at a time, so that when a new fancy strikes him he can marry her on the spot without waiting to get home to divorce one of the others!

The Most Divorced Christian Not as Foul as These Pagan Lust-pots

How would you like to be a woman in such a country? And still some people say Christianity has failed! At its worst, what are the five or six wives in a lifetime of a Barrymore, in Christian America, compared to the one hundred and sixty of respected and honored rascals like Ibn Saud!

And Ibn Saud is not at all exceptional, except in the number of his wives. Any Mohammedan may have four wives and whenever he sees a fifth woman he wants, he can merely dispose of one of the four by saying, "I divorce thee," and she is out on the street, without alimony or redress. Not even her sons can bring her back. One Bedouin sheikh complained to an American woman that he would like one wife who was educated and that if he had such a one he would be most kind to her. "The four I have are all ignorant," he said, "and cause me much trouble. I want one with whom I could talk. If I can find the right one I might be willing to let her wear a hat!" Such magnanimity! But imagine a husband in a Christian country telling his wife that if she does so and thus he *might* be willing to let her wear a hat!

Pagan Countries Improve Only After Contact With Christian Countries

It is true that things are improving a little in the non-Christian world. Adopting western, that is, Christian ways, Turkey, for example, passed decrees permitting women to appear in public unveiled. That Turkey is also discouraging harems and polygamy now, is due only to Christian influence.

**Pagan Wife Killed Not Only If She Looks at Another Man,
But If Another Man Looks at Her**

The accepted and honored injustice exercised against women in non-Christian countries is so utterly crass and hardened that a western mind cannot even conceive it. While husbands regularly and acceptably practice adultery and polygamy, the wife is often subject to death if a man but manages to look at her. For example, the Ibn Saud, of the one hundred sixty wives, being told that "western ways" were getting around in Arabia, angrily interrupted a speaker at a formal dinner in honor of the Crown Prince Emir Saud, and cried: "By Allah! If I saw any one of my wives talking to any man, even my brother, I would kill both immediately."

Sinful Brothers Kill Sisters Who "Fall"

Dr. Paul W. Harrison, the famous "Desert Doctor" of Arabia, relates that girls have their throats slit by their brothers for committing adultery.

And while their husbands live with Geishas or their equivalents, wives die by the thousand, because no man not even a doctor, may look upon them. Victor Heiser, M. D., in an article entitled "An American Doctor in China" (*The Saturday Evening Post*, November 20, 1937) says it is easier to train women doctors

"than change the *idee fixe* that no male physician should be allowed to examine a woman. In the past his diagnosis had to be made by feeling her pulse through a gauze net, or even by means of the vibrations along a silken cord made fast to her wrist and passed through a hole in the wainscot into a neighboring room."

In Pagan Countries Daughters Are a Shame and a Liability

And why did not our friend Ibn Saud bother about counting his daughters? Because in pagan countries, unless a man, like the lowest of Chinese and Japanese, is willing to sell his daughters into prostitution, daughters are expensive. A writer in the *New York Times Magazine*, March 28, 1937, speaking of India says, "The stigma attaching to unmarried girls is so great that parents are driven to desperate remedies. One of them is the pathetic dowry given to induce young men to marry." The writer goes on to say that a Brahmin youth who has passed the university entrance examinations commands a dowry of five thousands rupees to marry, a graduate ten thousand. In other words, if you were

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a beautiful young thing in India, instead of in Indiana, and wanted to marry a college graduate, it is not he who would give you an expensive diamond, it is you who would have to pay him thousands of dollars to marry you. That, and that literally, is the effect of the absence of Christianity, as far as woman is concerned.

Treatment of Women Not a Matter of Climate or Race But of Culture

And let no one think that all this is a matter of continent or nationality, and not of Christianity. The Greeks, before Saint Paul declared to them that "*there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Jesus Christ,*" treated their women just as badly as the Persians treat them now. Greek fathers used to expose their baby daughters to starve or to be saved by someone for a life we Christians call "worse than death."

