

Chapter 26: FAMILY

INTRODUCTION

THE human family, according to Rousseau, is "the most ancient of all societies and the only one that is natural." On the naturalness of the family there seems to be general agreement in the great books, although not all would claim, like Rousseau, that it is the *only* natural society. The state is sometimes also regarded as a natural community, but its naturalness is not as obvious and has often been disputed.

The word "natural" applied to a community or association of men can mean either that men *instinctively* associate with one another as do bees and buffaloes; or that the association in question, while voluntary and to that extent conventional, is also *necessary* for human welfare. It is in this sense of necessity or need that Rousseau speaks of family ties as natural. "The children remain attached to the father only so long as they need him for their preservation," he writes. "As soon as this need ceases, the natural bond is dissolved." If after that "they remain united, they continue so no longer naturally, but voluntarily; and the family itself is then maintained only by convention."

Locke appears to attribute the existence of the human family to the same sort of instinctive determination which establishes familial ties among other animals, though he recognizes that the protracted infancy of human offspring make "the conjugal bonds . . . more firm and lasting in man than the other species of animals." Since with other animals as well as in the human species, "the end of conjunction between male and female [is] not barely procreation, but the continuation of the species," it ought to last, in Locke's opinion, "even after procreation, so long as is necessary to the nourishment and support of the young ones, who are to be sustained by those who got them till they are able to shift and support for themselves. This rule," he adds, "which the infinite

wise Maker hath set to the works of His hands, we find the inferior creatures steadily obey."

Yet Locke does not reduce the association of father, mother, and children entirely to a divinely implanted instinct for the perpetuation of the species. "Conjugal society," he writes, "is made by a voluntary compact between man and woman, and though it consists chiefly in such a communion and right in one another's bodies as is necessary to its chief end, procreation, yet it draws with it mutual support and assistance, and a communion of interests, too."

If the human family were *entirely* an instinctively formed society, we should expect to find the pattern or structure of the domestic community the same at all times and everywhere. But since the time of Herodotus, historians and, later, anthropologists have observed the great diversity in the institutions of the family in different tribes or cultures, or even at different times in the same culture. From his own travels among different peoples, Herodotus reports a wide variety of customs with respect to marriage and the family. From the travels of other men, Montaigne culls a similar collection of stories about the diversity of the mores with respect to sex, especially in relation to the rules or customs which hedge the community of man and wife.

Such facts raise the question whether the pattern of monogamy pictured by Locke represents anything more than one type of human family—the type which predominates in western civilization or, even more narrowly, in Christendom. Marx, for instance, holds that the structure of the family depends on the character of its "economical foundation," and insists that "it is of course just as absurd to hold the Teutonic-Christian form of the family to be absolute and final as it would be to apply that character to the ancient Roman, the ancient

Greek, or the Eastern forms which, moreover, taken together form a series in historic development."

Though the observation of the various forms which the human family takes has led some writers to deny the naturalness of the family—at least so far as its "naturalness" would mean a purely instinctive formation—it has seldom been disputed that the family fulfills a natural human need. Conventional in structure, the family remains natural as a means indispensable to an end which all men *naturally* desire. "There must be a union of those who cannot exist without each other," Aristotle writes, "namely, of male and female, that the race may continue"; and he goes on to say that this union is formed "not of deliberate purpose, but because, in common with other animals and with plants, mankind have a natural desire to leave behind them an image of themselves."

The human infant, as Locke observes, requires years of care in order to survive. If the family did not exist as a relatively stable organization to serve this purpose, some other social agency would have to provide sustained care for children. But wherever we find any other social units, such as tribes or cities, there we also find some form of the family in existence, not only performing the function of rearing children, but also being the primitive social group out of which all larger groupings seem to grow or to be formed. Aristotle, for example, describes the village or tribe as growing out of an association of families, just as later the city or state comes from a union of villages.

We have seen that the naturalness of the family—as answering a natural need—is not incompatible with its also being a product of custom or convention. The facts reported by Herodotus, Montaigne, and Darwin, which show the variability of families in size and membership, in form and government, do not exclude, but on the contrary emphasize, the further fact that wherever men live together at all, they also live in families.

