

Economy in the Home.

Thesis of

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Outline.

Why economize in the home.

Ways and means of economy.

Economy in buying.

" " using.

" " of one's self.

Kinds of economy.

False: illustrations.

True: "

Effect of individual economy upon
national wealth.

It is the diligent in earthly and heavenly work to whom is given the promise, "Be thou faithful over a few things, and I will make thee ruler over many things." Every true housekeeper, as she remembers amid her cares who kept the widow's cruse from failing and who supplied the wedding feast of Cana, should realize the sympathy of God in her work and think of the good results derived from daily performing her duties well. Surely a true housekeeper and homemaker performs one of the grandest services. From our homes come all heroisms, all inspirations of great deeds; from our homes have come our heroes and martyrs. Our homes influence our health, comfort, morals and religion.

"Home!" - the very word has in it a religious meaning; it has in it the elements of love, rest permanency and liberty; besides all this it has in it the idea of an education by which all that is purest within us is developed into nobler forms, fit for a higher life. How

can people live decent Christian lives in filthy and impure surroundings? The influence of our homes for good or for evil is something we can not think too much about. The power to create a home ought to head the list of all creative faculties. The effects of the home on the nation cannot but be infinite. If every citizen came from a home which gave to him proper training, could the nation be anything but an ideal one?

Every woman has a mission work in her own home. The charm of a cosy home rests principally with its mistress. It is her duty to make that home so attractive that no one ever passes through it without learning something useful, without seeing housework respected, without feeling the influence of a right view of life and its duties.

Some one asks, "what has all this to do with economy?" I answer, "it has everything to do with it. No house can be truly a home without this essential factor - economy, whether the economy be of time, wealth or health. How beautifully Ruskin says, "all true economy is the law of the house. Strive to

make that law strict, simple, generous. Waste nothing grudge nothing."

We read somewhere that economy is the "science of proportion". Whether or not a particular purchase is extravagant depends on the income from which it is taken.

Suppose a woman has one-hundred and fifty-dollars a year for her-dress and gives fifty for a bonnet; she spends one-third of her income for a bonnet! This is extremely extravagant, while for a woman whose income is ten or more thousand it may be no extravagance at all.

Extravagance often comes from ignorance. How often mothers and their-girls have not the slightest-idea of what they have to spend. Husbands and fathers do not-give them any information whatever-as to their allowance. Then when a bill is collected the "women folks" are suddenly made aware of the fact that they will "break" him up in business and further that if a man was "coining money" he might afford to dress them in that foolishly extravagant style. I hold that every mother and every daughter should know exactly what her allowance

is and if she did I am certain much worry on the point of extravagance would be done away with. For every right minded sensible woman will spend her portion - whether it be great or small - judiciously.

Careful buying and careful use of the article bought is the secret of true economy. Do not pay more for an article than it is really worth. Nothing is worth buying that is shop worn or that will not wear well in proportion to its cost. It is so delightful to think in some "airy way" that the things we like best are the cheapest and that a sort of duty compels us to get them at any sacrifice. Some people seem to have a mania for buying everything they see because it is "such a bargain." In this way food, clothing, furniture, etc. are recklessly accumulated without a thought as to the use to be made of them, and after being stored away or thrown about until time and fashion makes them utterly worthless, they must be given away or otherwise disposed of. Every article bought should be suited to the use made of it. When money comes easily it usually

goes easily. Those who have not learned that every dollar means so much honest labor of somebody's head or hands cannot be expected to properly spend it. Somebody says, "America wastes enough yearly to feed the thousands who are now said to be out of employment." I do not believe that this is so true now as it was some years ago. In these days of housekeeping magazines and cooking schools we are steadily learning the art of true economy in the home.

After an article is purchased do not be extravagant and allow it to go to ruin. Master Johnny should not be allowed to play with costly volumes, with bread and butter fingers, nor is it necessary that his little sister practice line-drawing on the furniture. To be sure there is such a thing as being too fine to take comfort, and this is anything but cheerful.

Some people seem to think that by economy is meant carelessness in the home circle for the sake of fine clothes; to gain this selfish end they actually become stingy in lines which in the

end will be an enormous expense. I know women who are terrified at the "outrageous" quantity of sugar in the recipe for preserves - so they leave out a portion of it, for "economy's" sake" and then when the preserves spoil, all - sugar, fruit and work - are thrown away.

