

The Christian Home



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ONCE in a while those of us who are ordinary housewives, with more than ordinary resistance to being them, have a chance for a brief glimpse of the world outside. Such an interlude is surely in the spirit of the old Chinese maxim which says: "If you have two loaves of bread, sell one and buy white hyacinths for the soul." I went in search of soul-food the weekend after Thanks-

3. To reinterpret and, if necessary, to reorganize social programs and social movements in terms of family needs.

4. To indicate and to encourage the contribution of the family to the new social order.

The work is accomplished chiefly through such activities as the production and distribution of printed materials, procurement or loan of speakers and other lead-

perceptibly as the hour approached.

I was one of the first to be "processed" by the imposing line of registrars. The other delegates appeared from the first to be among old and cherished friends. While the laggards were registering, I visited all the display tables and collected free materials conscientiously—only to have all of them thrown away as trash by the cleaning maid next morning, leaving me with the uneasy suspicion of her wider experience in these matters.

The opening meeting was an informal gathering under the friendly leadership of Mrs. Duvall, who has been a frequent contributor to THE CHRISTIAN HOME. Delegates answered the roll call by states, speaking briefly of their special interests and of the organizations which they represented. We could no longer be strangers to one another after that first morning, a fact which strengthened the conference greatly.

The afternoon sessions Friday and Saturday met under the guidance of these national committees:

1. Economic Basis of the Family.
2. Education for Marriage and Family in the Colleges.
3. Education for Marriage and Family in the Community.
4. Education for Marriage and Family in the Schools.
5. Marriage and Family Counseling.
6. Marriage and Family Research.
7. Religion and the Family.
8. Teacher Training.
9. Youth Problems.

The youth group, meeting with Dr. Homer Rainey, of Stephens College, agreed in informal discussion that these things are true of the general youth picture in America today:

1. Too many youth are having to postpone marriage because of finances, housing shortage, or further educational needs.
2. Married youth are postponing children for the same reasons.
3. There is a dangerous lag of one and one-half to two and one-

Report on the National Council ON FAMILY RELATIONS

By LOIS COOPER BENTON

giving, when I attended in New York the annual meeting of the National Council on Family Relations—which will no doubt be surprised to have its doings thus associated.

The National Council was formerly called the National Conference, but its title has been altered to avoid confusion with the White House Conference. Dr. Lawrence Frank now serves as president, with Mrs. Evelyn Duvall as executive secretary. The purposes of the organization, as outlined in 1946 are:

1. To emphasize the place and the importance of the family in the social order.
2. To democratize the knowledge of the family that we now possess.

ership for various local undertakings, sponsorship of institutes and workshops for training family-life leaders, etc.

I flew to Washington, D. C., while digesting my Thanksgiving dinner, and there caught the overnight train for New York. My 7:30 arrival was taken as a special personal insult by the hotel clerk, who nevertheless contrived to hang me quite comfortably on a nail until I could get into my room at noon.

I tried hard to make breakfast last until time for registration at 9:00 A.M., but the inflationary prices in the dining room left me with thirty or forty minutes to study my program, and to watch the crowd gather. The excitement grew and the tempo quickened

half years between the termination of youth's education and their entrance into jobs.

4. There is since the war the problem of the college boys' being four or five years older than the girls, and so exerting considerable pressure on the girls to marry before they finish their education.

5. The keen sociological insights of the G.I. Bill have "caught on" with American youth, and will be demanded by them in future governmental planning and policies.

6. Too often still, the young wife with a family must go to work to make ends meet.

In the light of the situations cited above, these specific recommendations were made by the committee:

1. We need more data on the marriages of the past five years.

2. We favor consideration of a revision of the G.I. Bill to increase its benefits and to extend its scope.

3. We are in serious need of more community services for young married couples, especially in the areas of prepaid medical care, recreation, and nursery services.

4. We sense the urgent need for uniformity of marriage laws throughout the country.

ONE OF the most scintillating speakers of the conference was Dr. Ashley Montagu, producer of "One World Or None," and initiator of the increasingly popular practice of placing the newborn baby in the room with its mother. He quoted Freud's saying that the three impossible professions are psychoanalysis, bringing up children, and the government of nations. Then he chose to confine his remarks to the second field only.

In stressing the importance of the infant's receiving tactile stimulation or loving handling from the time of its birth, he even suggested that a child may never learn to breathe properly unless he is "jounced." Thus the infant's need for emotional stimulation may exceed his opposing need for germ-free isolation. The audience was reminded, somewhat whimsically, that the cold-blooded Englishmen of today were brought up

by cold-blooded nurses, rather than by their own mothers. (I was reminded at this point of Grace Loucks Elliott's question of several years ago. She wondered whether it was merely accidental that this generation of over-petting youth had as infants been bottle-fed and strictly unhandled by their scientific [!], book-reading mothers.)