Where Europe Is Still Pagan, Women Still Wear Veils

Let there be no misunderstanding: if women are treated as human beings in Europe today it is because there they have heard Christ's words to the adulterous men about to stone a woman, "*Let him who is innocent throw the first stone.*" As a proof that without Christianity women would be no better off in Europe than in Asia, one need but call attention to that part of Europe which is not Christian,—Albania. There, in that last Mohammedan stronghold of Europe, a revolution broke out in 1937, an insurrection of the Albanian men against the governor's order that the women of Albania should henceforth appear in public unveiled, as women in the Christian countries do. The *New York Times* caption for May 16, 1937, read, "Revolt Flares in Albania, City is Captured; Enemies of King Act on Unveiling of Women."

Only Where Christ and His Mother Enter Do the Polygamists and the Geishas Exit

Yes, the saying that Christ and His Mother raised womanhood to queenhood is not empty rhetoric. Where Christianity is, there women walk about free and unveiled; are courted and loved and married. But wherever Christianity is not, there the wife helps the husband with his slippers, but the Geisha girl helps him with his two-steps! And so it will continue to be until the Christian missionary has carried the ensign of the Mother and Child into every city and hamlet!

CHAPTER XVII

YOU AND I, AND A BETTER WORLD

This is the Commencement Address delivered at Incarnate Word College, May 31, 1945, and is here printed for the first time. I think it fittingly closes these chapters of collected, re-published articles. The reader will make allowances for the topicality unavoidable in a commencement address. I thought it best to publish it as it was delivered.

Beyond its topicality, this is not just another conventional commencement address. It has in it things even clergymen might well ponder. And it makes clear that the "new woman's" influence will not be good, necessarily, because of any feminine intuition, but only, if at all, because of training, a training more truly Christian than that which, largely restricted to the men, has not prevented Christian nations from fighting a Hundred Years War, a Thirty Years War, and two World Wars. The savages and the barbarians and the pagans fought and fight still more wars. But the tragedy that these Christian wars have been fought at all is due solely and entirely to the fact that Christianity has not been understood sufficiently or tried enough.

But we are making progress. Bishops no longer captain the bloody encounters! By and by, we will make still more progress. This essay gives some hints which, I believe, not only every educated woman, but every man and woman everywhere ought to grasp and take to heart.

Commencement, One of Life's Happiest Milestones

College commencements represent the happiest group milestone in human life. For a whole class of happy people, commencement sets a colon to exciting years of work and play well done, and the colon suggests long vistas of usefully happy years ahead. The milestones that come later in life too often end in a period, not a colon.

At midnight, June 27, 1787, in Switzerland, Edward Gibbon completed the last volume of his monumental *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. He had got the idea for it many years ago when as a young man on a visit to Rome he heard the barefooted friars singing vespers in what once had been the Temple of Jupiter. He had worked on it twenty-one years, when on this June night he wrote a writer's only happy word, *Finis*.

He records the event in his *Autobiography*. "After laying down my pen," he wrote, "I took several turns in a . . . covered walk

of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotion of joy on recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that, whatsoever might be the future fate of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious."

For Gibbon that great milestone was a period. For you graduates this happy occasion tonight is a colon. It marks the end of many things—of good things and of examinations—but it more truly means the beginning, the commencement, of the long, useful, the really decisive things ahead.

I am happy on such an occasion to be your Commencement Speaker. As you are leaving this your Alma Mater I am glad to have the last word. Your fathers and mothers and friends may think that a professor always has the last word. However, I can playfully assure them that in a girls' college a man professor can be sure of the last word only if he is the Commencement Speaker!

The World Needs Flames of Justice, Not Torches of Revolution

My first wish is that you do not go out with romantic visions of setting the world afire but with a firm resolution to be a clear, steady flame of justice and charity and usefulness, wherever you are, all your life. Two wars have made me terribly afraid of people who want to set the world on fire. I have developed an abhorrence of anyone who wants to reform the world in a big way. The big way turns into wars and revolutions, and the reform ends in ruined cities and millions of unmarked crosses.