Whether or not the political community is also a natural society, and if so, whether it is natural in the same way as the family, are questions reserved for the chapter on STATE. But it should be noted here that for some writers, for Aristotle particularly and to a lesser extent

for Locke, the naturalness of the family not only points to a natural development of the state, but also helps to explain how, in the transition from the family to the state, paternal government gives rise to royal rule or absolute monarchy. Even Rousseau, who thinks that the family is the *only* natural society, finds, in the correspondence between a political ruler and a father, reason for saying that "the family . . . may be called the first model of political societies."

IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION, a family normally consists of a husband and wife and their offspring. If the procreation and rearing of offspring is *the* function, or even *a* function, which the family naturally exists to perform, then a childless family cannot be considered normal. Hegel suggests another reason for offspring. He sees in children the bond of union which makes the family a community.

"The relation of love between husband and wife," he writes, "is in itself not objective, because even if their feeling is their substantial unity, still this unity has no objectivity. Such an objectivity parents first acquire in their children, in whom they can see objectified the entirety of their union. In the child, a mother loves its father and he its mother. Both have their love objectified for them in the child. While in their goods their unity is embodied only in an external thing, in their children it is embodied in a spiritual one in which the parents are loved and which they love."

Until recent times when it has been affected by urban, industrial conditions, the family tended to be a much larger unit, not only with regard to the number of children, but also with respect to other members and relationships. The household included servants, if not slaves; it included blood-relatives in various degrees of consanguinity; its range extended over three or even four generations. Sancho Panza's wife, for instance, pictures the ideal marriage for her daughter as one in which "we shall have her always under our eyes, and be all one family, parents and children, grandchildren and sons-in-law, and the peace and blessing of God will dwell among us." Even though they belong to the nineteenth century, the families in *War and Peace* indicate how different is the domestic

establishment under agrarian and semi-feudal conditions.

But even when it comprised a larger and more varied membership, the family differed from other social units, such as tribe or state, in both size and function. Its membership, determined by consanguinity, was usually more restricted than that of other groups, although blood-relationships, often more remote, may also operate to limit the membership of the tribe or the state. Its function, according to Aristotle, at least in origin, was to "supply men's everyday wants," whereas the state went beyond this in aiming at other conditions "of a good life."

In an agricultural society of the sort we find among the ancients, the household rather than the city is occupied with the problems of wealth. In addition to the breeding and rearing of children, and probably because of this in part, the family as a unit seems to have been concerned with the means of subsistence, on the side of both production and consumption. Its members shared in a division of labor and in a division of the fruits thereof.

Apart from those industries manned solely by slave labor in the service of the state, the production of goods largely depended on the industry of the family. In modern times this system of production came to be called the "domestic" as opposed to the "factory" system. It seems to persist even after the industrial revolution. But, according to Marx, "this modern so-called domestic industry has nothing, except the name, in common with the old-fashioned domestic industry, the existence of which presupposes independent urban handicrafts, independent peasant farming, and above all, a dwelling house for the laborer and his family."

In effect, the industrial revolution produced an economy in which not only agriculture but the family ceased to be central. The problem shifts from the wealth of families to the wealth of nations, even as production shifts from the family to the factory. "Modern industry," according to Marx, "by assigning an important part in the process of production, outside the domestic sphere, to women, to young persons, and to children of both sexes, creates a new economical foundation."

The family was for centuries what the factory and the storehouse have only recently become in an era of industrialism. For the ancients, the problems of wealth—its acquisition, accumulation, and use—were domestic, not political. "The so-called art of getting wealth," Aristotle writes, is "according to some . . . identical with household management, according to others, a principal part of it." In his own judgment, "property is a part of the household, and the art of acquiring property is a part of the art of managing the household"—but a *part only*, because the household includes human beings as well as property, and is concerned with the government of persons as well as the management of things.

