

at work in their particular employment ; they must feel that it is their duty to strive to prevent such tendencies as are inimical to their welfare and consequently to the welfare of the human race ; and they must seek to discover what are the best means of bringing this about. To the attainment of such knowledge much education is yet necessary ; and in the giving and gaining of this education, much individual self-sacrifice may be needed. "Looking not each of you on his own things, but each of you also on the things of others." In the struggle for existence women must recognize that, whatever they are or may become intellectually, physically they are not and never will be men ; and in seeking occupations, unlimited competition with men is not desirable. This fact is often lost sight of by those who, regardless of results, urge the indiscriminate opening of all employments to women. It is often disregarded by the women themselves, who seek and submit to employment for which they are or evidently become physically incapable. True, restrictive measures of any kind are not apt to be popular, but they may nevertheless be expedient. To debar women from particular employments or to place certain restrictions on them seems to be a step backwards instead of in advance ; but it may be so only in seeming.

A girl who had lost her health, and finally was obliged to give up her situation on account of continuous application to work, which, after some years' experience, proved beyond her strength, said to me, "We do not know at the time and do not believe that we are over-exerting ourselves." Isolated cases of women having shown themselves able to stand a severe physical strain cannot refute the fact that a vast majority of women are of weaker mould than men, and that over-work has in many cases been the cause of a life of semi-invalidism. It is nothing short of criminal to permit, let alone to exact, an undue exertion of physical strength from women ; and it is the duty of the Government to prevent it. That women are willing, nay, even anxious sometimes, to attempt hard physical labour, is no reason for their being permitted to do so.

Another result of the indiscriminate and extensive employment of women is increasing danger to the life of the home. It is generally conceded that the family is the great safe-guard of a nation's prosperity, and anything which would endanger it cannot but be looked on with disfavour and even alarm. What does the displacing of men by the competition of women at lower wages mean if not that the former often find employment more difficult to obtain or less profitable than formerly, and are less able to provide means of maintenance for a family ? Man was intended by nature to be the bread-winner of the family ; and if family life is to be maintained such he must remain : so that the persistent usurpation of his place by unfair competition must mean eventually a danger to the continuance of the home. Let women, when they wish to compete with men, meet them on fair ground by demanding equal remuneration.

It is true that under the present condition of things many women find employment of some kind necessary for their support, and for such let the field of labour be as wide as is consistent with their physical ability. But it is the duty of those who accept low wages because they are not entirely dependent on themselves, to remember that in so doing they are making it more difficult for those who really are obliged to support themselves to obtain remunerative employment.

In discussing the occupations of women in this paper no reference has been made to certain learned professions or other like careers which of late years have been entered by women along with men. Such occupations have not been considered as coming within the scope of the present enquiry, since they are independent of any legislative control, and questions regarding competitive wages or low wages do not arise with regard to them. Whether they ought to be included within woman's sphere of labour or not seems largely a matter of custom and prejudice. If the entering of such professions or the holding of such positions can tend in any way to aid in the general improvement of the women wage-earners as a whole, that of itself is a sufficient reason why women should do so.

Whatever hopes for the future exist among the well-wishers for women wage-earners in Ontario, much can be done in the immediate present for their benefit in the way of