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LIGHTENING THE LABOR OF THE HOUSEWIFE.

By Mabel Fiske-Bassett.

If the discontented housewife, who is so weary of the same never-ending drudgery that she scorns the very thought of it, would seek to turn her mind into new channels regarding it, she would soon find herself greatly benefited thereby. Indifference and thoughtlessness toward any cause will never bring success. Such immediate trouble may not result, as it did in the case of an old colored woman of the South upon being suddenly removed to a Northern home, but in the end, as the years roll on, misery of a serious character is very apt to befall the unthinking housewife. If she is compelled to persist in monotonous drudgery throughout a long life she may find herself, while still young, a weary, disheartened old woman, broken in health and unattractive to everyone.

The colored mammy in question had just arrived from the South to serve a lady living in Philadelphia. As old mammy was altogether ignorant of modern conveniences in the present-day apartment house, her mistress took pains to explain everything to her. Then the lady of the house left Philadelphia for two weeks, giving the servant entire charge of her home.

"How did you get along, Mammy?" was the first question she asked on her return.

"De fines' ever," old mammy replied. "An' dat air gas stove—oh, my! Why, do you know, Miss Richards, dat fire ain't gone out yit."

Instead of thinking of household duties only when they are thrust upon one, let the housewife study them seriously for a while. Let her realize that the subject is worthy of her highest consideration, and admitting it to be so, immediately try to find means of lightening the tasks, and also make a careful study of all the labor-saving devices now to be had.

Economy of motion, she will find, is the secret by which she can save her strength and thereby save herself.

"How can I do my work with a minimum of effort?" she should ask herself repeatedly, and then in every detail of the labor seek its answer constantly. Not a few simple means will present themselves to her mind on investigating the subject. Pneumatic cleaners for floors, walls and furniture, will greatly reduce the cleaning task. The washing machine she will find is another helper which she cannot afford to be without. A small high stool for kitchen use will be found indispensable to her tired feet. It should be light weight, so as to require little exertion in lifting it about. Then when doing work she should take it to the kitchen sink, the table and the stove. She will often find herself sitting for 15 or 20 minutes at a time. The fireless cooker is a great convenience. While it is cooking the dinner, the woman may be away from the kitchen for hours at a time. Leaving the roast and the vegetables to its care, she can spend an hour or two shopping, mending by the pleasont window of the living-room, or what is still better for herself, diverting her mind in the library by an interesting book or magazine, or calling on a friend.

When she has exhausted her own resources let her turn to the advertisement pages of the best magazines. There she will find an array of labor-saving devices that will surely surprise her. No room of he rhouse will lack attention on these obliging pages, but naturally, the kitchen may receive the largest space, since it is always the housekeeper's principal workshop.

Anna O'Hagan, in Good Housekeeping, has furnished some valuable suggestions along this line. She shows us what may be done in a country home, where city conveniences are few. "Six months ago," she writes, "I pand a brief visit to my old friend, the Graceful Hostess.

The busy woman's dress is of no little importance, nowadays, when such a variety of pretty housedresses array themselves before one, it is an easy matter to make a suitable choice. By this is meant a dress that will be convenient for housework. The one-piece gowns having low neck and short sleeves are by far the prettiest and most comfortable.

Put your whole heart into the work, you poor, tired housewife, and you will be rewarded for the temporary effort it will cause.

THE NEW CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.

The real "Christmas Spirit" will work every day in the year. It will not allow children to go hungry, and men and women to continue workless, nor young womanhood to sell its honor upon the streets.

Somewhere in the heart of the Divine is a wonderful, beautiful plan. That plan is to expand the sphere of the Home-mother into a part of the great universal Motherhood of the race. Little by little the individual mother is being taught that the duties which have belonged to her kind since the world began have gradually ceased to be confined to her own home and family. Women are beginning to see that the world needs a collective mother. Hitherto, they have been taught that their highest duty was to fit their own children for the world; now, as one noble modern mother has put it, "The time has come when mothers must fit the world for their children."

Into my mind comes the portrait of a mother that I knew in the small town where I grew up. According to our old standards she was a model mother. She gave up her whole life to fitting her only son to step into the honored place held by his father in the community. She seldom left her house. She never attended a club or meeting of any kind. She was interested in absolutely nothing outside of the comfort and welfare of her immediate family. Recently I made a visit to that town. Outside the parlor window I saw a shabby, hopeless wreck of manhood, badly mowing the grass. He had a familiar look, and I asked who he was. It was difficult to connect this besotted wreck with the sleek, well-groomed young man, once the most promising in the town. He had gone down under the wretched inadequacy of his character. There was no strength to withstand the temptations which the state permits to exist, and which his devoted mother had never regarded as ameliorable. She had not fitted the world for her child, and although an "ideal mother," she died of a broken heart because she had failed in her divine mission. She had failed because she thought it confined to the small space limited by the walls of her home.

