

duce only a brief adhesion. This will occur in the case of a really good cement if the pores in the broken edges of the china or delft-ware absorb much of the adhesive matter; but if a second application of cement is made without cleansing the edges, the desired result will usually be attained. Cemented china should be dried in a

hot place. Neither furniture nor crockery that has been repaired in this way should be used until it has been allowed to dry for several days in a proper atmosphere. The mending of fine china and lace is counted a superior acquirement among gentlewomen in France, Italy and Germany and is considered as refined as it is valuable.

## SELF-SUPPORTING WOMEN.

There are many women whose chief desire is to marry—whether circumstances are favorable or quite the reverse. They wed to obtain freedom from the discomforts and penalties that are so often the portion of the unmarried daughter at home, who feels that she contributes nothing to the family prosperity, but rather adds to the already heavy burden of the breadwinner. They are impatient with themselves because they are not able to compel content to take the place of dull weariness.

Elderly spinsters were once deemed too numerous for the world's welfare, but now there are too few of them, so changed for the better is the average condition of unmarried women. Since the alternative for unsatisfactory wedlock is now a tolerable if not a wholly sympathetic profession or craft by which a living may be gained, spinsterhood has, as a natural consequence, been endowed with the dignity and charm of a voluntarily chosen condition. The best of single women who lack fortunes of their own no longer allow themselves to be carried idly through life by others, even though the added burdens would not be felt by those who would be called upon to bear them. Tender, manly men there are who would never admit that their energies are overtaxed to provide for dependent female relatives outside their immediate families; but conscientious women have come to doubt their right to receive support from men upon whom they have no claim save that of a more or less distant relationship, although custom blinds the eyes of many to a clear recognition of the charity by which they are sustained in idleness.

There are many young women who are not to be blamed for leaning helplessly upon a weary and overworked father, because they have inherited a conviction that womanly weakness is proper, feminine and charming; and this belief cannot always be easily put aside. Other women, equally endowed with traditional ideas, and, perhaps, more unfortunate, are idle through natural inaptitude. The absence of employment to some women is a matter for gratitude, if any such lively and distinctive emotion is possible to them. They neither seek occupation nor desire it. Such persons may be instances of atavism, their span of tendency reaching back to the times of the patriarchs, when women were counted as material possessions and were ranked between a man's house and his servants.

We all know what it is to inherit certain gifts of mind, manners and character. If these are good and precious, we are praised, esteemed and loved because of them; but if, unfortunately, our gifts are not suited to the social or industrial standards of the time in which we live, we are scoffed at and condemned. No woman is able to better herself until she has a desire for improvement and a craving for a broader nature. But from whence are such cravings to come? This question brings the mind forcibly against a blank wall, and the pain of ignorance tells us that distress and blame are equally undeserved by us; and so, also, is fault-finding with women who prefer to be self-supporting or, at least, choose the pleasure of earning money because they see it is man's chief delight in a country like ours. To work for pay without lowering the dignity of man's position in the industries or taking from him the happy consciousness that he is able to provide for his daughters, if they are willing to be thus supported, or if they should ever become weary of self-support and need his strong hands to hold them up—to do this is the problem for women to solve.

Since, in the present disproportion of the sexes in our Eastern States, every twelfth woman must remain unmarried, surely she it is who has a right to be respected in her desire to stand alone, worthily and honorably, eating the bread neither of charity nor of dependence. There is an aspect of the lives of single women that is not sufficiently regarded. It is to be noticed in that enforced idleness in certain well-to-do families which allows leisure for brooding over the evils of a solitary setting and for a dreary self-pity or, perhaps, for a still more pathetic devising of some sort of marriage on the plea that any change is better than stagnation and nothingness. To have an "easy time" is too often supposed to express the most enviable condition of an unmarried woman who is no longer youthful and who has all her material needs supplied.

Can anything be more difficult to endure than idleness with discontent fully alive in one's spirit? An unwed woman has no fixed and proper sphere unless she makes a worthy place for herself in some one of the many occupations that are looked down upon only when followed by unskilled workers. It is our present object to suggest, not to direct or counsel women who desire or need to earn money. We do not hint, because it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to say just what ought to be done by women; but we would strongly urge that they can and should avoid idleness, no matter how large their individual resources may be. Especially should single women who have passed their early youth decline support from kinsmen to whom they can return no adequate equivalent.

Dependence is belittling to the character of both men and women. The wife is not a dependant. If she is an intelligent, conscientious person, she does as much to maintain the family in her capacity of careful dispenser and purveyor as does the husband who provides. Except in cases of illness or special misfortune, she is a squanderer who neglects the house and strays afield to earn a little money. When this is really necessary, and she, weighing her earnings carefully against the losses caused by the fact that she is less a housekeeper and homemaker for being a provider, finds the balance in favor of her toil, all is well or, at least, as well as such unfortunate conditions will permit. Of such women we would not be understood to speak in this connection, but of her who is not willing to wed solely to gain support.

*La femme passée*, whose sole personal value was her youth and prettiness, and whose capital has been eaten up by time, is a pitiable object if idle and poor. She has prepared herself for no occupation while the springtime of her life was quickly passing, having had no ambition but to wed; and she now finds this hope a broken reed—all her stakes are irretrievably lost. Sad, indeed, is such a fate if she is compelled to become self-dependent or to eat the bread of charity. Provident parents arrange with religious faithfulness that this need not happen to their daughters, the girls' aptitudes or talents indicating at an early age which direction their training should take in order to provide the surest safeguard against possible need.

Sometimes the strongest quality in a young woman's nature is her fondness for children. All that she has to give and the best there is in her heart to do is bounded by child life. If she does not marry, personal maternity is not hers; but in vicarious motherhood she is almost happy. She who ministers to the children of her kinspeople or friends is not a dependant. She earns all that she is likely to receive; she has, in fact, a money value in the position for which she was, by Nature, especially endowed.

"A child's nurse? No; it is too menial," exclaims a woman who is ambitious only for the possession of money. But by no means can such an occupation be called menial. It is the highest calling next that of mother; and sometimes it is, through special gifts, even more lofty than the mother's position with regard to her children. It is ideal, if only looked at from a high point of view. It is an almost divine self-effacement—a ministration which money cannot pay for, but for which money or its equivalent is taken. Indeed, were not some payment accepted for such services, the burden of obligation would be too heavy for those who receive the blessing which vicarious mothers bring to their helpless little ones. Thus, the true nurse is not only self-forgetful but self-supporting. She eats not a crumb received from charity.

It is in the care of child-life that *la femme passée* of a certain maternal temperament finds the most tolerable compensation for the waning of her butterfly days and the decadence of those small social recognitions that were mostly due to the freshness of girlhood. This evanescent empire having slipped away from her, the tender hands of children caress her into semi-content, compelling her to forget sometimes that she has missed her aim or, perhaps, that she was not properly equipped for the battle of life. And this brings us to the question, "Why should not women earn money?" True, this was man's privilege and duty as long as there were no more women than could or would become wives; but that day is past. It is useless to tilt at stern facts, for they cannot be moved