

SPENDING THE FAMILY INCOME

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Spending the Family Income by S. Agnes Donham

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BY
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CALIFORNIA

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TO AMBROSE
ALBONIA

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO MY PUPILS AT THE GARLAND SCHOOL FOR HOME MAKING
1913-1920

IN WHOSE INTEREST I FOUND THE INCENTIVE TO
DEVELOP THE MATERIAL

THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

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PREFACE

Years ago Mrs. Ellen H. Richards said, "There are to-day many temptations to spend for things attractive in themselves, but not necessary to the effective life." This is equally true of the present day and the purpose of this book is to assist those who wish to plan their spending systematically, giving each department of household or personal expenditure such careful consideration that they may be sure they have resisted the temptation to spend for those things which are merely attractive in themselves without adding to the real values of life.

It is not the size of the income so much as the way in which it is spent which determines whether we are successfully obtaining those things which we believe to be most worth while in life. Too many people live according to the conventional standards of their social set without consciously defining their own standards, counting the cost of maintaining them and balancing the cost with the return in "the durable satisfactions of life."

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Living by a carefully made budget means using such intelligence in the spending of one's income that first the necessities and then those desires which are most worth while are obtained.

The successful budget is the one which neglects none of the physical necessities, gives none of them an undue portion of the whole, and provides maximum amount of opportunity for the development of the mental and spiritual needs of life.

Satisfaction with the results of our spending will come only when we feel that a fair proportion of our desires have been gratified. The quickest way to such gratification is through planning our spending, keeping our main purpose always in view.

The family which is saving for a home will spend for other things with greater care than the family without such a goal. The child who is saving for a bicycle will find it comparatively easy to deny himself an ice-cream cone. Both the home and the bicycle are obtained more quickly if all spending is done with the home or bicycle in mind.

This book represents no attempt to solve individual problems in the distribution and use of income. The purpose is rather to state and discuss the principles which should guide the spending of income, whether it is large or small. The author is convinced that no one can successfully solve the

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financial problems of a home except the people who direct the spending of the money within the home itself. Suggestions may be made which will, if applied to the individual problem, prove helpful, but so many and so diverse are the personal elements which enter into the arrangement of life for each family that actual decision can be made only from the inside.

There will be many who will wonder why this or that division of household business has not been touched, but the book is not planned to cover the business of the home. The intention has been to confine the subject matter to budget making.

If there is help in these pages for others, it is because of the fact that the experiences and opinions of many have been studied and absorbed during years of lecturing and teaching. The source is not to be traced except by accident, and if any fellow worker recognizes an apparently direct quotation, apologies are due to him. If in the constant rearrangement of notes, quotation marks have disappeared it is a compliment which it is hoped is not too subtle to win his appreciation. There may be places where quotations are made from Mrs. Richard's "Cost of Living Series" without due credit. If so it is with pride rather than apology, for Mrs. Richard's thoughts and conclusions were so fine,