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MS-53: Moses J. Gries Papers, 1850-1934 (bulk 1890-1930).

Series D: Sermons and Addresses, 1893-1917, undated.

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“Home and Parent,” 1903 December 13.

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HOME AND PARENT.

I speak of the home as a soldier of civilization. We think of home as the place of peace and content. The home should manifest the strong, the soldier, the aggressive spirit. It should be a force for the guidance and upliftment of human civilization.

No one knows the origin of the family. The family is present in all ancient civilizations. We find it in India and China and Egypt and among the Semites. The Bible pictures for us one family in the beginning and the beautiful family life of the patriarchs. Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel have hearths like our own. The Bible characters are human as we are. Therein lies the everlasting power of the Bible stories. Through all the ages, family influence has been strong among the Jews. From the time when Abraham was protector to his nephew Lot and Jacob found a refuge in the house of his uncle Laban, there has been family helpfulness. It was through all the centuries of persecution and it is today.

Family and home are the unit. It was with the Greeks and the Romans and the ancient Jews. It was the unit of ancient society. Although some declare that the home is passing, that the individual is the unit of modern society and others emphasize organization and the tendency to the formation of groups of individuals, Carol D. Wright still declares the family is the fundamental unit of civilized society.

Honour thy Father and thy Mother, is the commandment connecting God and man. It is the link between the duties to God and the duties to man. Honor father and mother is commanded in the law-book and commanded by all rabbinical life and teaching. Our ancient law safeguards the sanctity of the home. How often purity is emphasized. God dwells in a pure and loving home, is the thought of the Rabins. Jewish womanhood has been celebrated for chastity through all the ages, even through the world's night of darkness and licentiousness. Woman is honored in the Bible, and has been honored in Israel, and the father was the high priest of the patriarchal household.

School nor church can take the place of parent. No institution can be in-

stead of father and mother. Tutor, nurse nor maid should be in place of the parent. School and home divide the child between them. They must co-operate. Parent must help the teacher and teacher should know and help the parent. Home is the great teacher. It is the first teacher of the first grade lessons of life. It must implant the essential virtues, obedience, respect, love of truth and honor, willingness to serve.

Home is the teacher of the moral life. It is the former of character. Do we value aright how great should be its moral influence by example and by precept. Teach through all the pure conversations of home, by means of the pure, uplifting stories, by all the noble interests of home. Are the pleasures of your home pure? and uplifting? The weakness of our homes is in their unhealthy atmosphere. No real religious life, pleasures for which we should apologize to our children, and so many pleasures out of our homes. Create and preserve the home interests and the home pleasures. Emphasize the home spirit. Important are the family associations and the family reunions.

Mothers' clubs are good; we welcome them. We should have fathers' clubs as well, clubs for fathers and mothers to study the true interests of the home and the child. I know men are absorbed in their business, they come home tired. What interest have we in life greater than our children? Let us bequeath to our children less money and more character, more mind, more heart, more soul. Father and son, mother and daughter should be true companions. Sacrifice all things out of the home to be a true father and a true mother. Woman should not be household drudge. Man should not be business slave. Home is all-important. Father and mother are willing to give their life for their children. We need not die for our children, we should live for them. The true ideals of home should be not money and not pleasure but heart and soul. At home teach reverence, honor for the aged, the father and the mother, respect for the holy things of life, interest in the nobler ideals and purposes. Establish a happy children's hour. It has power to bless every home. It will renew our own heart and soul life. Israel was saved by the home more than by the synagogue and the school. The Jew believes in the home.

America believes in the home. We establish schools for our children and

create clubs for men and women. We seek public amusements and public interests that lead away from, some of them against the home. There is no substitute for the home. Human beings were destined to grow in the home as a flower in the garden beneath the sunshine.

Let us be against the tendencies that weaken and destroy the home. The rich and the well-to-do and the poor need better homes. The home life cannot be lived in public. It demands privacy. The life of the family is sacred. There should be full freedom for life to touch life. Lyman Abbott speaks the truth,- "Four walls and a roof may make a home."

Bad homes are the cause of vice and crime among the poor and the unfortunate. Most of the boys and girls in the reformatories come from homes not good. To every child, let there be a home. I believe in the power of the home spirit. It makes the morality of a city. If all the homes of Cleveland were good homes we would have no shameful manhood, no dishonored womanhood, no depraved childhood, and we should be free from the sins and vices that are the disgrace of our civilization. If we truly care for our homes and truly love our children, parents would not be indifferent, and homes would not be passive. There would be more of the soldier spirit. We would fight against the immoral and for the moral and the clean and the pure.

America needs men, strong, masterful men to master our problems of industry, commerce and government. What use are masterful men if they be not men of character, men of heart and men of soul. The mighty republics and the world-empires that once conquered the nations are no more. Corruption and licentiousness destroyed them. The democracy will live, not by commerce and industry, nor by domination world-wide. It will live if it rest upon the rock of righteousness. Our ideals are not world-power but world-justice and world-happiness.

The nation is made up of men and women; they make it righteous or unrighteous. We must go back to the home, the maker of character. The true nation rests upon the true communities, which in turn rests upon the true family. We need the home true and pure.