

WOMAN AS AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER OF SOCIETY.

by

SARAH P. THOMPSON.

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1. Introduction.

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## WOMAN AS AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER OF SOCIETY.

Ever since the history of the world began it has been woman's mission to make and keep the home, to prepare women for future home-keeping, to train men for battle and, later in the stage of civilization, for statesmanship.

Drummond says that development of the human race may be learned by a study of the "evolution of mothers." The innate mother love saw the need for protection of child life from the elements and, as a result, a primitive shelter was secured, first beneath a projecting rock, followed by hollowing out of the mountain sides and the construction of caves and hovels. After general shelter was secured it was necessary for individuals to be protected, exposure sometimes being necessary in times of storm. This condition suggested personal covering in the shape of leaves, or skins of animals. Thus each step in civilization is the direct outgrowth of the mother love which exhibits its self in surrounding the child, that it may grow to manhood or womanhood.

The growth of woman's education has been slow. While men were trained in war and protection, the daughters were instructed in the care of the home and all its allied industries. At the same time there was inculcated the idea that marriage was the ultimate end to be gained. In order to afford entertainment women were instructed in such accomplishments as music and dancing. With this, as an entering wedge, commenced the education of women; advancing by stages until now women may secure an education equal and in the same classes with men. With the removal of many of the home industries to the manufacturing establishments, time has been given to pursue more

advanced work. With this tendency toward fuller education came the inclination to swing away from the homely manual tasks, that had held them so long in bondage, as they supposed. With the decadence of home training women were unable to construct the homes with skill and power known in earlier times. This lack being felt by the educators of the day, the home education has been introduced <sup>and</sup> is being rapidly added to our school curriculums. Another reason, for the introduction of this work, is that young women after spending long hours in the school room need recreation and play; and therefore it is practically impossible to gain scientific and fundamental instructions in home arts in the home.

As physiological laws are being better understood, it is found that proper food and hygienic living are the causes of the physical and mental development which enables the individual to withstand the pressure of the day and successfully surmount the difficulties of present living. As upon women devolve the responsibility of supplying proper food and hygienic surroundings, it is necessary for them to understand the great laws underlying demand and supply. They not only control the consumption of food, but the expenditure of a large portion of the income. In times gone by the major portion of the home consumption was the material produced in the home; making the home both a producer and consumer. To-day it is not a producer but a consumer, and renders women important executive factors. Statistics show they spend over ten billion dollars, in the United States for one year in home making. To buy wisely and with this expenditure, limited though it may be; produce strong healthy men and women, requires knowledge of desired result to be gained with the purchased material.

In order to make clear woman's position, as a true executive member of society, it is necessary to indicate her work in a specific way. Upon women devolves the feeding of the world; from childhood to old age humanity is a product of what it eats. In the feeding of these in a diseased condition food has the power to retard or accelerate recovery. Throughout life there are varying periods with varying demands, with regard to foods. Occupations differ in quantity and quality of activity with corresponding demands upon the food supply. In childhood activity is excessive; the building up of the bony structure with the development of the muscles, requires both nourishing and energy giving foods; requiring not too extensive a demand upon the digestive system. Women should know the changes produced by application of heat to foods thereby rendering them not more difficult to digest; such as that the starch grains should be thoroughly burst by heat and moisture, thus making it possible for the saliva to partially digest it during mastication. The proteids require and demand to be not over cooked so that the digestive fluids readily act, while the fats are digested in the intestines and should not be eaten by them selves. Even an improperly prepared lunch for school children causes unavoidable difficulties, because the stomach requires the blood for digestion and causes drowsiness, or, when little is eaten, hunger is often satisfied in the middle of the afternoon spoiling the regular meal, and according to Haig irregularity in only one meal may render the quantity and quality of work accomplished less for a week or more. A depleted physical system gives opportunity for development of micro-organisms lying dormant in the system or round about us, causing cessation from work with its attendant care and expense.

Then there is another side

Then there is another side to this question. The effect that food has upon morals has been proven to be of such great importance that it has been taken up in reformatories and the inmates are given foods that are mild in their effect. Lack of proper nourishment from lack of properly prepared foods and from improper eating, together with unhygienic surroundings often cause a longing to satisfy the demand. If one glass of intoxicants will accomplish this will it not again? And so an appetite may in this way be created. Is it not a grand and noble work to supply suitable foods and suitable surroundings that the body and mind may be kept pure and clean? For, "Know ye not that ye are the temples of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy which temple ye are."