Most of us can think of persons among our acquaintances who have lost their health by saving the pennies. They dismiss their hired help so that they can have better clothes or perhaps that they may outshine their neighbors by having a larger house and by the time they have done the spring house cleaning the daughter and mother are overworked and a doctor bill or perhaps even worse - a funeral expense far exceeding the cost of hired help must be paid. Few people seem to realize that when their strength is gone their hard earned money must go for the building up of their bodies. We must spend in moderation both strength and money.

Comparing housework with other industries it must be said in respect to using mechanical devices and labor

saving appliances, that while farming has been transformed by inventions - the main processes of housework are done to-day just as they have been done for many years. We have seen but one great invention take its place in the home and this one is the sewing machine. Besides this great invention numberless devices for saving steps and time are worthy of mention; Among these are carpet-sweepers, meat-mincers, raisin seeders, peeling machines, all of which give better results with less toil than the old ways and should be always at hand. There are also machines for washing clothes in the aggregate instead of piece by piece; these save much time wear and breakage if in the hands of intelligent operatives. Thus we must economize our health and time while economizing wealth.

No where in the house is there such a wide range for economy as in the kitchen. A penny on this and two cents on that, gives us surprising results. Of course these pennies must

not be saved at the cost of health, cheerfulness and goodness; for, indeed, these all depend on the kind of food we eat. A woman makes a great mistake when she buys foods because they are cheap—for example when she buys cheap baking powders, not thinking of the harmful results to the health of the family.

A good example of false economy is found in the case of the man who bought his wife a diamond bracelet and a lace shawl and took her to Washington to show off her beauty in ball dresses, and yet he would not let her pay wages that would command any but the poorest servants. The woman was worn out trying to keep up a showy establishment with one-half the hands needed for the purpose.

One writer says, "the ideal home rests upon a firm foundation of order, cleanliness and wholesome food. That without these qualities a house cannot be a home. Neither art, nor music; neither family affection nor intellectual interests, nor all combined can make up for

the lack of these essentials. If we consider these thoughts the humblest details of housework become dignified. Yet the girls are allowed to hate housework and to grow up ignorant and incompetent about it. What right has a girl to go into a house of her own unless she knows how to superintend every branch of housekeeping? And she can not properly superintend unless she has some practical knowledge herself. Let all girls have a share in housekeeping. It need not occupy half the time to see that the house has been properly swept, dusted and put in order, to prepare puddings and dishes, that many girls spend in reading novels which enervate both mind and body and unfit them for everyday life. Our mothers used to pride themselves on their housekeeping and fine needlework. Let the present generation add to its list of real accomplishments - the art of housekeeping and homekeeping.

How many poor women work at washing, house cleaning scrubbing, day

after day, week after week, year after year, wages are paid regularly but if there is no knowledge as to the best possible manner of investing the money there can be no true economy. The hard earned wages go fast for cheap goods, poor laces, brass jewelry, etc.

Undoubtedly the people of our country would not suffer so severely from the present "hard times" if they had economized properly when times and money were flourishing. The panic in Chicago during the past winter gives a good illustration. Last summer or perhaps for the past two or three summers when business was fair many people spent their last "penny" to be in the "swim". While fair weather lasted they needed no warm clothing, nor warm houses - but when a "cold wave" swept over the country thousands who had been drawing regular wages were forced to apply to the mayor for assistance. An investigation the authorities found the homes destitute - no coal, no wood in the sheds, no flour in the chest - in

fact everything seemed suddenly to have taken wings. We ask who is to be blamed for such results of hard labor? If one thing we are certain and that is that we can not blame nature. She has been more generous to us than to any other nation. The fault must be laid at our own door. Our own ignorance and disobedience of the laws of economy and industry have made our present "hard times"; and we cannot hope to cure the disease without first removing the cause.

The wealth of the nation depends upon the prosperity of the homes. When the people prosper the nation is prosperous, and when reverses overtake the people, the nation, which is the people, must suffer. The people and the nation are one and inseparable. The problem of the welfare of the homes should be the problem of the nation; solve the problem of making homes prosperous, happy and contented, and the question of national prosperity will find its own solution.

We hear many complaints about the need of reform, about the need of equalization of wealth, and the need of some method to prevent the wave of "hard times" from engulfing so many families and sweeping them to destruction or casting them upon the mercy and charity of the world. No doubt we do need reform, but let the reform begin at home. Let every home initiate a reform within itself; let every household economize and cherish the bounties of nature in times of prosperity and sunshine and when the storm breaks, they will not have to seek shelter in the charity of the more fortunate, but will turn to the measure laid by in times of sunshine and can live in peace and plenty, till the clouds have cleared away and fortune smiles once more.

As is the home, so will the nation be; improve the home, economize in the home so that improvement will be possible and questions of social reform can be trusted to care for themselves.

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