

Girls Should be Taught Wifely Duties 1903

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“A young woman’s education can in no sense be said to be completed until her school studies have been supplemented by thorough training along all lines of housekeeping and home-making. Her educational advantages may have been the best; she may have wealth and position, culture and accomplishments, and yet without a practical knowledge of household industries it is probable that in time she will find herself handicapped in a position where independence and capability are the only assurances of success.

It is a wise mother who elects to provide for the future well-being of her daughter by sending her forth from her own roof-tree well and thoroughly equipped with both knowledge and experience in all branches of housewifely accomplishments.

The daughter should be taught, by both precept and example, to regard housekeeping as a profession, and a profession of dignity and importance, inasmuch as the welfare of all humanity depends upon the home and homemaker.

This will serve to lift the everyday duties of housekeeping from the rut of drudgery to the place of artistic and scientific accomplishment.

Sometimes the daughter will fail to see the necessity for all this domestic training, especially if she has reason to believe that she will never be obliged to do her own housework.

But as wealth is no guarantee against domestic disaster, it should not be made an excuse for housewifely ignorance.

And, too, in her own future experience she will likely find that servants are quite often neither capable nor intelligent, and that the only safeguard to domestic felicity is in the competent mistress, who is equal to the emergency of wisely ordering her own domestic affairs, and training to some degree of usefulness that embodiment of stupidity and incompetency that often finds its way into our kitchens.

When her interest is once aroused, the daughter will soon begin to feel a certain sort of pride in her housewifely attainments, and a sense of the responsibilities of the homemaker.

She will see too, that no one speciality will suffice; that the making of a cake, the compounding of a salad, or the preparing of a dainty desert is not by any means an adequate preparation upon which to warrant the successful management of a home, or the comfort and happiness of its inmates.

The making of a wholesome loaf of bread, the broiling of a steak, the roasting of a joint, and the cooking of vegetables; the canning, the pickling and the preserving; the care of all kinds of meats and household supplies must supplement the lighter and more ornamental accomplishments.

The daughter should also be trained to habits of thrift and self-dependence, for in no other way can she attain to self-confidence and independence in her own domestic experiences.

She must learn to have an eye to the business end of her occupation, and understand the value of all household commodities.

And to this end a certain sum of money must be set aside for household purposes, and the daughter, with perhaps a good deal of kindly tuition from the mother should be allowed to purchase the household supplies.

This will not only give her a practical experience in domestic economy, but will teach her the value of money and the necessity of wisdom and discretion in its use.

The care of her own, and perhaps of her brother’s wardrobe, the mending, the planning and the remodelling of half-worn garments, the care and oversight of the table linen and the bedding, a supervision of the sewing room and the laundry, will all be helpful to the prospective housewife.

The artistic arrangement of a room may be considered an accomplishment but the care of the sick and of children and a knowledge of simple household remedies in cases of emergency, are often a necessity,

In fact, to sum up the whole matter, the daughter will soon learn from practical experience that it takes an all-round woman, capable of turning her hand to any and every kind of household labour, to keep in perfect running-order the complicated machinery of a modern household.

And she will realise the importance of her home-training accordingly.

And, too, this season of apprenticeship may be made a mutual pleasure and benefit to both mother and daughter, for if the mother has fallen behind the times in her methods, and has grown a little old fashioned in her ways, she will soon become enthused with spirit of progress of her up-to-date daughter and many new and helpful innovations will be the result.

The close companionship and the mutual interests of this season of household discipline will develop a happy relationship and good-fellowship that will be a source of source of much pleasure to both, and in future years the daughter will hold in grateful appreciation the mother who elected to provide so wisely and well for her daughter's happiness and well-being."

Vince