The foregoing throws light on the extraordinary shift in the meaning of the word "economics" from ancient to modern times. In the significance of their Greek roots, the word "polity" signifies a state, the word "economy" a family; and as "politics" referred to the art of governing the political community, so "economics" referred to the art of governing the domestic community. Only in part was it concerned with the art of getting wealth. As the chapter on WEALTH indicates, Rousseau tries to preserve the broader meaning when he uses the phrase "political economy" for the general problems of government; but for the most part in modern usage "economics" refers to a science or art concerned with wealth, and it is "political" in the sense that the management of wealth, and of men with respect to wealth, has become the problem of the state rather than the family. Not only has the industrial economy become more and more a political affair, but the character of the family as a social institution has also changed with its altered economic status and function.

THE CHIEF QUESTION about the family in relation to the state has been, in ancient as well as in modern times, whether the family has natural rights which the state cannot justly invade or transgress.

The proposal in Plato's *Republic*—"that the wives of our guardians are to be common, and their children are to be common, and no parent is to know his own child, nor any child his parent"—was as radical in the fifth century

B.C. as its counterpart would be today. When Socrates proposes this, Glaucon suggests that "the possibility as well as the utility of such a law" may be subject to "a good many doubts." But Socrates does not think that "there can be any dispute about the very great utility of having wives and children in common; the possibility," he adds, "is quite another matter, and will be very much disputed."

Aristotle questions both the desirability and possibility. "The premise from which the argument of Socrates proceeds," he says, is "'the greater the unity of the state the better.'" He denies this premise. "Is it not obvious," he asks, "that a state may at length attain such a degree of unity as to be no longer a state?—since the nature of a state is to be a plurality, and in tending to a greater unity, from being a state, it becomes a family, and from being a family, an individual." Hence "we ought not to attain this greatest unity even if we could, for it would be the destruction of the state." In addition, "the scheme, taken literally, is impracticable."

It is significant that Aristotle's main argument against Plato's "communism" (which includes the community of property as well as the community of women and children) is based upon the nature of the state rather than on the rights of the family. It seems to have been a prevalent view in antiquity, at least among philosophers, that the children should be "regarded as belonging to the state rather than to their parents." Antigone's example shows, however, that this view was by no means without exception. Her defiance of Creon, based on "the unwritten and unfailing statutes of heaven," is also undertaken for "the majesty of kindred blood." In this sense, it constitutes an affirmation of the rights and duties of the family.

In the Christian tradition the rights of the family as against the state are also defended by reference to divine law. The point is not that the state is less a natural community than the family in the eyes of a theologian like Aquinas; but in addition to having a certain priority in the order of nature, the family, more directly than the state, is of divine origin. Not only is it founded on the sacrament of matrimony, but the express commandments of God dictate the

duties of care and obedience which bind its members together. For the state to interfere in those relationships between parents and children or between husband and wife which fall under the regulation of divine law would be to exceed its authority, and hence to act without right and in violation of rights founded upon a higher authority.

In the Christian tradition philosophers like Hobbes and Kant state the rights of the family in terms of natural law or defend them as natural rights. "Because the first instruction of children," writes Hobbes, "depends on the care of their parents, it is necessary that they should be obedient to them while they are under their tuition. . . . Originally the father of every man was also his sovereign lord, with power over him of life and death." When the fathers of families relinquished such absolute power in order to form a commonwealth or state, they did not lose, nor did they have to give up, according to Hobbes, all control of their children; "Nor would there be any reason," he goes on, "why any man should desire to have children, or take the care to nourish and instruct them, if they were afterwards to have no other benefit from them than from other men. And this," he says, "accords with the Fifth Commandment."

In the section of his *Science of Right* devoted to the "rights of the family as a domestic society," Kant argues that "from the fact of procreation there follows the duty of preserving and rearing children." From this duty he derives "the right of parents to the management and training of the child, so long as it is itself incapable of making proper use of its body as an organism, and of its mind as an understanding. This includes its nourishment and the care of its education." It also "includes, in general, the function of forming and developing it practically, that it may be able in the future to maintain and advance itself, and also its moral culture and development, the guilt of neglecting it falling upon the parents."

