

Blame the Family

While the war boom in babies will certainly add considerably to the nation's population, the busy war marriages can hardly result in the establishment of stable families. And soon the country will be strewn with the wreckage of many such marriages. Similarly the way is used as an excuse to sever family ties already weakened by the strain of modern living.

But what of today's children? What has been, and will be, the effect on them of the disintegration of the family and family life? How well have the present generation of parents discharged their obligations to their children? Statistics abound to prove the decline of the family, both numerically (even war babies are not going to change the family picture greatly) and measured according to the standard of its influence. The latest census disclosed, for instance, that the average population per occupied dwelling in the United States dropped from 4.1 in 1930 to 3.8 in 1940.

Personal experiences, however, can at times reveal a problem more distinctly than mere figures. For this purpose the observations of an educator associated with one of the larger metropolitan school boards are enlightening. The man in question has served as principal of a school for mentally retarded students and more recently as principal of a grammar school in a semi-slum neighborhood. Speaking not long ago on the waning influence of family life in general and the negligence of parents in particular, he remarked bluntly: "The average parent has almost completely lost even his or her fundamental animal instinct toward the children."

For instance, the educator continued, "if we arrange a meeting for the children's parents they will come only if guaranteed refreshments, otherwise the proportion of those present to the number of invitations extended will range from one to two per cent." And whenever he contacts the parents to discuss the child's progress or suggest a course of action, the answer, he ruefully asserted, is usually "anything you want to do with the boy (or girl) is all right. In fact I don't care what you do." Granting these remarks do not reflect exceptional pictures, who then is to blame the oncoming generation for whatever excesses they may be guilty of in later life?

The opinions of this educator can be substantiated in a hundred different ways. Consider only the fact that a few months ago a campaign launched by high school students in a Northwestern State against objectionable newspapers and magazines bogged down because the parents absolutely refused to cooperate in any way whatsoever.

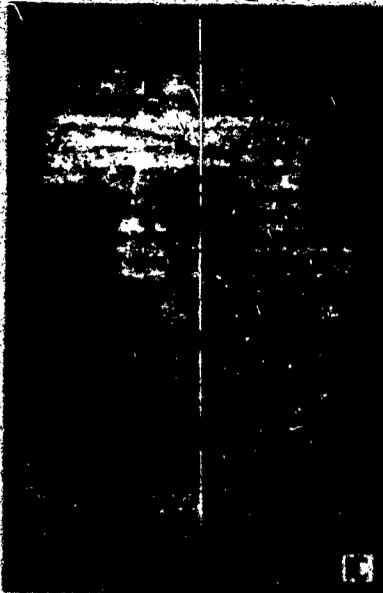
The present family status was cynically summed up more than five years ago by John Hodgson Bradley writing in "The Forum." Fathers and husbands "no longer rule the roost," he stated, "because the rule as well as the roost is disappearing. They can no longer dictate the lives of daughters and wives who are economically independent who are emotionally and chemically able to have as few children and as many love affairs as they desire." Sad commentary on an institution ordained by God with the husband and father as the head and the wife and mother as the heart! The same writer quotes Langdon-Davies as predicting, after mature thought, "the ultimate doom of the old-fashioned home and family."

That family traditions and virtues, customs and attitudes are degenerating can hardly be doubted. Perhaps the day is nearer at hand than most people would be willing to admit, when a concerted move will be made to accept the program of State rearing of children advanced by the irreligious Bertrand Russell and others of that stripe more than ten years ago.

Whether consciously or not, our generation is witnessing the death of one liberty and the birth of another. The liberty of indifference, which granted parents and families the right to discharge their obligations or to neglect them, is rapidly disappearing. In its place has come an increasing measure of the liberty of necessity, the fundamental premise of State absolutism. Unless all present indications are wrong, the family will be jeopardized seriously by the ascendancy of this brand of "liberty," which acts like a wise press on society.

Each grape on the vine, when thrown into a vat with thousands of other grapes, loses its own identity and individuality. And unless

'Dies In Japan'



Rev. Lee J. Fehigan, M. M., of Brockton, Mass., whose death in Japan has been announced by the State Department. A missionary in Korea, he apparently was among the nationals of the United States due to return to America from Japan. The death from heart disease, in the International Hospital, Kobe, is the first death of a Maryland missionary in the Orient since the beginning of hostilities between this country and Japan. (N.C.W.C.)

KNIGHTS OF ST. COLUMBA IN ENGLAND GREET CANADA K. OF C. WAR WORKERS

LONDON — American Knights of Columbus who came to England during the first world war to serve the United States troops left behind them the seed which blossomed into the Knights of St. Columba, with more than 300 councils in England and Scotland.

This time the Canadian Knights are over here on the same job of looking after the troops, and British Knights got together to give them a welcome.

The Ordinary of the Canadian Army, Bishop Charles Lee Nelligan of Pembroke, together with F. Walter Slade and J. W. C. Tierney, overseas comptroller and assistant comptroller of K. of C. Canadian units services respectively, were guests at a party given by the Knights at the Royal Automobile Club here, and afterward they were present at a meeting in the Westminster Cathedral Hall which was attended by some hundreds of Knights from London and the provinces.

The Supreme Knight of the Knights of St. Columba, W. J. Loughrey, travelled from Liverpool to be present, and with him on the platform were three other members of the supreme board.

Bishop Nelligan, replying to a speech of welcome, said: "May I express the hope that the time will come when the Knights of Columbus and the Knights of St. Columba will be moulded into one organization and that they will build on the four corner stones of unity, fraternity, charity and patriotism a great superstructure that will accomplish a magnificent mission for God and our country."

Mr. Slade explained that the Canadian Knights are working here with three other Canadian agencies—the Y. M. C. A., the Salvation Army and the Legion—to serve the troops. Though the Knights work primarily for Catholics, they serve all alike, he said.

Inter-Faith Post-War Planning Urged

DURHAM, N. H.—A call for joint action by Catholics, Protestants and Jews in planning for the post-war world was sounded at the closing session of the biennial meeting of the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches.

In a resolution adopted unanimously by the gathering early conferences were urged between a group representative of the Protestant denominations, representatives of the Catholic Church and Jewish leaders, to study the contribution of religion to post-war world problems.

The family finds within itself the strength to resist this frontal attack upon its very existence, to mend the rents in its own armor, and to realize its natural primary responsibilities, it too may be overcome by the enemy who attacks from without and bores from within.—CV Service.

Avers Religion Must Win Its War By Alertness After Peace

NEW ORLEANS, July 8.—The school of the Archdiocese of New Orleans is going to have a fight on its hands if it is to prevent the anti-religious philosophy on which Axis youth have been raised from spreading through the rest of the world, the Most Rev. Joseph F. Rummel, Archbishop of New Orleans, said in an address here.

His Excellency spoke at a general session of the first of the 1942 Summer Schools of Catholic Action, held June 5-12 at Bienville College here, with Dominican College host for the recreational events.

"The Catholic Action movement is dedicated especially to planning and building for the post-war peace," Archbishop Rummel said. "I hope that we all see that the kind we are praying for, not so after the other World War. It is wise to build for that post-war period on the basis of religion. We are not sure that religion is going to get a proper break."

"We may be sure that religion is going to have a fight on its hands. It seems wise and prudent

for us to organize and it is particularly important that our youth have that training. We must be prepared for a fight of the peace conference because the enemy isn't going to be done even when he is beaten. He will fight the intellectual fight and the moral fight to the last ditch. It will be a battle for the ideology he has worked out for himself. Americans will be as much in danger then as now when we are faced with the planes and armies."

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