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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1906.

Sensationalism—"The Family."
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There has been too much perturbation, too much fuss and feathers about the book entitled "The Family," written by a daughter of the "Wall Street man." It is true that Mrs. Elsie Clews Parsons is a "doctor of philosophy," and for a time lectured on sociology in Barnard College; but even such honors as these do not, we opine, make her utterances on the subject of marriage authoritative, or entitle her promulgation of wild theories even to a respectful hearing.

That there are some evils, sociologically considered, in our lax marriage laws, or our diverse divorce laws, no one will deny, but that these can be cured by the issue of a mild-mannered lecturer of Barnard College, or even any good can be accomplished by a sensational book on the subject, is manifestly absurd. The evil, if it will be, is inherent in weak human nature, and is not to be cured by either theories or laws. An old adage says, "Marriages are made in heaven," but modern developments would lead to a modification of this to "Happy marriages are made in heaven."

It is perhaps the fault of our rushing age that so many marriages turn out unfortunately; there is not enough pre-arrangement or mutual understanding beforehand. We have got away from the olden days that a person shall suffer all through life for a mistake; and whether it is a mistake in morals or a mistake in marriage, the world seems ready to give every man one more chance.

But no possible good can come of such unmodest discussions, such a radical proposition as that of Mrs. Parsons. It is really not worth discussing seriously. The whole subject is one that eminent and scholarly students of sociology have been working on for years. Through their efforts some sane and rational solution may come.

There is no hope or help in any such super-hysterical sensational promulgation as that of Mrs. Parsons.

Atlanta now counts that day lost whose low descending sun sees no new ten-cent magazine begun.

Railroads at the South.
Few railroad managers in the United States are the intellectual equals of Samuel Spencer, president of the Southern Railway Company. None of them knows the general business and industrial conditions of the South as well as he.

In a speech delivered before the Agricultural Association at Montgomery last month, Mr. Spencer made an interesting array of facts concerning the post-bellum development of the South—a development that is little short of the marvelous, and unsurpassed by that of any other portion of the world in the past thirty years. While, of course, the main object of Mr. Spencer's address was to correct some popular misapprehensions regarding the relations of the railroads to the public, he incidentally touched upon the growth of the South's business and its rapid strides toward the commercial leadership of the nation. He showed, for example, that the manufacturing products of the South now approximate in annual value eighteen hundred million dollars, and that while the section is still largely devoted to agriculture, its products of the farm are only seventeen hundred millions annually. These figures will undoubtedly awaken thoughtful men to not only the possibilities of the South's wealth production at the South, but to its actualities.

Mr. Spencer complains, with apparent justice, that the railroads are not getting their due share of the great prosperity of the South. It goes without saying, of course, that they have been, and are continuing to be, potent factors in the re-awakening of the industrial revival and development of which the South is the center. It is not that short-sighted commercialism, giving them of an opportunity to reap a high reward. With increased prosperity have come higher wages and also higher prices for everything the carrier must buy. Instead of \$9 per thousand feet for bridge and shop lumber in 1896, the cost is now sixteen to twenty dollars per thousand, instead of \$18 per ton for fuel rails, the cost in ten years has increased to \$23; instead of \$11,000 each for locomotives, the cost is now from \$16,000 to \$20,000; instead of \$475 for box cars a decade ago, the cost is now \$800; and so on throughout the long list of necessary railroad purchases. The only article the railroad has for sale is transportation. The southern railroad systems, unlike many of those of the West, were not given grants of land by the government as an inducement for their construction. They were built solely with the capital of their owners. For many years all the conditions were unfavorable to most of them earning profits, and many of them were for a long time operated at a loss to their owners. The result has been that loans at heavy interest have had to be procured to prevent bankruptcy. In the case of railroads, loans take the form of bond issues, which merely are mortgages upon property. The interest rate has not declined proportionately with the increased earning power of the roads, and the rate of transportation has been constantly declining. This presents a situation that requires an unusually high order of ability to cope with, and the managers of Southern railroads, therefore, are, and were to be, men of marked financial and business astuteness, or the properties

with whose success they are charged would long ago have suffered accordingly. Commenting upon this difficult phase of railroad management at the South, Mr. Spencer said: "With an increase in the price of everything the carrier must buy—with an increase in the cost of labor, of material, of the verdicts of juries in damage suits, in taxes, &c.—and with decreasing rates, a point must be ultimately reached where the carrier's capacity to meet the public demand for increased facilities must be substantially impaired, if not destroyed. It must be apparent that if there is a continual increase in the units of expense, with a continual decrease in the units of revenue, the financial strength of the enterprise cannot survive indefinitely. If the process is carried far enough, mere increase in volume of traffic, which has sustained the carrier thus far, will not suffice, and without financial strength and credit the carrier cannot adequately meet the proper requirements of the public."

There is much in this speech that the South may well think seriously about.

Kentucky has decided that the surplus fund of the Mutual Life Insurance Company is the property of the policy holders. Unfortunately, the court falls to give instructions about how to force the company to loosen up.

Abuses in Insurance Management.
District Attorney Jerome, of New York, has made a report to Gov. Higgins upon his investigation of the affairs of the Mutual Life Insurance Company which would attract the attention of policy holders in bringing about a change in the management of that company. Mr. Jerome finds that while a number of acts performed by officers of the company bore close resemblance to certain well-known criminal offenses, there is no State law covering those specific acts under which insurance officials may be proceeded against criminally. Among such acts Mr. Jerome mentions the payment of exorbitant salaries, favoritism to relatives of the president of the company, the outlay of large sums for "legal expenses," which sums went to influence legislation, and contributions to political campaigns. That these transactions were not forbidden by law, Mr. Jerome asserts, is the fault of the State superintendent of insurance, who neglected to recommend the necessary legislation.

It is obvious, however, that if insurance officials cannot be punished under the criminal law, they may be punished by ousting them from office. Still in charge of both the Mutual and New York Life Insurance companies are the very men of whom Mr. Jerome says that their acts very closely resemble grave criminal offenses. These men are seeking re-election, and presumably vindication, at the hands of policy holders. They have escaped prosecution, not because guilty of wrongdoing, but because their particular method of doing wrong was not specifically forbidden by statute. To continue these men in power would be to condone their abuse of the great trusts confided to them. They ought to be turned out of office and deposed of the power they have used with so little regard to the moral law that they have barely escaped prosecution under the criminal law.

Somebody threw a bomb at a monologue artist in one of the Warsaw theaters the other night. This is conclusive evidence that even bomb-throwing cranks have their lucid intervals.

Revision Will Not Come That Way.
Theoretically, it would be a splendid thing for the tariff-revision Republicans and Democrats to combine in the Sixtieth Congress against the standpatners, and thus oust Mr. Cannon from the Speaker's chair. The combination would be numerically strong enough, for the revisionists in the Republican ranks are by no means few in number.

From a practical point of view, however, it is difficult to see how the proposition can be carried to a sane conclusion. In the first place, a Republican Representative elected to the Speakership through the suggested agency would be serving under two masters. He would be compelled, if he had any gratitude in his soul, to confer with and listen to his Democratic friends, and unless he gave regard to their wishes, might well expect to merit their contempt. He would soon find the double yoke a difficult one to wear. He would discover, too, that as soon as his composite Ways and Means Committee began to work upon a tariff bill, the vital differences would be running from three to seven hours late.

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