As is evident from Hobbes and Kant, the rights of the family can be vindicated without denying that the family, like the individual, owes obedience to the state. In modern terms, at least, the problem is partly stated by the question, To what extent can parents justly claim exemption from political interference in

the control of their own children? But this is only part of the problem. It must also be asked whether, in addition to regulating the family for the general welfare of the whole community, the state is also entitled to interfere in the affairs of the household in order to protect children from parental mismanagement or neglect. Both questions call for a consideration of the form and principles of domestic government.

THE KINDS OF RULE and the relation between ruler and ruled in the domestic community have a profound bearing on the theory of government in the larger community of the state. Many of the chapters on the forms of government—especially CONSTITUTION, MONARCHY, and TYRANNY—indicate that the great books of political theory, from Plato and Aristotle to Locke and Rousseau, derive critical points from the comparison of domestic and political government.

We shall pass over the master-slave relationship, both because that is considered in the chapter on SLAVERY, and because not all households include human chattel. Omitting this, two fundamental relationships which domestic government involves remain to be examined: the relation of husband and wife, and of parents and children.

With regard to the first, there are questions of equality and administrative supremacy. Even when the wife is regarded as the complete equal of her husband, the administrative question remains, for there must either be a division of authority, or unanimity must prevail, or one—either the husband or the wife—must have the last word when disagreement must be overcome to get any practical matter decided. So far as husband and wife are concerned, should the family be an absolute monarchy, or a kind of constitutional government?

Both an ancient and a modern writer appear to answer this question in the same way. "A husband and father," Aristotle says, "rules over wife and children, both free, but the rule differs, the rule over his children being a royal, over his wife a constitutional rule." Yet the relation between husband and wife, in Aristotle's view, is not perfectly constitutional. In the state "the citizens rule and are ruled in turn"

on the supposition that their "natures . . . are equal and do not differ at all." In the family, however, Aristotle thinks that "although there may be exceptions to the order of nature, the male is by nature fitter for command than the female."

According to Locke, "the husband and wife, though they have but one common concern, yet having different understandings, will unavoidably sometimes have different wills too. It therefore being necessary that the last determination (*i.e.*, the rule) should be placed somewhere, it naturally falls to the man's share as the abler and the stronger." But this, Locke thinks, "leaves the wife in the full and true possession of what by contract is her peculiar right, and at least gives the husband no more power over her than she has over his life; the power of the husband being so far from that of an absolute monarch that the wife has, in many cases, a liberty to separate from him where natural right or their contract allows it."

In the so-called Marriage Group of the *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer gives voice to all of the possible positions that have ever been taken concerning the relation of husband and wife. The Wife of Bath, for example, argues for the rule of the wife. She claims that nothing will satisfy women until they "have the sovereignty as well upon their husband as their love, and to have mastery their man above." The Clerk of Oxford, in his tale of patient Griselda, presents the wife who freely admits to her husband, "When first I came to you, just so left I my will and all my liberty." The Franklin in his tale allows the mastery to neither wife nor husband, "save that the name and show of sovereignty" would belong to the latter. He dares to say

That friends each one the other must obey
If they'd be friends and long keep company.
Love will not be constrained by mastery; . . .
Women by nature love their liberty,
And not to be constrained like any thrall,
And so do men, if say the truth I shall. . . .
Thus did she take her servant and her lord,
Servant in love and lord in their marriage;
So was he both in lordship and bondage.

WHILE THERE MAY be disagreement regarding the relation between husband and wife, there is none regarding the inequality between parents and children during the offspring's imma-

turity. Although every man may enjoy "equal right . . . to his natural freedom, without being subjected to the will or authority of any other men," children, according to Locke, "are not born in this full state of equality, though they are born to it."