When the women of tomorrow have gained complete mastery over themselves, when they have achieved poise and peace, when they are liberated from the four famous boundaries of women's lives, "ailments, servants, clothes and gossip," they will look out upon the world from the topmost deck of the ship of life instead of from the port hole on the water line. They will see that constructive social work for the whole human family is the obligation laid upon the mothers of the race. It will give no impetus to charity, but will mark a departure from charity. There will come a substitution of practical plans for the elimination of causes that make charity necessary.

Indeed, I think that when the world has conquered the art of right living and has gone seriously to work to solve the human problems that are keeping vast numbers of people in misery today, the most exalted "Christmas Spirit" will manifest itself on election day, when men and women will go to the polls together, not to vote temporary comforts to the poor, but so to regulate human affairs that there will be "bread for all, and roses, too." Every family should be able to buy its own dinner and to fill its own stockings on Christmas eve.—Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, in December Today's.

BETTER PAY FOR WOMEN WORKERS.

At a meeting recently held at Peoria Ill., Miss Agnes Nestor, president of the Chicago Trade Union League, said:

"Much has been said about the living wage for the working girl, meaning by this a wage barely sufficient for her to live. We, of the Trade Union League, wish more than this. We set a high standard and want the worker to receive not merely what will cover her necessities, but a wage that will give her joy in life, leisure and opportunities for self-improvement. We demand that she receive an equivalent for what she puts into the industry.

"It is the custom for the employer about to hire a woman, to ask if she lives at home. This really means that the employer intends to pay less to her if she lives with her family, because her support is partly met. Why should she receive less? As a matter of fact, that girl usually contributes her own wages to the support. Should she not receive just what she earns by putting her working power into the industry?

"The remedy for these conditions of unfair rewards for work is trade unionism. Only through the trade union can we hope to get what is rightly coming to us."

The Women on the Ark.

Noah embarked.

"This is the only safe boat for a suffragist," he boasted; "the police can't take her off it when we land."—New York Sun.

It's harder for a "near" man to spend money than for a generous one to make it.

HOUSEHOLD HELPS

A small sewing bag with needles, thread, thimble, etc., and hooks, eyes and buttons is a great convenience to the occupant of the guest chamber.

To clean a brass plate without soiling the woodwork around it, cut a piece of cardboard the shape of the plate and place it around it when cleaning.

Clean white enameled furniture by dissolving one tablespoonful of baking soda in a pint of warm water. Saturate a soft cloth and wash the furniture.—Dallas News.

Two tablespoonfuls of paraffin mixed with a bucket of boiling water with which tables are to be scrubbed will make them beautifully white and smooth.—Cedar Rapids Gazette.

THE MONOTONY OF WORK

By Mabel Fiske-Bassett.

There are hordes of women toiling daily over work at which their natures revolt and against which their brains cry out at the hideous, torturing monotony. We have all met these unhappy women. The girl with the seriously resigned face, the nervous, fretting girl, the overbearing girl whose expression plainly says, "My life is so miserable I shall have some redress by making it unpleasant for others when I can," the poor worn little woman whose face declares all hope has left her life, and the courageous one who constantly forces her lips to smile but who cannot conceal their quivering. These, and still others, show the various types of women who are daily plodding through some sort of work so distasteful, so uncongenial to their natures that the effort is sapping their very lives.

What is the cause of this pathetic condition into which so many are plunged? It is apparent at once. The whole trouble is caused by the majority of women, thrown upon the world to make their living, being utterly unprepared for it. The blame should be chiefly laid at the parents' door. In training their children, especially girls, parents must exercise more thought and intelligent care. There are certain American parents, believing they are looking out for the future welfare of their children, who make some effort to discover the bent of a boy's mind and develop him along these lines.

"My boy must make his own way in the world, and I shall do what I can to fit him for a congenial vocation," the father wisely declares. Accordingly he sets about educating him to the best of his ability. But with the girl a different view is taken. The parents seldom try to fit her for caring for herself. They only think of protecting her against the ills of life, not preparing her for them.

Stil another class of parents do not trouble themselves at all with the training of their children. They send them to school more because the law exacts it than from a desire to see them educated, and if William or Mary does not make the progress that he or she should, the parents calmly aver there's no help for it. "Some children will not study, you know. So if they won't it isn't my fault," is their lame excuse. Hence the child grows up ignorant, aimless, discontented, as undesirable to socitey as a weed is to a garden.

The girl of thoughtless, indifferent parents, and the girl having lived a sheltered life, meet in the various fields of work with the same result—an almost unbearable loathing over the monotony of their uncongenial employment. The girl, for instance, of an artistic temperament settled for life at an office desk. How the morning detail of filing away papers racks her nerves, the deadly horror of that ever present phrase ringing in her ears at the beginning of each letter she must write, "Referring to yours of the, etc.," that hopeless mass of envelopes awaiting addresses, the enormous stacks of cards to be indexed, the many other wearing details of the work. We know her feeling and we pity her.