Dr. Montagu's conclusion, that the best way to learn how to raise children is to be raised well oneself, is borne out in recent studies reported by Paul Landis and others. These studies give evidence that those persons have the best chance of establishing happy family connections who themselves grew up in happy families.

Three positive suggestions were given for the future:

1. Let the schools turn to human relations.

2. Make the nursery school an intrinsic part of the school system.

3. Let the school learn how to cooperate with parents, and vice versa.

THE Committee on Education for Marriage and Family in the Community, meeting on Saturday morning under the chairmanship of Lydia Lynde of the U. S. Extension Service, discussed the importance of coordinating or integrating (there were some brisk exchanges in the attempt to distinguish between the two) the family-life planning and activities in a local community.

DR. DAVID MACE, of London, guest from the group on Religion and the Family, reported on the training project undertaken by the British army under his supervision. A three-and-one-half-day course was given various army units awaiting demobilization. It included lectures on sex, marriage, parenthood, heredity, and homemaking, and finished with a "brain trust" or panel of experts who attempted to answer questions which had been received anonymously from the students. Servicemen and women and their officers were included in the training. The experiment was considered highly successful by the

army, and was subsequently taken up also by the naval and air branches, and requests have now come for the same service to be extended to occupation troops. Leadership was furnished by the British Family Guidance Council.

ELIZABETH CARMICHAEL, of the University of Alabama, brought in the report for the Committee on Sponsorship and Promotion, as follows:

1. Sponsorship of family-life programs should be cooperative.

2. The community should know what help is available.

3. Care should be taken to interest men's organizations and groups in sponsoring community family-life programs. It is important that all persons and groups who are to participate be brought in on the plans at an early stage.

4. All such plans and programs should have the wide participation of all age groups.

MRS. SEVER, of Massachusetts, gave the report for the Committee on Leadership, discussing the training program in Massachusetts in which she had participated. She recommended that training of leadership be initiated by some organization with prestige in the community. In the undertaking which she described, persons were selected by personal interview for training, with about equal numbers of men and women being accepted. No academic requirements were specified. Those selected were given a period of training under "specialists" each year, with a three-hour examination at the end of each period. At the end of three years, these were graduated as lay leaders in the field. The lack of academic prerequisites, and the failure to use leadership emerging from the group were pointed out by other members as possible weaknesses of the plan.

HAZEL GABBARD, chairman-elect of the Committee on Education for Marriage and Family in the Community, reported for the Committee on Program Materials, citing as good sources of program helps:

1. Federal and state agencies set up for the purpose.
2. State and local library resources.
3. Film depositories.
4. Skits by local and national groups.
5. Radio scripts by state groups (Oklahoma, for instance).
6. Encouragement and promotion of national radio programs.
7. Recordings (such as those on loan from Ohio State).
8. Commercial companies (with the warning that these must be chosen and approved with great care).
9. Wider use of libraries.
10. Group development of its own materials, such as clipping service supervised by a trained librarian.
11. Current textbooks (some available from McGraw-Hill, and the National Council might interest other publishers).
12. Work projects, with parents participating.
13. Parent-participation in children's activities having to do with food, play, mother-daughter occasions, etc.
14. Banquets and certificates of attendance to climax projects.
15. Establishment of parent education councils.
16. Annual revitalization of methods.

UNDENIABLY memorable features of the luncheon meeting on Saturday were that it cost three dollars and seventy-five cents, and that under the streamlined moderatorship of Mr. George Denny, of Town Meeting fame, it closed on time. No less memorable were some of the reports of family-life movements in such countries as Britain, Russia, Finland, Brazil, and China.

Dr. David Mace cited these situations which worry the people of Britain today:

1. The landslide in sexual behavior.
2. The zooming marriage breakdown rate (before the war, one marriage in twenty, last year one in five, this year perhaps one in four).
3. Disintegration of family discipline,

resulting in a high rate of crime among youth.

4. The desperate housing crisis, aggravated by loss of 450,000 houses from bombing.

He outlined the broad objectives of the British Marriage Council as:

1. A nationwide counseling service "to undermine the divorce court."

2. Thorough preparation for marriage offered to engaged couples, and "marriage service" after marriage.

3. A great educational campaign on sound principles for both young and old, to be carried on through teams of speakers sent wherever they are welcome.

In concluding his address, Dr. Mace said the work might conceivably take such trends as these in the future:

1. Scientifically-run marriage societies for finding suitable marriage partners.

2. Further extension of the work already being done by the churches through their home-and-family week programs and through the interdenominational family life organization set up by the British Council of Churches.