Paternal power, even absolute rule, over children arises from this fact. So long as the child "is in an estate wherein he has no understanding of his own to direct his will," Locke thinks he "is not to have any will of his own to follow. He that understands for him must will for him too; he must prescribe to his will, and regulate his actions." But Locke adds the important qualification that when the son "comes to the estate which made his father a free man, the son is a free man too."

Because children are truly inferior in competence, there would seem to be no injustice in their being ruled by their parents; or in the rule being absolute in the sense that children are precluded from exercising a decisive voice in the conduct of their own or their family's affairs. Those who think that kings cannot claim the absolute authority of parental rule frequently use the word "despotic" to signify unjustified paternalism—a transference to the state of a type of dominion which can be justified only in the family.

The nature of despotism as absolute rule is discussed in the chapters on MONARCHY and TYRANNY, but its relevance here makes it worth repeating that the Greek word from which "despot" comes, like its Latin equivalent *paterfamilias*, signifies the ruler of a household and carries the connotation of absolute rule—the complete mastery of the father over the children and the servants, if not over the wife. Accordingly there would seem to be nothing invidious in referring to domestic government as despotic, at least not to the extent that, in the case of the children, absolute rule is justified by their immaturity. The problem arises only with respect to despotism in the state, when one man rules another mature man as absolutely as a parent rules a child.

The great defender of the doctrine that the sovereign must be absolute, "or else there is no sovereignty at all," sees no difference between the rights of the ruler of a state—the "sovereign by institution"—and those of a father as the

natural master of his family. "The rights and consequences of both paternal and despotical dominion," Hobbes maintains, "are the very same with those of a sovereign by institution." On the other hand, Rousseau, an equally staunch opponent of absolute rule, uses the word "despotism" only in an invidious sense for what he regards as illegitimate government—absolute monarchy. "Even if there were as close an analogy as many authors maintain between the State and the family," he writes, "it would not follow that the rules of conduct proper for one of these societies would be also proper for the other."

Rousseau even goes so far as to deny that parental rule is despotic in his sense of that term. "With regard to paternal authority, from which some writers have derived absolute government," he remarks that "nothing can be further from the ferocious spirit of despotism than the mildness of that authority which looks more to the advantage of him who obeys than to that of him who commands." He agrees with Locke in the observation that, unlike the political despot, "the father is the child's master no longer than his help is necessary." When both are equal, the son is perfectly independent of the father, and owes him "only respect and not obedience."

Misrule in the family, then, would seem to occur when these conditions or limits are violated. Parents may try to continue their absolute control past the point at which the children have become mature and are competent to take care of their own affairs. A parent who does not relinquish his absolutism at this point can be called "despotic" in the derogatory sense of that word.

Applying a distinction made by some political writers, the parent is tyrannical rather than despotic when he uses the children for his own good, treats them as property to exploit, even at a time when his absolute direction of their affairs would be justified if it were for the children's welfare. The existence of parental tyranny raises in its sharpest form the question of the state's right to intervene in the family for the good of its members.

THE CENTRAL ELEMENT in the domestic establishment is, of course, the institution of mar-

riage. The discussion of marriage in the great books deals with most of the moral and psychological, if not all of the sociological and economic, aspects of the institution. The most profound question, perhaps, is whether marriage is merely a human institution to be regulated solely by custom and civil law, or a contract under the sanctions of natural law, or a religious sacrament signifying and imparting God's grace. The last two of these alternatives may not exclude one another, but those who insist upon the first usually reject the other two.

Some, like the Parson in the *Canterbury Tales*, consider marriage not only a natural but also a divine institution—a "sacrament . . . ordained by God Himself in Paradise, and confirmed by Jesus Christ, as witness St. Matthew in the gospel: 'For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh,' which betokens the knitting together of Christ and of Holy Church."

