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The Homemaker Yesterday and Today

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The Homemaker Yesterday and Today

Isabel Leith

What has become of the old-fashioned home?" is a phrase heard often today. Are we not living in 1929, and not 1829? Can we expect the home to remain the same, with the automobiles passing by and airplanes buzzing overhead? Can we expect the mother to do all the mental tasks which were done in the home in puritanical days? Shouldn't she rather be a person educated for her profession of homemaking, so she can do her part, which is not the drudgery in the home, but the management of the home? Yesterday the home was simpler. To establish a home, the mother would scrub, and rear children. Today it is more complex. The home has enlarged so it is a part of the community.

Abel says, "As the development of a country proceeds, the dependence of the individual on the community increases." Outside industries have responded to the homemaker's needs in that they have made it possible for the mother to have much of her work done outside. Children are now born in hospitals. Childbirth is no longer just an operation. Mothers have scientific care after childbirth, rather than just having the family doctor present, and perhaps making a single visit afterward, if it seems necessary.

The food for the family can be prepared outside the home. Canners have added variety to the diet and by distributing the year around food supply, have favorably affected prices. The bakeries also have grown. Restaurants are endeavoring to cultivate a home atmosphere. They prepare food which is very good; "like mother used to make." In these restaurants it is not necessary to eat and rush, as is usually done in a public eating place.

Catering may be done in private homes by the larger hotels. They usually serve for entertainments, arriving on schedule, furnishing the linen and silver for table and service, and washing the dishes later at the hotel. This eliminates the trouble of food preparation, serving and the clean-up which must follow in the kitchen after the party.

Another source of commercially cooked foods is the delicatessen store. The danger of this is not unbalancing the home, but of unbalancing the

Successful home management brings happiness to children.
the equipment who should be considered in its construction. Thus is opening up a commercial field for the woman who is trained in engineering.

Another commercial field open to women is that of demonstrating equipment. Many gas and electric companies are employing home economics or home equipment specialists who are conducting classes for women of the city, teaching them the proper use and care of the equipment. They also go into the homes and help solve the household problems. Besides these commercial types of work, there are numerous others, such as radio work, and advertising. There are also numerous calls for teachers, research workers and extension specialists, as more and more the public is beginning to realize the possibilities of these various fields.

So, perchance, when our western college installs an equipment department, our professor friend will find his chemical analysis is useless data, and that in the women are substances of which he knew nothing, and which are priceless beyond measure.

Turkish College Girls

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match games with the teams from the English High School for Girls. The hockey field is a plateau above the Bosphorus and playing there with the blue sea below and the hills of Asia beyond is a delight. No matter what the weather, snow or wind or rain or sun, there are girls walking around.

During the day the girls wear simple school clothes, wash dresses when it is warm enough and wool ones in cold weather. My home economics classes last year made middy blouses and wore them proudly, and copied them for their friends. Most of us changed for dinner into something thinner or gayer but not an evening dress. For a special party, some “dressing up” is done and when they go to the city, the girls look very trim and smart in suits or coats. I do not think time and attention are given in the extreme to clothes.

Arranged marriages are passing, too, with many of the old customs. I attended several weddings where the bride wore white satin with a veil, exactly like my sister’s a few years ago, up to the minute in fashion, and the bridegroom was present at the ceremony. Engagements are announced and the happy pair are often seen together. There is a marked feeling of respect for older members of a family and probably the parents’ wishes influence their daughter’s choice, but very few young people are coerced into doing things nowadays.

Turkish women have always been educated, though perhaps not according to our standards. Theirs has been the training prevalent in Europe and in this country in its early days, to educate a “lady.” Girls were taught at home; music, literature, languages and embroidery, perhaps. Sometimes they studied in groups and the children of employees shared the advantages of the heirs of the household. The spirit of democracy in family life is very striking in Turkey. Old and trusted servants are treated as friends. And while I have an opportunity, I would like to correct a prevalent idea of harem. The “harem lik” was the part of the house in which the women lived; grandmother, mother and children; and the “selam lik” was the men’s quarters. For an excellent description and explanation of education in Turkey today, I refer you to “School and Society” for Nov. 17, the article by Dr. Lucy Wilson, who spent the summer of 1928 there.