History more and more convinces me that the really great and enduring improvements in the world have come from very noble ideas and very little noise. The greatest of all came, not from a general staff and a military band, but from a stable and an angels' song. The mighty medieval crusades today are a bad memory; St. Francis, the humble peacemaker, the poor man of Assisi, lives on in eleven thousand monasteries all over the world. Three girls, who in 1869 came to Texas to found a badly needed but humble hospital planted a movement of charity and education which today as the Congregation of Sisters of the Incarnate

Word embraces colleges, academies, hospitals and orphanages in many states and several countries. It's the high-minded small way that benefits the world, not the strong-armed big way. St. James the Apostle said:

" . . . who causeth one sinner to be converted from the error of his way, shall save his soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins" (Epistle, V, 20).

Converting people in a small way and so saving your soul, as St. James promises, is the chief thing I ask of you and wish for you.

Some Call This the Century of the "New Woman"

A few months ago at the Centennial celebration of a Texas college for women the speaker declared that the most epoch-making development of our Century is not fast transportation or world wars but the new status of women. Wars and totalitarianisms, he said, are old things which the world has simply not yet been able to grow out of, but the social, economic, moral equality of women is something new—something Plato and Aristotle did not even dream of. A thousand years from now, he said, our Century will not likely be called the Age of the World Wars but the Age of the New Woman (Mary Hardin Baylor, Centennial, Feb. 1, 1945).

In the last hundred years woman has slowly achieved the same school curricula as men, the right to vote, an open door to man's professions, equal pay for equal work, opportunity to hold offices and to manage business, the right to choose her own husband, freedom from the chaperone—and also some freedoms we won't name! Women in this country get two-thirds as many college degrees as men; women control two-thirds of the wealth of the country. Culturally women seem to have four times more chance or inclination to attend plays and motion pictures, to hear reviews and read books, and to belong to discussion clubs—not to mention bridge clubs.

Woman's Influence in Civic Affairs Has Been Disappointing

Nevertheless in 1937 on her 79th birthday, Miss Alice Stone Blackwell, grand old pioneer of the woman's suffrage movement, to quote a headline, voiced "*disappointment at way Women have made use of ballot.*" She said "*she had hoped woman's suffrage would make certain peace, temperance and a child labor amendment to the Constitution*" (News Item, AP, *N. Y. Times*, Jan. 11, 1937). In view of the facts she commented quietly, "*No reform ever accomplishes as much as its advocates expect.*"

In this matter, too, the humanitarians had argued for the big reform, woman's suffrage, and expected the perfect world, and they are disappointed that woman's new power did not produce that better world. Crooked politics, wars, bad literature, race prejudice, starvation wages, unemployment, drunkenness and immorality were not ended, in fact, it almost seemed as if they had increased with the New Woman in politics and business!

**Only Better Training, Not Their Nature, Can Make Women
Wiser Than Men**

They aren't worse, of course, but there is a good reason why they did not become much better. That reason is important for us.

The reason is that women are not naturally better or wiser than men. Women by the fact of being women may be conceded to be more beautiful than men, but their being women does not make them better or wiser! Women, like men, grow good and wise only through wise Christian training and experience. Women unless so trained are just as savage as men.

Uncivilized Women Want Their Men to Kill Other Women's Men

A missionary, Father Marcelline Molz, in "The Naga Headhunters of India," (*Salesianum*, April, 1945, p. 56) writes that among the Naga headhunters,

"A Naga youth is not considered to have proved himself a man until he has taken at least one head. The Naga women concur in this point of view, for they never cease to ridicule a young man who cannot show a trophy. When a suitor pays court to a Naga girl, he must pledge his affection by presenting her with one or more heads."

It may be terrible that the Naga women should praise their men for headhunting—but until trained better than their savage men, it is perfectly natural that they do. Similarly, given the same training as men, it was perfectly natural that American women should have turned on Lew Ayres, movie star, as fiercely as the members of the American Legion when he said that his conscience forbade him to kill!

**Women In New Fields Have All the Ignorance and Vices
of Their Trainers**

When women enter politics, finance, medicine, the arts, it is

fantastic to expect them to be more skilled, more wise, or more moral than the men from whom they learned. A woman becomes a good swimmer only by expert training and practice: she becomes an honest politician only by training in highminded and Christian politics.

When women acquired the various freedoms we hear about, they inherited all the graft, prejudices, cruelties of the men. If the New Age of Woman is to be a special blessing for the world, then women must use their new cultural opportunities to become thoroughly Christian more quickly and enthusiastically than men—more honest, more just, more charitable, more fair, and more wise than men.

