

## 17. Woman's Sphere.

By One of the Sex.

### The Food We Eat.

Shall we eat more than two meals a day is a question which requires a little consideration on our part before we proceed to discuss the dinner and how it shall be prepared, and of what it shall consist. First to be thought about is, as always, what are the individual circumstances of the case? Are you dwellers on a farm? If so, this time of year, there is not much work for your men folks to do, and it would be well for them to reduce the number of their meals, as they are not consuming as much material as they do when in the harvest field, and even yourself, if you are the busy housewife it will be better if you will not crowd your stomach, but eat only enough to sustain yourself in health. If you are working in a factory, or in a shop, and are obliged to have breakfast at six o'clock in the morning, and you could eat three meals a day, only the first one ought to be so light that it could scarcely be called a meal. There are very few occupations during the winter months which would justify a person in eating more than two meals. Now, whether you will agree with me or not, I want to tell you the truth, and that is that this matter of eating one, two, or half a dozen meals in one day is simply a matter of habit, and it can be regulated to suit the notion of the individual who wishes to take himself in hand. The man who eats, as a certain family living near me do, five meals a day would assure you that it was just as impossible for him to get along on four meals as the one who is now eating three meals would feel it impossible to get along on two. The stomach is an organ which is extremely sensitive to habit. You can adopt a certain mode of eating, and if it is a change from the old custom, for a few days the stomach will protest. But by and by the normally healthy organ will adjust itself to the changed condition, and go on about its work the best way it may. You will hear some thoughtless person say, "Oh, well, I am not going to give up good things to eat, nor cut myself down in the number of meals, for what is the use of living if one has to continually deny himself?" Such remarks cause a sensation of mixed pity and contempt in the mind of a listener who lives for something beside guzzling and gobbling, and a great pity is felt for the weak minded individual who casts away so recklessly his time and chance upon this earth. If you are a person with an ambition above your waist line, and if you feel that you are here on this earth for a divine purpose, I assume that you will be quite ready to ask yourself, what is the best thing for me and my family? Our circumstances are so and so, and now when and what shall we eat to be healthy, full of vigor and able to make the very most of our time upon this earth? In the winter time, it must be very unusual circumstances which would require you to eat more than two meals a day, one at eight in the morning, and the other at three or four o'clock in the afternoon; and then, let me beg of you not to eat between your meals. After a day or two you will find that you do not get hungry, and the slight headache caused at first by

the change in your meal times will disappear to return no more until you go back to the three meal system. At least five hours should be allowed between meals and seven is much better.

### The Clothes We Wear.

#### FOOT WEAR.

Is there any one thing more unsatisfactory to the woman who finds herself getting along in years than the aggravation of getting shoes that will not either slop all over her feet or pinch into excruciating misery the corn which has at last appeared upon her once unblemished foot? It is very difficult to get shoes to suit you, unless you have that narrow, long and rather low insteped foot which all the shoemakers seem to have in mind when making shoes. But I want to tell you a secret, if you do not already know it—the whole difficulty in getting shoes to fit lies in the width. No, I will not say the whole difficulty, for the maker of the shoe has something to do with it as well. But remember the name of the shoes that fit and of those which did not fit, and then be sure and get the shoes wide or narrow enough to be quite comfortable and you are all right. If you can wear a No. 3 shoe, if it is E, E. width, that does not argue that you can decrease the width of your shoe if you choose to take longer shoes to suit your foot to the prevailing fashion. The width of a shoe does not increase proportionately with the length, remember that. And a narrow shoe, even it is much too long for you, will just surely develop either a hard or a soft corn. Therefore, learn your width of shoe and then never for the sake of convenience or style allow yourself to be coaxed into getting one letter narrower. As to the stocking, it is far more comfortable to most people to wear cotton hose all winter than it is to put on cashmere or even heavier hose. If the woolen hose are decided upon, I hope you went at once and got a pair of shoes at least one size longer and quite as wide as your old ones. If you did not, you have my sympathy.

#### UNDERWEAR FOR CHILDREN.

A little child, and it wasn't a girl, strange to say, was brought to a doctor the other day with a hacking cough and a pale, listless face, and the mother was greatly distressed lest incipient consumption was manifesting itself in the once romping form of her darling. It didn't take the shrewd physician long to unravel the mystery, and to find out where the seat of all the difficulty lay. In a very few minutes he had undressed the child, and found upon its body a pair of stiff, starched corsets, which are called in the shops underwaists, but which have bones and heavy double seams, with cords and starch to make the whole snug (God save the mark!) and which had shrunk, but which the mother had kept on the child because she did not wish just then to buy others. These waists by frequent washings and the natural growth of the child had become at least two inches too small for the child, and incipient consumption had set in; but with the removal of the deadly pressure and care as to diet and exercise in the open air, the child was on the high road to recovery. I was so horrified by this incident that I thought I would ask my friendly mother readers if they have put those health destroying corsets upon the precious forms of their

children, and if they have, how much too small they have grown with the washings of this winter? It does not take an hour to make a stout plain waist to fasten drawer and petticoats to, and when you make, give at least two inches more than the loose waist measurement of the child.

### Our Children.

#### THE INFANT

Our dear little baby has been dressed in warm and loose clothing, and the next question to consider is, when and how shall he be fed? It is somewhat disputed point with the best physicians as to whether baby shall be put to the breast directly he is dressed or shall be laid down in a soft, cosy crib to rest after all the unusual handling. Some say that it is an excellent thing for the mother to have the child at once. Others think the child is weary with all the unusual handling, and it should be allowed all the time which it will take of its own accord to rest before being put to work again. And it is work for the infant to nurse everyone knows that who has ever seen an infant with the beads of perspiration standing upon its brow as it tries, or even after it has found and appropriated its source of food. This question is one which no one but the mother or wise nurse can solve. If the mother be healthy and the child robust, there is no doubt in my mind that it will be better for both to rest awhile, at least until nature gives the child notice that its tiny stomach demands food. And then? Well, let the baby alone. First, last, and all the time, let me urge upon you, let the baby alone. Be sure that the crib is warm, that all the pillows, blankets, sheets, mattresses, even in the middle of summer I say, be sure they are all comfortably warm. A chilled baby is on the high road to colic and other troubles. You cannot be too careful about this warming, and never allow some one else to see after this if you are the nurse. It is not good for baby to be put in the bed with its mother. For a number of reasons; first, if baby is put low enough in the bed to be kept properly warm, the air which will be breathed by the child is poisonous in the extreme. You would not thing of giving the baby rotten food to eat; why should you give it rotten air to breathe? It is just as cruel and as dangerous to baby life and health. Another reason is that baby takes up a good share of the bed, and the mother needs all of the bed to turn her weary body upon. Again, if the mother turns about, ten chances to one (especially after baby begins to get more to eat than it should have), baby is disturbed by the jar and motion of the bed, and at once begins to nestle for food, and being nothing but an enigma, it fancies that as soon as disturbed it requires food, and so if the mother be of the silly kind who thinks that every cry must be stilled by nursing, at once the worst of habits is set up and baby has begun his life upon earth with very discouraging prospects. Let the child sleep as long as ever it will. I know one excellent nurse who always puts a baby down upon one side or the other, and then after an hour's sleep she goes and turns the baby over. It took me a long while to discover why this should seem to rest the baby, as it did, for I could see no reason why a baby should be turned