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A Book for Home Managers

Helen Pundt quotes excerpts from the new home management text by Dr. Paulena Nickell

FIVE years of sacrificed vacations and isolation from telephones, teas, formal dinners, and other social demands enabled Dr. Paulena Nickell, in collaboration with Jean Muir Dorsey, homemaker, formerly of the University of Minnesota, to place upon the library shelf a new book entitled *Management in Family Living* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc.). Dr. Nickell, head of the Home Management Department at Iowa State, contributed to the work a knowledge which had grown out of professional experience while Mrs. Dorsey drew from her experiences in managing a home and family of four.

Throughout the period of co-authorship, practice challenged theory, and only those facts remained in the final writing which survived the most critical scrutiny of both factions.

During three years of association, Dr. Nickell became increasingly impressed with Mrs. Dorsey's skill as a homemaker and her unquestioned status as a resource in the community. Intelligent women called upon her for every kind of advice in the management of a home. She not only gave her work dignity, but she succeeded, Dr. Nickell has stated, in making her job a profession. That admiration which grew during the three years of friendship, became a catalytic agent in the development of *Management in Family Living*.

One of the difficulties encountered in the writing of the book was the elimination of jargon peculiar to fields of science close to the homemaking profession and the refined use of words to convey precise meanings.

The volume is intended primarily for college students and young homemakers, but it has in it as well a philosophy of homemaking which may be applied to everyday living.

To assist the young homemaker in meeting the challenge of these requirements, Dr. Nickell and Mrs. Dorsey have analyzed in Part II of the book the time,

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energy, and fatigue costs of homemaking, the control of such costs through planning, acquiring skills and improving methods of work, through improved working conditions, and the use of personal help and commercial agencies. The authors have devoted one entire section to family finance management and another to family housing management.

Perhaps as important as any section of the book to the student and young homemaker is the chart of abilities, techniques, and personal qualities for evaluation and self-improvement. Comprehensive and detailed, it facilitates self-analysis and points the way to potential development.

The objectives of homemaking as stated by the authors are:

1. Optimum physical and mental health for each member of the family.
2. Optimum development of the individual members of the family.
3. Satisfying family life.
4. Wholesome and useful relations with other individuals and groups both within and outside the home.

Before discussing the approaches through which these goals may be reached, the authors consider the many changes which have taken place in civilization and consequently in the home. First there is the change from external authority to internal authority, that is, from imposed discipline to self-discipline; the rise of democracy in the home; the effects of industrialization which have not only made the homemaker a director of consumption instead of a producer of goods, but have increased as well the supply of goods from which she has to choose.

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