

# SOLVING *the* PROBLEM of WHETHER

## WIVES SHOULD WORK



Here's a question which society can't be expected to answer, but must be decided by the individuals concerned, says a noted expert on home management—but there are definite rules to follow if the working wife and husband expect to make a go of it

**I**N these days of quick and easy—and numerous—divorces, it is always easy to start an argument about marriage. And one of the most debated questions pertaining to matrimony is, "Shall a woman work after marriage?"

There are a number of reasons why a girl may feel that it is necessary for her to continue her work. One is that girls in college do not train primarily for homemaking but are educated for professions and other occupations, just as are men students.

Another reason is plain economic necessity. Many young people have had to shoulder financial obligations and responsibilities in their own families during the last few years. Often, young women will not let the men they intend to marry remove these burdens from them.

Often, the men have similar obligations of their own, and the sensible solution may be the one whereunder the couple marries and each assumes his or her own burden rather than delay the wedding date.

Dr. Helen Judy-Bond, professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, who instructs in home management and family social relations, points out that the world would have lost some of its greatest benefits had married women been deprived of the opportunity of carrying on in a profession.

One needs only to think of the value of Madam Curie's contribution to humanity to be convinced of this.

Dr. Judy-Bond maintains that the question of whether a wife should work cannot be solved by society, or industry, or by the sages who write and talk verbosely on the subject.

"No, a thousand times no. The de-

cision must be made by the two people concerned, for only they know the many intimate problems that must be brought into the picture."

But—if the wife is going to continue to work after marriage, Dr. Judy-Bond believes there should be complete understanding and co-operation about homemaking.

"Otherwise, in addition to the financial contribution she is making, the young wife may find herself bearing the burden of the home's work. Unless the couple buys all its help, there must be a division of tasks."

**DR. JUDY-BOND**, one of the most eminent members of her profession, insists on equality of sharing, first of all. When it comes to budgeting she believes that it is impossible to put down many rules. Much depends on the scale of living and the personal needs of the two individuals.

"How much money a couple should have before they marry must be determined by their plan of living and their occupation," she explains. "If a man is a day laborer his scale differs from that of a man preparing to be a college instructor. It always is wise to have a reserve fund for emergencies, and to put aside so much each week, but this matter must be worked out.

"I believe that two young people should have an understanding about the manner in which their life together and their finances are to be handled, and should forget about commandments. If they lay down rules they are likely to feel that they have failed, if an illness or unexpected guests cause the budget to be upset one week.

"Rent, however, should not exceed 20 or 25 per cent of the monthly income.

It may be easier to estimate by saying that it should not be more than one week's salary.

"Home ownership must be determined by the future plans of the man and girl. If they expect to reside permanently in their community it might be well to own a home. If they intend to move—a young college instructor may be given a position in another school—then the ownership of a home could handicap them."

Girls who have had work in home economics courses, Dr. Judy-Bond believes, are better able to cope with domestic problems than are those who open a cook book and get out the measuring plans and spoons.

Girls approach marriage in a wiser, more understanding way today, she believes, than when their mothers were entering on this venture. They are doing an excellent job, too.

"They have an opportunity of choosing their husbands, whereas their mothers were more limited, not having careers of their own to pursue, as a rule, if they didn't marry. They did not come in contact with many men, either."

**THE** matter of saving, while important, should not dwarf other values, Dr. Judy-Bond asserts.

"The newly married couple should not save so much on a small income that they sacrifice food values and other necessities. Saving can be exaggerated. The bride should not work after marriage if it is going to produce a serious conflict with her husband, but as a rule it will not. He will be grateful for the extra financial aid, unless he is able to take care of the household comfortably."

Courses on food and home management for boys are increasing rapidly.

In many schools they have been introduced at the request of the boys.

The courses on marriage and the family life are crowded at Columbia University. In fact, the number of students enrolling for this work has increased 75 per cent in the last two years.

"Young people are realizing that they must understand the psychological, physiological, and sociological basis of the family. They must know how the group should function if it would serve society and the individual to the best of its ability, how to make adjustments, face problems, as well as what the various organized groups are doing to render help to them. Today an increasing amount of time is being given to the study of the constructive side of family life while very little is devoted to the remedial problems. The positive attitude should be adopted."

There is a pronounced tendency, too, Dr. Judy-Bond relates, on the part of young people to discuss the intimate problems of marriage.

The nutrition department of Teachers College, which works closely with the home-making group, has expressed interest in the reports from high schools as to the number of boys who want to know how to cook.

The old fear that girls were taking to typewriters instead of stoves has been dispelled by the enrollment in these courses, and now that the boys are taking an interest, there is no reason why any family should not be well-fed.

"I think that it is of primary importance in married life that every woman know how to cook well," Professor Grace McLeod of this department says. "Unless a woman knows how to cook she can't have a happy, healthy family"