3. Encouragement of the government in its present tendency to make all of its economic and social planning family-centered.

4. The linking of all the significant family relations organizations into an international grouping.

MRS. EMILY MUDD spoke of free maternity leave and care and free nursery services as illustrative of Russia's vital concern for family life, especially as a source of strength for the state. She felt that while these services offered ample opportunity for propaganda, nevertheless they were broad and flexible, and at least provocative.

DR. MAURI RUOHUNKOSKI, gynecologist, brought word from his native Finland of the new advances in medical care and maternity services. On the other hand is the sad lack of sex education in the schools, and the

prevalence of criminal abortion throughout the nation. The financial difficulties almost equal the political, he said.

PROFESSOR JOHN LOBB, sociologist of Mt. Holyoke College, reported for Brazil. He pictured this great neighboring country as one of sharp and naked contrasts, with a dual pattern of sex relationships and family living: first, the old and powerful patriarchal family of the landed estates, and second, the casual or illegitimate family, with no legal protection or social status. He felt that strong family institutions in Brazil would have to meet the needs of both of these patterns, and that the government, weak as it is, is the best hope so far for advancement. The establishment of a single pattern of family life, and the enlargement of community services to families were given as goals to be achieved. These five specific needs of the country were put before us:

1. Child welfare plans.
2. Education—65 per cent illiteracy still.
3. Health.
4. Secure position for the aged and for the very poor.
5. Protection of those living under the above-mentioned casual family pattern.

CHINA'S report was made by Dr. Ernest Osborne, director of Child Development and Parent Education at Teachers' College, Columbia University. He found in China a family-centered society, but one somewhat vague in its pattern, both because of the variety of languages and customs, and because of the strong impact of Western culture, especially in the large cities and on the East coast. Plural marriages he found illegal but extensive, with Confucianism actually being used in some places to stem modern ideas of marriage. He rejoiced in the small but well-trained body of family-life leaders emerging, and hoped that these would not feel it necessary to copy the West too closely. "There must be something very substantial in their patterns

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Family Relations

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of the past," he finished, "to have produced such citizens."

DR. ABRAHAM STONE, delegate to the World Congress in Paris in June of 1947, said that housing, sex education, and size of family were three of the basic issues faced by that gathering. He reminded the audience that twenty national groups are already affiliated with the international body, and asked that the National Council appoint representatives to it.

ON SUNDAY morning after the reports of the standing committees, Dr. Homer Rainey gave the closing address. He touched briefly on the necessity for keeping almost all youth under twenty or twenty-one off the employment market for the next few years, and saw the peak in school enrollment coming perhaps as late as 1960. This would put the main stress on the educational system at the junior college level, and

would necessitate the development of public junior colleges, as well as the strengthening of private ones. And with this new emphasis at the junior college level, the question of whether junior college training really belongs to secondary education or to higher education would have to be met. "We are keeping youth in school longer and longer, and educating them better for work that requires less of them," he said. This fact emphasized the need to train for avocational interests and activities. Juvenile delinquency seemed to him to come at the point where youth's energies are at their highest peak, and yet youth are least wanted by society. The fact that 80-90 per cent of all youth are now in school calls for variety and diversity of curriculum on the broadest possible base, and incidentally strengthens the case of those who feel that the solution is two years of military training for all.

In answering the central question, "What is education through the junior college level to be like

for all youth?" Dr. Rainey enumerated these needs of education for the common life:

1. A background of common experience.

2. Development of social, economic, moral, and spiritual intelligence to equal our scientific and technical development.

3. Development of the kind of liberal education which will equip persons for active leadership in society.

4. Meeting the necessity for world leadership now thrust upon us by our wealth and power, and by our freedom from destruction in the recent war.

5. Development of a new concept of leadership that will call forth statesmen worthy of the trust—"men and women who will stand for a fact."

Youth are in desperate need of leaders, since leaders always serve to concrete ideals for youth. The young follow their leaders idealistically, but abandon them precipitately when disillusioned. Hence the need of youth and of the world for steadfast leaders.

Patience

I think that sometimes patience is a kind
Of music measured to the beating heart,
And sometimes it is quiet in the mind,
While I am certain often it is art
Acquired only after practicing.

I have known patience when it was resigned
Acceptance of a circumstance or thing,
And there is patience that is nearly blind.
Beyond all question, patience is another
Way of expressing love within a mother
Heart—but, though it be silence or be song,
Or gray or rainbow-colored, always there
Is this concerning patience: it will bear
Its gold, unfailing harvest, after long.

By ELAINE V. EMANS
