

■ The writer is a progressive Filipino woman.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN AS PROFESSIONALS

In the past three decades since the Filipino women acquired the right of suffrage, we have been faced with increasing burdens demanding from us resolute and positive action.

Today women must not only manage the home but also help support it. And in the competitive world in which we find ourselves, we have become so engrossed cutting a path to success that many of our loveliest traditions are being trampled or at least ignored in the rush. Daily the signs are growing more ominous that if we don't watch out and temper our acts with the family ideal of devotion to virtue and to home, the 20th century race might turn us women into cold and calculating efficiency machines!

There is the ever present threat for women today to compete with men as if they were men and not ladies —

and many believe that this is the root of many problems in our society today. As co-partners of men we, too, are entitled to lead just as men are. But we must lead as women, and not as men — for we may be coequals, but certainly we are not identical.

In the old days, women were the anchor and men the seafaring wanderers. Today there are probably as many women as men who must leave the threshold of home to assume a professional role. Where there are male doctors, there are lady doctors. Where there are male lawyers, there are almost as many women lawyers.

Where there are male engineers there are female engineers — and the same goes for architects, dentists, business administrators, commerce graduates, journalists, musicians and other professionals.

The economic demands are such that women have had to leave their homes to help share in the economic burdens of the family. This is something that we cannot help if we are to adequately feed, clothe and educate our children.

This being the case, the challenge is greater than it has ever been before for the women to remain professional ladies despite all the growing demands foisted upon them by the modern age.

To be a professional lady is to be a gentle and charming person. To be so, it is imperative to be humble and not vain. The advice of a psychologist to women who would crusade for a cause is: "Stay in the group. Maintain your ideals firmly but unobtrusively. By and by your quiet, constructive example and your wholesome influence will win supporters to your banner!"

To be wise, a professional must draw from her vast store of learned facts com-

bined with her experience. She must use science to guide her in decision-making. She must use management methods to produce wise action. Above all, she must learn to develop a keen knowledge of psychology to enable her to anticipate reactions to the things she says, the things she does, and the decisions she makes. Tact and understanding follow when one has become a good psychologist.

Add to humility and restraint a wise and tactful concern for the reactions of other people and you have all the ingredients to charm and wisdom. Fortify them with a big dose of character and you have not only a woman but a lady — a professional lady.

A lady of character is one who can firmly decline wrong-doing. She may not say a loud "no" but her acts in repudiating any injustice or dishonesty will make her meaning clear. — *Louise Orendain.*