More women in Turkey are being given education today in public and private schools, and undoubtedly their influence will be great.

Homemakers Yesterday and Today

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every other way, the nursery school has an important part to play.

Apart from these things which have been taken from the home, what has the mother left to do, or what effect will this have on the home?

The mother can be either a bridge friend, a club maniac, or a happy medium, who spends her time educating herself to be better able to care for her child and perform her job of homemaking rather than housekeeping.

The mother must be more than a cook today; she must be a dietitian, so she can select the proper foods, whether she prepares them or not, so that from the standpoint of health her children will be an asset to the community, instead of a liability.

Besides these, the mother must be a companion to the children. She must have a knowledge of psychology to understand their actions. She should
make herself something that they wish to be like, rather than a critic who is
human and unreal to the children—
someone they obey because they must.

Besides knowledge, she must have
infinite patience, sympathy and tact.
She must be their counselor as well as
consoler. She should not make them
dependent on her, nor yet so far off
they will not come to her for advice.

A mother's work today extends into
the community. She has a part to play
there. She is an educated person and
should contribute her share to church,
charity and schools to make a better
place for her children to develop.

All in all, the mother should not be
a kitchen drudge. She has such an
important task to perform in being a
mother and in spending time with her
children that she cannot spend her en-
ergy doing the physical labor in the
home, which can be done as well by
someone else.

Gesell of Yale says, "We need not
fear that the home is about to be un-
dermined. The purification of milk
and water, the establishment of public
libraries, and public elementary schools
have not weakened the home or bereft
parents of their children."

To this might be added the fact
that more girls are being trained for
homemaking today than ever before.

Instead of being pessimistic about
the family, we should make use of the
present situation to better it. The fact
that today women are not content to
spend their days within four walls
should not be deplored, but used as the
keystone for an improvement in our
homes.

It is upon this basis that the ser-
dices taken out of the home and mod-
ern equipment giving the mother as-
sistance in the home are justified, for
she still has a full-time job left in
mothering. These things make it pos-
sible for motherhood to be up-to-date.
And as Zona Gale says, "Motherhood
is progressive, just like science or ag-
riculture or life."

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**That Foreign Flavor**

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larger outer leaves of a well-washed
cabbage and tied into place. Hot wa-
ter is poured over the rolls in a large
kettle and the whole is cooked for
about a half hour.

The Spaniards enjoy baked oysters.
Their way of preparing them is to take
twelve oysters and scald them in their
own liquor. Chop twelve more oysters
raw. Cook two quarts of spinach for
three minutes in boiling water, drain
and chop finely. Add two tablespoons
chopped onions, one-half cup butter
and cook well, but do not allow to
brown. Combine spinach and onions
with chopped oysters, salt, pepper and
two tablespoons of cream. Cook five
minutes and add one egg and one egg
yolk. Put two whole oysters (pre-
viously cooked) in a ramekin, fill with
above mixture, sprinkle top with bread
brumbs and bake until set.

Delizia is made only in Italy, and
there only on special occasions. One-
half pound of spaghetti is cooked in
boiling salt water. A small onion,
a clove of garlic, and a bell pepper are
fried in olive oil until brown. A can
of tomato soup and salt, paprika, wor-
cestershire sauce and curry are added.
When thoroughly heated, one-
half cup grated cheese is added. When
the cheese is melted, a can of corn and
the spaghetti are mixed with the to-
mato sauce. Then one-half pound of
hamburg steak, mixed with a little wa-
ter, is added to the mixture. The
whole is put into a baking dish and
sprinkled with grated cheese. Let it
bake for twenty minutes. Mushrooms
may be added if desired. The tomen-
toes and cheese give a delicious flavor.