Women Today Can Take Over the Cultural Leadership

And women today are in a splendid position to become so—if they know how and if they want to. They are getting the same high school training as men, and the time seems to be approaching when as many will go to college as men. During the war years, while the men brutalized on war fronts, women have been able to push ahead educationally. Furthermore in school and in life women are somewhat less enslaved by vocationalism, so as to allow them an edge in liberal subjects. In addition to that, women somehow—both career women and housewives—seem to have more time for culture, for plays, books, and study clubs, and even novenas and prayer meetings, than men. In short the setting is perfect for women for the first time in the history of the world to take over the cultural leadership—that is, the leadership in better living, in better thinking, and in an improved brotherhood of man.

Cultural Leaders Should See the Right First and Live It First

Of this feminine leadership in better thinking and living, young women who have had the liberal education for which you got your degrees tonight should be and will be the leaders. To be leaders at all, and to be above all *worthy* leaders, you must see the right and live and teach the right sooner than others. To be a true leader, for example, you must be among the first to understand race prejudice and to overcome it in yourselves and in others. Race prejudice is only one of dozens of things regarding which the human race must think and act more wisely.

Thornton Wilder in his beautiful play, *Our Town*, remarks, "Wherever you come near the human race, there's layers and lay-

ers of nonsense" (Act III). Unfortunately, there are not only layers of nonsense, there are layers and layers of prejudice, racialism, blind nationalism, revenge, and war lust. These are the layers of original sin that women trained in good, liberal, Christian schools must take a lead in rolling back.

In the Past Even Churchmen Have Too Often Supported Wrongs and Stupidities

Banishing these sinful stupidities cannot be entirely entrusted to the men. We men have rolled up a sad, sorry record regarding them. Even the record of our morally elite, our churchmen, is badly spotted. While it must be emphasized that churchmen have ever been in the front rank of any true progress, justice, and brotherhood, as only recently, for example, I heard His Excellency, Archbishop Robert E. Lucey, urge corrections of the injustices of Yalta, one must nevertheless sadly note that there has never been a war or a witch hunt which some churchmen did not sanctify. It was a Jewish highpriest who crucified Christ as a blasphemous and traitor; it was a Catholic bishop who ordered Joan of Arc burned at the stake as some kind of war criminal; it was the great Protestant divine, Cotton Mather, who promoted the shameful witch burnings of Puritan New England. And today, when modern witch hunters, like Judge Samuel Rosenman, want blanket war criminal punishment for whole organizations (*Time*, May 21, 1945), looking to the butchery of some six million people, the Anglican Archbishop of York self-righteously cries out that all whom he calls master war criminals should be lynched on the spot without trial and that as regards punishment of others, "Some share of guilt [must go to] the whole German people" (*Time*, April 2, 1945, p. 53)!

A High Morality Quotient Is More Needed Than a High I. Q.

Yes, sadly, just as among judges, teachers, doctors, so just as surely if not as universally among clergymen there has never been a war or a witch hunt which some churchmen did not give the moral whitewash. Clearly, a high morality quotient is as rare as a high intelligence quotient, and no class of men has enough of a morality quotient to make the world good and just without the utmost help from everybody whom God, through grace or education, endowed with rightmindedness—with a sense of justice, with the heroic ability to *do to others as one wants to be done by*.

Such right-minded people is what we need. More and more we must expect them to arise from among the women—for they are

now the greater recipients of a liberal Christian culture. Such right-minded leaders is what one should especially be justified in expecting of young women who are graduates of so progressive a Catholic liberal college as Incarnate Word.

Three Guides for Right Thinking

To be such true, right-minded leaders you must first of all resolve that you will never stop trying to see what is really right, good, and progressive. You must determine to keep on thinking, and learning, and praying against your own prejudices until you see and feel the right. Some principles of procedure should become second nature to you. I would suggest three.

