

Smaller Family of To-day

Mother Love And Money Factor In Modern Marriages

By LADY OSSULSTON

The great problem of marriage, since Adam and Eve were turned out of the Garden of Eden to fend for themselves, has been an economic problem, and to-day, with its high standard of living for all—a quite right and proper standard—and reduced incomes, or, at least, reduced purchasing power of incomes, the problem assumes greater proportions than ever. The most important point in solving it is the sad necessity for the curtailment of the family, but this is in some respects a good thing, as it seems to be prompted, on the most part, by a sense of greater responsibility to the child.

This degree of responsibility appears to be a new merit, but has not yet been included in the official list of cardinal virtues. Indeed, by stern critics of the present age, it is misinterpreted to mean selfishness and a wish on the parents' part to avoid responsibility.

In the "good old days" which they extol everyone had a dozen or more children—and lost two or three. Curiously, the mother who had "buried" the greatest number of children seemed to consider herself the best authority on the rearing of them. If none died, it was considered worthy of comment, and one still occasionally hears old people proudly assert that they had fourteen children, "and all of them living," and a respectful silence falls on the listeners.

Indeed, it is something to be proud of—to have fourteen children and to rear them all successfully: it is nothing short of miraculous! But it is better luck than management!

If one inquired one would find that most of these "innocents" died of one or other of the minor ailments of childhood, any of which are curable, if not preventable, when babes are brought into the world in proper conditions. But it is not possible to provide proper conditions

when little No. 12 or No. 14 makes its appearance.

Modern parents realise this, and consider it a duty to restrict their family to the number which they know they can care for, house, and educate properly.

So much for the individual aspect. Speaking nationally, it is, in the main, only among the leisured and professional classes that the smaller family is found.

For the other classes, however, there is still every encouragement to have large and unwieldy families—unwieldy for themselves, unwieldy for the State. Their responsibilities are lightened every year. Among the poorer classes the ones who take the most advantage of this state of affairs are the least worthy because the really self-respecting and thrifty will not avail themselves of State help whenever it is possible to keep their independence.

The knowledge necessary for enlightened control is withheld from the poor, which is both cruel to the individual and bad for the community; bad, because it means that the irresponsibles are increasing at the expense, literally, of the others, who pay for everything in taxes either at the cost of their own children's bringing-up or by depriving themselves largely of the joy of children.

Naturally everyone would wish that mothers and babes of the poorer classes, many of whom are among the "salt of the earth," should continue to receive skilled and loving care, free of charge when necessary, in our hospitals; and also that increasing efforts should be made to give the child-wealth of the nation much greater equality of opportunity in every way. But this very unwieldy, unenlightened multiplying and crowding is one of the factors which makes that ideal farther and farther away from realisation.

Train Your Child Wisely!

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Preparing For School

It is the same in many respects with the children who one day go to preparatory and public schools. There is so much that can be done in the nursery to prepare children for school life.

So frequently you hear people say, "Oh! when they go to school they will soon learn not to do that," or, "School will teach them that this behaviour won't do." That, after all, is very unfair, both to the child and to the school. It is hard on the

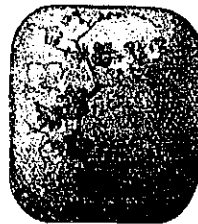
child who has been allowed to persist in slack, tiresome habits at home to have the difficulty of overcoming them added to the difficulties of absorbing and being absorbed by the new life at school.

The first years are essentially the habit-forming years, and if habits are formed aright they should become so much second nature as to cause the child no effort as he grows older.

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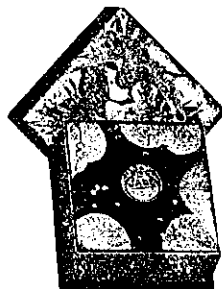


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Film also ruins teeth. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth to cause decay.

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