

Editorial

ADELAIDE HOODLESS SAID, "A nation cannot rise above the level of its homes."

She deplored the fact that the most important duties a woman can undertake as a woman were so often put into the hands of inexperienced, untrained girls. To remedy this, Adelaide Hoodless made the crusade for teaching Household Science in schools her life work. Out of her conviction that the need for upgrading homemaking skills in women was essential, came the thought that resulted in the organization of the Women's Institute.

Women's Institutes that sponsor 4-H Homemaking Clubs, members of Women's Institutes, and others, who are leaders of 4-H Homemaking Clubs are doing work that would have had the enthusiastic approval of Adelaide Hoodless. Through the club projects, girls at an early age, are being given instruction in the rudiments of homemaking that will be of value to them all through their lives.

There are few women, who, at some time in their lives, are not involved with homemaking. In the Creator's design for living, females were given the role of bearing the children and creating a home for them; males were to be the providers and the protectors. Women may or may not marry, may or may not have children, but their need for a home, the desire for and the thrill of planning a home, if only for herself, is a strong instinct in almost every woman.

Along with this instinct, women were supposed to have been endowed with an inborn ability to make a good job of their homemaking. This is not so, although most girls do probably pick up some knowledge of homemaking from their mothers. The quality of the homemaking skills acquired from the mothers depends, to a large extent, on the efficiency of the mother's housekeeping methods and the mother's awareness of the girl's need to learn these skills.

Many women who claim no vocation other than the job of providing a well kept home for their families have a tendency to apologize for being engaged only, in this apparently simple occupation. But is it so simple?

Homemaking consists of meal planning, cooking, cleaning and care of the house; buying or making clothes; laundering; buying all consumer goods for home and family; management of time; duties and money; entertaining, chauffeuring, nursing at times, letter-writing, contacts with relatives, neighbours and friends; perhaps gardening.

In addition to these duties a mother has the obligation of caring for the children, which not only means physical care but the responsibility for the personality development of the family. Children today will be the adults of tomorrow and there is a growing awareness that a healthy and intelligent home environment is necessary to develop people who can adjust to the stresses and tensions of modern living.

No woman, then, should feel the need to apologize for being engaged in such an imposing list of duties. No woman who takes seriously her duties as a wife or mother should feel that she is not fulfilling the potential abilities in herself when she lists herself as a housewife.

Today more and more women are engaged in paid employment outside their homes. Many women have abilities that enable them to pursue successfully careers in business and the professions. Many of these women, too, have the desire for a home and family. The adjustments and working arrangements needed to combine paid employment with the duties of a homemaker are a challenge; but a thorough training in the skills for housekeeping and child care will certainly be of great value. Women away from home a part of each day may need such training more than the woman who stays at home, since she hasn't time for the trial and error methods that are common to beginning housewives. If a woman employs help, she should have a thorough knowledge of housekeeping and child care in order to direct her household help for efficiency in the operation of her home.

Every woman needs training in the skills necessary for homemaking.

It may well be that, when in the years to come the effectiveness of the Women's Institute is assessed, if it ever can be, the sponsoring of 4-H Homemaking Clubs will rate very high among the accomplishments of the organization.

Maryn Lardy