Others, like Kant, seem to stress the character of marriage as an institution sanctioned by natural law. The "natural union of the sexes," he writes, "proceeds either according to the mere animal nature (*vaga libido, venus vulgivaga, fornicatio*), or according to law. The latter is marriage (*matrimonium*), which is the union of two persons of different sex for life-long reciprocal possession of their sexual faculties." Kant considers offspring as a natural end of marriage, but not the exclusive end, for then "the marriage would be dissolved of itself when the production of children ceased. . . . Even assuming," he declares, "that enjoyment in the reciprocal use of the sexual endowments is an end of marriage, yet the contract of marriage is not on that account a matter of arbitrary will, but is a contract necessary in its nature by the Law of Humanity. In other words, if a man and a woman have the will to enter on reciprocal enjoyment in accordance with their sexual natures, they *must* necessarily marry each other."

Still others see marriage primarily as a civil contract. Freud, for example, considers the view that "sexual relations are permitted only on the basis of a final, indissoluble bond between a man and woman" as purely a convention of "present-day civilization." Marriage, as a set of taboos restricting the sexual life, varies from

culture to culture; but in Freud's opinion the "high-water mark in this type of development has been reached in our Western European civilization."

The conception of marriage—whether it is merely a civil, or a natural, and even a divine institution—obviously affects the position to be taken on monogamy, on divorce, on chastity and adultery, and on the comparative merits of the married and the celibate condition. The pagans, for the most part, regard celibacy as a misfortune, especially for women, as witness the tragedy of the unwedded Electra. Christianity, on the other hand, celebrates the heroism of virginity and encourages the formation of monastic communities for celibates. Within the Judaeo-Christian tradition there are striking differences. Not only were the patriarchs of the Old Testament polygamous, but orthodox Judaism and orthodox Christianity also differ on divorce.

Augustine explains how a Christian should interpret those passages in the Old Testament which describe the polygamous practices of the patriarchs. "The saints of ancient times," he writes, "were under the form of an earthly kingdom, foreshadowing and foretelling the kingdom of heaven. And on account of the necessity for a numerous offspring, the custom of one man having several wives was at that time blameless; and for the same reason it was not proper for one woman to have several husbands, because a woman does not in that way become more fruitful. . . . In regard to matters of this sort," he concludes, "whatever the holy men of those times did without lust, Scripture passes over without blame, although they did things which could not be done at the present time except through lust."

On similar grounds Aquinas holds that "it was allowable to give a bill of divorce," under the law of the Old Testament, but it is not allowable under the Christian dispensation because divorce "is contrary to the nature of a sacrament." The greatest familiarity between man and wife requires the staunchest fidelity which "is impossible if the marriage bond can be sundered." Within the Christian tradition Locke takes an opposite view of divorce. He can see good reason why "the society of man and wife should be more lasting than that of

male and female amongst other creatures," but he does not see "why this compact, where procreation and education are secured, and inheritance taken care for, may not be made determinable either by consent, or at a certain time, or upon certain conditions, as well as any other voluntary compact, there being no necessity in the nature of the thing . . . that it should always be for life." Against Locke, Dr. Johnson would argue that "to the contract of marriage, besides the man and wife, there is a third party—Society; and if it be considered as a vow—God; and therefore it cannot be dissolved by their consent alone."

Laws and customs, however, represent only the external or social aspect of marriage. The discussion of these externals cannot give any impression of the inwardness and depth of the problem which marriage is for the individual person. Only the great poems, the great novels and plays, the great books of history and biography can adequately present the psychological and emotional aspects of marriage in the life of individuals. Heightened in narration, they give more eloquent testimony than the case histories of Freud to support the proposition that marriage is at all times—in every culture and under the widest variety of circumstances—one of the supreme tests of human character.

The relation between men and women in and out of marriage, the relation of husband and wife before and after marriage, the relation of parents and children—these create crises and tensions, conflicts between love and duty, between reason and the passions, from which no individual can entirely escape. Marriage is not only a typically human problem, but it is the one problem which, both psychologically and morally, touches every man, woman, and child. Sometimes the resolution is tragic, sometimes the outcome seems to be happy, almost blessed; but whether a human life is built on this foundation or broken against these rocks, it is violently shaken in the process and forever shaped.