While the question of food is of vital importance, the ~~Environ-~~ments of individuals should be considered; and in this the first and greatest is the house and the home influence and, in close connection, the clothing. The shape, size, and color of the house effects the people who live therein; and in many instances the house is neither attractive nor conducive to harmony of thought or happiness; the mother has no idea of artistic arrangement, no knowledge of harmony of colors; everything is put into the house in a hap hazzard sort of way. The house may be necessarily small, but, no matter, it may be rightly built with regard to utility and beauty, by combining these two elements. Women may not be artists and architects, but, by the amount of artistic taste they use in dress and in the arrangement of the home, they regulate the development of art. The degree of civilization may be known by the character of its art. "The house is not only a result of character but it determines character." No matter how well and beautifully a house may be built and arranged, it would

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be as useless as an uninhabited carapace unless it be a home as well as a house. "A sane mind is a sound body" is as truly connected as a sane household in a sound house. The family is the body, the home is the spirit, the house is the outer shell; while woman is the creator of the whole. "A family without a household is but a dis-membered spirit, and a family in a discorded household is but a sick and sorry spirit at best."

The reason so many women are nervous and always tired is because of the constant discord about them. There is no relation between their different kinds of work and between their different utensils. As the human mind is not perfectly adapted to sudden changes, there should be a similarity of each successive transition to the one preceding. A gradual change causes no radical adaptation of the nervous system to the new condition, the way is paved and no serious results will be felt. As a result of weariness and nervousness there is irritability with its attending loss from the comfort and quiet of the home, causing members of the family to seek a substitute for home life elsewhere. But by sympathetic work and watchful guidance over the welfare of those about them women become the head machinists that manage the apparatus of human livelihood and happiness; they make and keep the standard of the home; on their influence, either remote or direct, depends mens standing socially, politically, and financially. "The life of the family with all that it means to the life of the race, is absolutely dependent upon the household life; whether we live or die are determined by our household condition." Not realizing this is, in the majority of cases what causes our indifferant living and results in developing weak inharmonious individuals, thus retarding advancement. The condition of many homes

furnish material for thought, for laughter, and for pain too deep for tears.

As stated above the environment does not alone consist in the conditions of the home and home life but of the clothing as well. In considering the clothing of a child a wise mother will first think of comfort and combine that with beauty. To an educated or wisely critical person the dress is not beautiful if it does not fulfil the demands for comfort and utility. An unwise mother may put such material into the garment that the child is not free to play at will for fear of soiling perishable material and the delights of childhood are greatly restricted. All clothing should be loose enough to allow perfect freedom of all muscular action, and should be suspended from the shoulders. Not only should the child's but the adult's clothing be purchased with respect to comfort and convenience. No individual can accomplish the same quantity or quality of work if hampered by or conscious of burdensome or heavy clothing.

Another place where intelligent and wise guidance should reign is in the management of hygienic conditions both in and surrounding the home. Among the first considerations is ventilation. In intelligent homes this is well provided for both by day and night. Many still cling to the old idea that night air is to be dreaded as some rank poison, so they shut up avenues by which clear fresh air may enter. Thus avoiding the supposed deadly night air, but taking into their systems poison from the impure air resulting in heavy aching heads and slow pulse; Thus greatly depleting the system and lessening the power to work and shortening life.

Danger often results from incorrect plumbing, as misjoining of pipes, leakage, and lack of traps allowing the house to become im-



pregnated with impure gasjes. One instance on record is, of a house in New York wherein dyptheria became rampant. When examination was made the plumbing was discovered to be in a most imperfect condition, especially in the cellar, where the pipes leading into the sewer were discharging their contents through many leaky joints. After this discovery the home-keeper confessed she had never been in the cellar. This is onlyone of many such examples.

Water is the source of contamination and carrier of infectious organisms. Public sentiment needs to be created with regard to water and water supplya The sentiment is growing apage with the knowledge gained by women and with their active cooperation with sanitary commissioners. A house to be purchased or rented is to be examined with regard to methods of ventilations, plumbing, heating, water supply, kind of soil, natural and artificial drainage, construction of house in general as to its cellar and walls, and arrangement of rooms as related one to the other. Natures great disinfectant is plenty of sunshine. Therefore our wise home director will not rent or purchase a house having rooms wherein the sun never shines if possible to avoid it. If, however, a room must necessarily be shut off from the sun<sup>a</sup> part of the time as is often the case, furnishings will be so chosen that the room will appear bright and cheerful. Deep carvings, mouldings, cornices, unnecessary ornaments or open meshed upholstery are all dust collectors. Much and heavy drapery as well as carpets have the same effect. Therefore all draperies and floor coverings should be of such character as to be easily removed and cleansed.

As has already been said women regulate purchasing and consump-

tion, therefore must understand the correct expenditure of money  
 In apportioning income, be it great or small, there are fixed di-  
 visions that may be of the greatest value. Those for food, shelter,  
 clothing, sundry daily expenditures, repairs, pleasure, and most im-  
 portant of all the reserve fund for cases of emergency and the  
 proverbial "rainy day." The amount used in these various places  
 depend upon the culture and training of the family. Some may save  
 in clothing to give more to shelter; some may save in clothing to  
 give more to food; some save in other places to add to the reserve  
 fund. However it is, the same system must always be followed, for  
 a wise woman never lives beyond but well within her means.

"That woman as a sex should hold the office of feeder and cloth-  
 er and keeper of life is right, wholly right, but unless the processes  
 followed are abreast of the age the end is not fully attained."