

THE MODERN HOUSEHOLD

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The Modern Household by Marion Talbot & Sophonisba Preston Breckinridge

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MARION TALBOT & SOPHONISBA PRESTON BRECKINRIDGE

THE MODERN HOUSEHOLD



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By
MARION TALBOT
and
SOPHONISBA PRESTON BRECKINRIDGE



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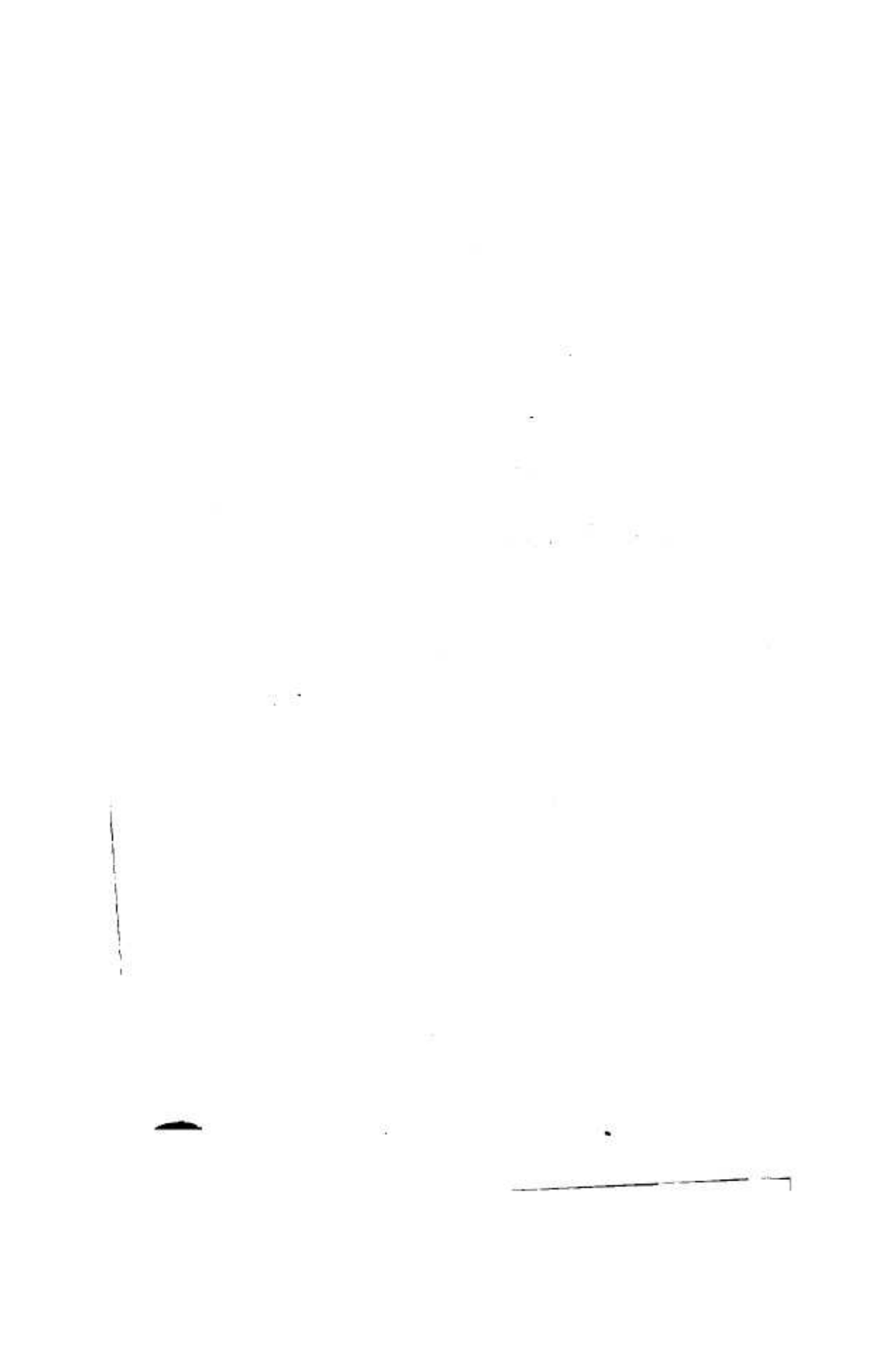
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PREFACE

WE hope that the statements and suggestions in the following pages, supplemented with the questions, will lead housewives, either separately or in study classes, and students of social conditions in college and elsewhere, to find ways by which the household of moderate income and with children may realize its possibilities as an organized group of human beings. In these days, the constructive forces necessary for the maintenance of the household must be sought in new garbs, and those forces which seem to be disintegrating must be reinterpreted in order to serve their higher purposes. No attempt has been made to treat the subjects presented in an exhaustive way or to do more than to indicate the wide range of interests which are the field in which the progressive housekeeper may serve and enjoy.

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June, 1912*

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CHAPTER I

THE HOUSEHOLD AS A SOCIAL UNIT

THERE are students of modern social conditions who prophesy that the home and the family will not endure in their present form as social organizations. Moreover, these views have secured a considerable following, and they have obtained a greater publicity than they really merit.

The prevalence of these views doubtless seems greater than it is, partly because newspaper and magazine writers have widely quoted them and thus given them the semblance of more widespread authority than they actually possess, and partly because they reflect a general and very genuine dissatisfaction with many social phenomena apparent at the present time. Such evidence is found in the increasing frequency of divorce, the lowered birthrate, the multiplication of hotels and tenements, the increase of public places of amusement, and the desertion of families, either temporarily or permanently, by husbands and fathers.

On the other hand, it is true that the dependence of the community upon sound family life as the condition of enduring community life is becoming constantly more widely recognized and more frankly acknowledged by persons of large experience in actual dealing with social problems. Those who work among the poor with any appreciation of their responsibility for the consequences of their ministry have long been familiar with the fact