But the most pitiful part of it all is that such women must continue at their tasks simply because their minds are unprepared for better things. The average woman, unfortunately, is easily discouraged. She falls into a groove through necessity and through necessity or timidity she is loath to abandon it. A man having any ambition whatever, works his way up and out of the situation, but a woman will toil on day after day, year after year, performing the work she loathes, because she is not fitted to do what she likes. It is certainly a pitiable sight, one worthy of serious thought.

It is possible to escape this situation, girls. The effort now devolves upon you, as it is too late for your parents to correct their mistakes. Awaken to the realization that it is only you who can now prepare yourself for better things. If you begin reasoning your way out you will come to see that most work for the business girl, like the clerical sort, for instance, soon becomes mechanical to a great degree, thus leaving the mind and vitality free to pursue other and more difficult things. Herein lies the one redeeming feature of such work. If you have a literary, a musical, an artistic taste of any sort, or a bent of any kind, you will find yourself able to pursue it when the office work is done. In this day of almost numberless teachers of every sort, of evening schools offering instruction upon every subject, of free libraries and of correspondence schools for those not located centrally, there is not an avenue closed to any field of activity. So it is altogether feasible for you to educate yourself in the hours not devoted to work. Give an hour or two every evening to it, or if you cannot do so much, devote two or three nights in the week to it. Have the determination fixed firmly within you to persevere against all obstacles and you will find more spare moments for study than you now think possible.

While advising thus the writer is reminded of a polite and dapper little Japanese elevator boy with whom she went to the top floor of one of the city hotels the other day. In a corner of the elevator nearest to him lay two books, one an English grammar, the other a book on civil service. They told a pretty story to the writer's mind of the courage and determination of the little brown man.

"Well, I can't do that way," I hear some weary woman exclaim. "When evening comes I'm too exhausted to do anything but rest and amuse myself."

If you are in fairly good health, my poor woman, if you eat sufficient nourishing food and take the right amount of daily exercise, you will not be exhausted when the day's work is done. Furthermore, do you not know that occupying the mind is one of the surest ways of resting the body? A certain famous woman's definition of recreation is: "Variety of work, but always work." This woman was recently urged by a friend who thought she was overtaxing herself, to rest.

"Rest," she replied, "why I should get tired if I rested."

She was right to a great extent. Change of occupation rests the woman in health more than idleness could.

Exclaim with Susan Coolige:

"Every day is a fresh beginning,
Every morn is a world made new."

Cease regretting the yesterdays and think only of the possibilities of today, for this day contains the only hours of your life that are truly yours. As you use them so you will mold your life. Plan the day with method and see that each hour answers to its appointed task. And bear ever in mind, that no quality is of so much value to one in his plight as the unwavering determination to fight your way out of it.

It is said of an Indian that when he loses his way he never admits the fact. He only says, "Indian no lost; Indian here; wigwam lost." So, like the Indian, refuse to harbor fear or discouragement. Then what delight you will take in your work! Life will surely possess a new charm for you. The knowledge of ever-growing power to place yourself where you wish to be ,and the consciousness of a steady movement onward and upward, the buoyancy of it, the pleasure of it is genuine. Choosing the right vocation, one really to your taste, have no fear but that success will crown your unremitting efforts. Then you can say as did Phillips Brooks, "Duty makes us do things well, but love makes us do them beautifully."

INTERNATIONAL SEX INVESTIGATION.

Interest in sex hygiene is by no means confined to this country. The Berlin correspondent of The Journal of the American Medical Association reports the organization of an international society for sex investigation in Berlin November 16. The organizations which are active at present in the field of sex investigation are chiefly concerned with practical and humanitarian purposes, such as hygiene, educational and legal, social and moral reform. The new society is to devote itself to a purely scientific investigation of sex problems. For this reason the man at the head of the society is not a physician, but Professor J. Wolff, who is professor of economics at the technical high school in Charlottenburg. It is also a notable fact that a professor of theology in the Berlin University belongs to the executive committee. In the meeting for organization he emphasized the fact that he hoped for advantages from the new society in three fields, psychology, economics and history.

Closely related to this work is the action of the association of German statisticians which has determined to secure information with reference to the number of venereal patients at present under medical treatment. As experience has shown and as every practitioner knows, such an investigation will not give the entire number of patients, but the knowledge obtained from the large number of cases available will be of value. A committee appointed by the association in conjunction with the executive committee of the German association for combating venereal diseases has elaborated a plan by which it is to be determined how many persons with venereal disease were under medical treatment in the period from November 20 to December 20, 1913, inclusive. This is determined by including in a table the number of patients visiting the office in this time in such a manner, that each patient is reckoned only once. The cases treated in the public hospitals are collected directly by the statistical bureau.

He Won.

Mrs. Bacon—What's the matter with Tommie's face and hands? They are badly swollen.

Mrs. Egbert—You see, they offered a prize at his school for the boy who would bring in the greatest number of dead wasps, and Tommie won.—Yonkers Statesman.