To some degree each reader of the great books has, in imagination if not in action, participated in the trials of Odysseus, Penelope, and Telemachus; in the affections of Hector and Andromache, Alcestis and Admetus, Tom Jones and Sophia, Natasha and Pierre Bezúkhov, in the jealousy of Othello, the anguish of Lear,

the decision of Aeneas or the indecision of Hamlet; and certainly in the reasoning of Panurge about whether to marry or not. In each of these cases, everyone finds some aspect of love in relation to marriage, some phase of parenthood or childhood which has colored his own life or that of his family; and he can find somewhere in his own experience the grounds for sympathetic understanding of the extraordinary relation between Electra and her mother Clytemnestra, between Augustine and Monica his mother, between Oedipus and Jocasta, Prince Hamlet and Queen Gertrude, Pierre Bezúkhov and his wife, or what is perhaps the most extraordinary case of all—Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost*.

On one point the universality of the problem of marriage and family life seems to require qualification. The conflict between conjugal and illicit love exists in all ages. The entanglement of the bond between man and wife with the ties—of both love and blood—which unite parents and children, is equally universal. But the difficulties which arise in marriage as a result of the ideals or the illusions of romantic love seem to constitute a peculiarly modern problem. The ancients distinguished between sexual love and the love of friendship and they understood the necessity for both in the conjugal relationship if marriage is to prosper. But not until the later Middle Ages did men think of matrimony as a way to perpetuate throughout all the years the ardor of that moment in a romantic attachment when the lovers find each other without flaw and beyond reproach.

Matters relevant to this modern problem are discussed in the chapter on LOVE. As is there indicated, romantic love, though it seems to be of Christian origin, may also be a distortion—even an heretical perversion—of the kind of Christian love which is pledged in the reciprocal vows of holy matrimony.

WE HAVE ALREADY considered some of the problems of the family which relate to children and youth—the immature members of the human race—such as whether the child *belongs* to the family or the state, and whether the family is solely responsible for the care and training of children, or a share of this responsibility falls to the state or the church.

There are other problems. Why do men and women want offspring and what satisfactions do they get from rearing children? For the most part in Christendom, and certainly in antiquity, the lot of the childless is looked upon as a grievous frustration. To be childless is not merely contrary to nature, but for pagan as well as Christian it constitutes the deprivation of a blessing which should grace the declining years of married life. The opposite view, so rarely taken, is voiced by the chorus of women in the *Medea* of Euripides.

"Those who are wholly without experience and have never had children far surpass in happiness those who are parents," the women chant in response to *Medea's* tragic leave-taking from her own babes. "The childless, because they have never proved whether children grow up to be a blessing or a curse to men, are removed from all share in many troubles; whilst those who have a sweet race of children growing up in their houses do wear away . . . their whole life through; first with the thought how they may train them up in virtue, next how they shall leave their sons the means to live; and after all this 'tis far from clear whether on good or bad children they bestow their toil."

Still other questions arise concerning children, quite apart from the attitude of parents toward having and rearing them. What is the economic position of the child, both with respect to ownership of property and with respect to a part in the division of labor? How has the economic status of children been affected by industrialism? What are the mental and moral characteristics of the immature which exclude them from participation in political life, and which require adult regulation of their affairs? What are the criteria—emotional and mental as well as chronological—which determine the classification of individuals as children or adults, and how is the transition from childhood to manhood effected economically, politically, and above all emotionally?

The authors of the great books discuss most of these questions, but among them only Freud sees in the relation of children to their parents the basic emotional determination of human life. The fundamental triangle of love and hate, devotion and rivalry, consists of father, mother, and child. For Freud all the intricacies and per-

versions of love, the qualitative distinctions of romantic, conjugal, and illicit love, the factors which determine the choice of a mate and success or failure in marriage, and the conditions which determine the emergence from emotional infantilism—all these can be understood only by reference to the emotional life of the child in the vortex of the family.

The child's "great task," according to Freud, is that of "freeing himself from the parents," for "only after this detachment is accomplished can he cease to be a child and so become a member of the social community. . . . These tasks are laid down for every man" but, Freud writes, "it is noteworthy how seldom they are carried through ideally, that is, how seldom they are solved in a manner psychologically as well as socially satisfactory. In neurotics, however," he adds, "this detachment from the parents is not accomplished at all."