One—Nothing Is Right That Doesn't Square With Christianity

You should stand convinced at all times that nothing is truly progressive that cannot be harmonized with God, Christ and the Bible. You should recognize as wrong in yourself and in others whatever offends against these religious concepts. An atheist may often be right, but when he is, his ideas must harmonize with Christ and the Bible. That holds for adherents of any sect or denomination. I should like you to feel absolutely certain that society never rises higher than its truest religious beliefs, and that therefore your most important search for truth must be for religious truth.

Two—Mankind Needs the Ten Commandments for Happiness

Secondly, you should proceed on the conviction that the Ten Commandments are an absolute essential for man's happiness, not only hereafter, but here and now. God gave us these Commandments not to make life hard for us but to make possible the only happiness that we can reasonably expect on earth. Any plans or institutions, no matter how seductively proposed as conducive to man's happiness, which violate this holy code will lead to misery and must be ruthlessly rejected.

Three—The Supreme Yardstick of Right Is Christ's,

"Do Unto Others . . ."

These two conditions are the first foundations of any worthy leadership. But the principle that *actively* makes for leadership is Christ's chief Command, "*All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them. For this is the law and the prophets*" (Matt. vii, 12). Christ could give us

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no higher yardstick for being just and fair and charitable in all things to all men. If you really feel it and apply it to your parents, your husband, your mother-in-law, your children, it doesn't seem possible that you should ever be thought anything but the best and wisest of women.

Christ's Yardstick Alone Can Prevent an Unjust Peace and Another War

If you now rise higher, as because of your high education you should, and apply this standard to every proposed law, to all peace terms and settlements, to all races and creeds, then you cannot be unjust and you cannot go wrong. If you will then live and speak those ideas, you will be the finest leader your country and mankind can possible have. With enough leaders like that there could not be an unjust peace, and taking in other countries, there could not be another war.

Christian Leadership as a Wife and Mother

But you may ask how extensive should you try to make your leadership. My contention has been from the beginning that the little flame that is right is much better than a conflagration that may go wrong. I repeat, I should like every graduate first of all to see what is right and then to use it whenever she can, beginning in her own home.

As graduates of Incarnate Word College you are trained to take your place in the world of wages and hours, in the world of vocations and professions. Promotion in your profession is a success I wish you and a success which everybody can easily understand.

But I should like to emphasize that your success as college graduates, as valuable leaders, is not limited to a professional career. It is my conviction that a liberally educated girl can use her Christian leadership while being a wife and mother, quite as effectively as in a career. Florence Nightingale and Clara Barton did splendid things as career girls. And if you make a career your life I wish you every blessing. But who will say that St. Monica, the mother that finally turned a pagan son, Augustine, into the saint and theologian, did not exercise a wholesome influence on the world that was as great as Florence Nightingale's or Clara Barton's!

**Becoming the Mother of a Saint Is Greater Than
Becoming a Governor**

Merely being a wife and mother, it is true, is no great achievement. The Naga women I quoted are wives and mothers very early. But a wife and mother that possesses the world's front rank Christian attitudes is a tremendous factor for good. The saints all had mothers; but so had the gangsters. The right kind of college-trained mother has the best chance in the world of becoming the mother of a saint—of another St. Francis of Assisi perhaps.

We return to the quotation from St. James—about saving one's soul by converting just one sinner. For a college graduate to influence her husband and children is not reforming the world by a revolution. But we have agreed that violent reforms start with high ideals and too often end with ruined cities. A girl who influences her husband and children into the highest tiers of Christianity is improving the world in the mustard seed way which Our Lord so highly commends.

**Christ Himself Started With Twelve Fishermen.
Not With the World**

He himself did not set out to reform the world with a brass band and a mighty conference of potentates. Instead he took twelve fellows of the type of fishermen, wherever he found them, and spent most of his time making good and wise Christians out of them. As we all know, he ended by remaking the world. And His work is still going on.

**As Individuals Let's Live the Golden Rule Towards Those About
Us, as Americans Let's Worry More About American
Sins Than German or Russian Ones**

Surely, if Christ considered the shaping of twelve Apostles into high-grade Christians his first and constant vocation, then what worthier leadership or finer vocation can one wish for a college graduate than that she help those near and dear to her, her hometown fellow citizens, her family, kin and friends, and, God willing, a husband and children, to become the kind of people Christ would want them to be. What more can your Alma Mater, and your country, and your church, ask of you?

