Notes: Women and industry

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H. C. McComas, of Princeton, has an article in Scribner's October 26th which hints at a scientific reason for the failure of many women to succeed in industrial life. McComas does not find it an inferiority of brain. Masculine and feminine brain are of the same piece, and he concluded a celebrated anatomist, who has dissected hundreds of brains, as saying that he cannot tell whether the one under his knife belongs to a flapper or a captain of industry. The brain fibre is the same in man or woman but it seems to be his idea that when the young male and female animal begin to work they, from the start, follow distinctly different lines. This seems to depend upon the difference in the secretion of the glands. This point can be developed with actual illustrations from experiments that have been made. The young female animal grows into one kind of physical structure, the male into another. As far back as we know anything about man, the female has had the same kind of physical organization and it is this organization, coupled with her glands, which seem to have developed in her certain instincts, distinct from masculine instincts. The point for us is to show that the young female is not interested in mechanical operations. It is the woman side of things that she is instinctively absorbed in. This is a sound physiological basis for our inquiry as to why women do not take the same absorbed interest in industrial life that men do. They are not made that way. All this fits in with my old thesis that the woman is superior in what you may call the clerical side of modern industry. She is a better office man than the man. Her natural inclinations grow in it. It is suitable to her. The man deteriorates under it, becomes more or less petty, a abnormal, philandering. He needs a more robust kind of activity.