In one sense, it is never fully accomplished by anyone. What Freud calls the "ego-ideal"—which represents our higher nature and which, in the name of the reality-principle, resists instinctual compliance with the pleasure-principle—is said to have its origin in "the identification with the father, which takes place in the prehistory of every person." Even after an individual has achieved detachment from the family, this ego-ideal acts as "a substitute for the longing for a father"; and in the form of conscience it "continues . . . to exercise the censorship of morals."

ONE OTHER GROUP of questions which involve the family—at least as background—concerns the position or role of women. We have already considered their relation to their husbands in the government of the family itself. The way in which that relation is conceived affects the status and activity of women in the larger community of the state, in relation to citizenship and the opportunities for education, to the possession of property and the production of wealth (for example, the role of female labor in an industrial economy).

Again it is Euripides who gives voice to the plight of women in a man's world, in two of his great tragedies, the *Trojan Women* and *Medea*. In the one, they cry out under the brunt of the suffering which men leave them to bear in the

backwash of war. In the other, Medea passionately berates the ignominy and bondage which women must accept in being wives. "Of all things that have life and sense," she says, "we women are the most hapless creatures; first must we buy a husband at great price, and then o'er ourselves a tyrant set, which is an evil worse than the first."

The ancient world contains another feminist who goes further than Euripides in speaking for the right of women to be educated like men, to share in property with them, and to enjoy the privileges as well as to discharge the tasks of citizenship. In the tradition of the great books, the striking fact is that after Plato the next great declaration of the rights of women should be written by one who is as far removed from him in time and temper as John Stuart Mill.

In Plato's *Republic*, Socrates argues that if the difference between men and women "consists only in women bearing and men begetting children, this does not amount to proof that a woman differs from a man in respect to the sort of education she should receive." For the same reason, he says, "the guardians and their wives ought to have the same pursuits." Since he thinks that "the gifts of nature are alike diffused in both," Socrates insists that "there is no special faculty of administration in a state which a woman has because she is a woman, or which a man has by virtue of his sex. All the pursuits of men are the pursuits of women also." Yet he adds that "in all of them a woman is inferior to a man." Therefore when he proposes to let women "share in the toils of war and the defence of their country," Socrates suggests that "in the distribution of labors the lighter are to be assigned to the women, who are the weaker natures."

Mill's tract on *The Subjection of Women* is his fullest statement of the case for social, economic, and political equality between the sexes. In *Representative Government*, his defense of women's rights deals primarily with the question of extending the franchise to them. Difference of sex, he contends, is "as entirely irrelevant to political rights, as difference in height, or in the color of the hair. All human beings have the same interest in good government . . . Mankind have long since abandoned the only premises which will support the conclusion that women ought not to have votes. No one now holds that women should be in personal servitude; that they should have no thought, wish, or occupation, but to be the domestic drudges of husbands, fathers, or brothers. It is allowed to unmarried, and wants but little of being conceded to married women to hold property, and have pecuniary and business interests, in the same manner as men. It is considered suitable and proper that women should think, and write, and be teachers. As soon as these things are admitted," Mill concludes, "the political disqualification has no principle to rest on."

Though no other of the great books speaks so directly for the emancipation of women from domestic and political subjection, many of them do consider the differences between men and women in relation to war and love, pleasure and pain, virtue and vice, duty and honor. Some are concerned explicitly with the pivotal question—whether men and women are more alike than different, whether they are essentially equal in their humanity or unequal. Since these are matters pertinent to human nature itself, as it is affected by gender, the relevant passages are collected in the chapter on MAN.

OUTLINE OF TOPICS

	PAGE
1. The nature and necessity of the family	497
2. The family and the state	
2a. Comparison of the domestic and political community in origin, structure, and function	
2b. Comparison of the domestic and political community in manner of government	498
2c. The place and rights of the family in the state: the control and education of children	