On this happy educational milestone of your life, that is the vocation and that is the success I, and I am sure all your other teachers and superiors, heartily and hopefully wish you. May it bring you happiness, fame, and salvation. Good-bye and good luck!

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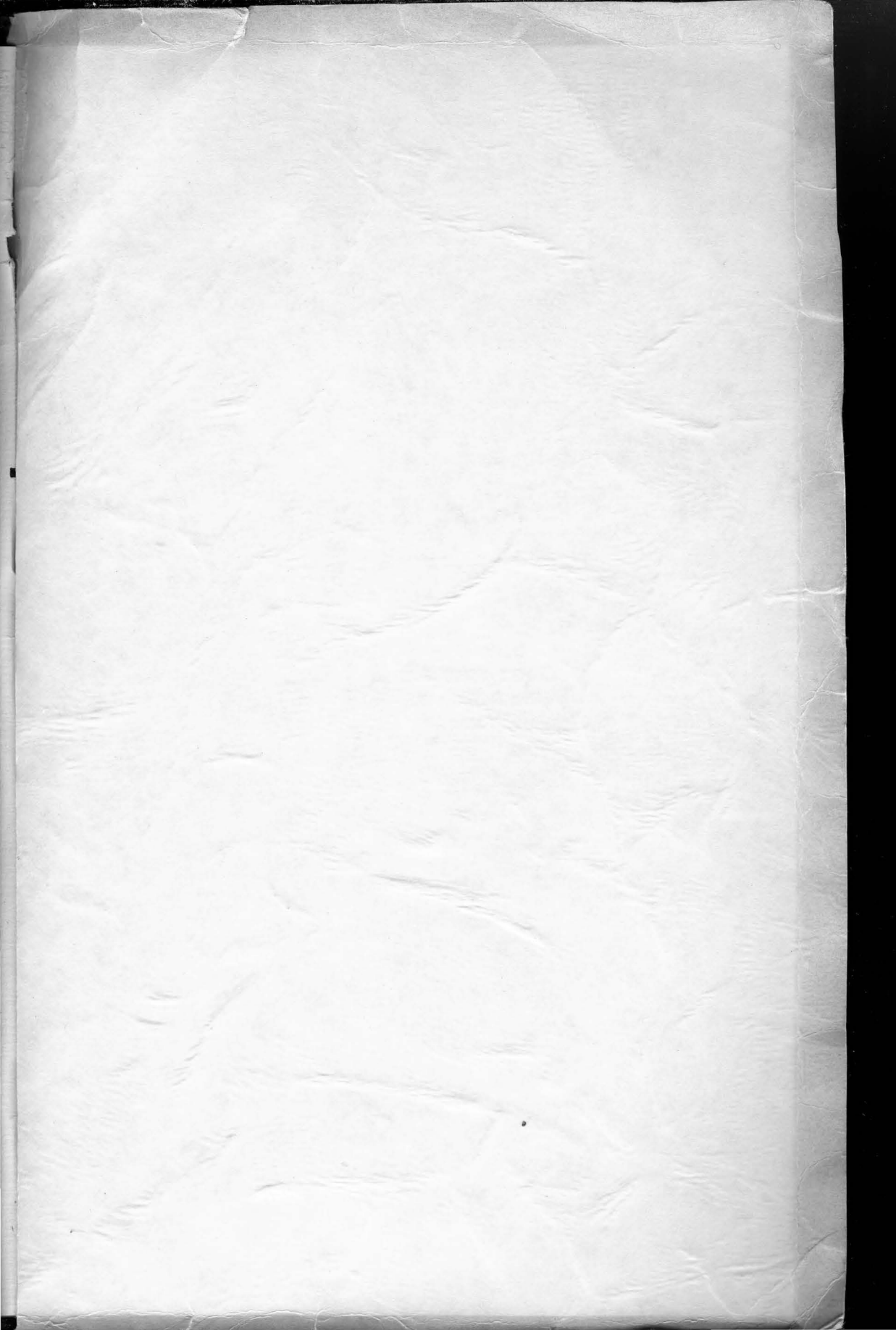
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