

Wastes in Leisure

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IF one were to believe the captions appearing in recent magazines commenting on women, one would be forced to believe that a modern classification of women is "Giggling Girls," "Flippant Flappers," "Lazy Thirties," "Idle Forties" and "Incapable Fifties."

We women resent such a classification, but if we do not think more seriously of our leisure and its use, it may be deserved.

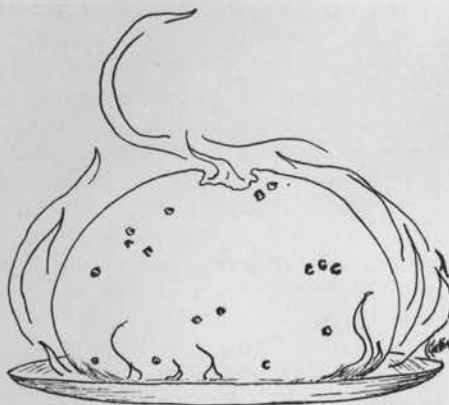
At first thought, we do not admit that we have any leisure. When we count the number of things we have to do in the course of a day, it seems that leisure is a far-fetched term when applied to any active homemaker and especially to the farm woman who has the outside chores, such as washing the separator and taking care of the chickens, besides her regular housework. We have been freed from many of the tasks which our mothers and grandmothers performed. We no longer spin and weave, we no longer dip candles. Many of us have stopped cleaning lamps and even churning. What are we doing with the time saved? We all insist that we are busier than ever in spite of having been freed from these tasks.

Interesting studies recently made at the Agricultural Experiment Station of Idaho show how the average woman spends her time. Her work in preparation of food consumes 14.5 percent of her time; the house, 9.4 percent; clothing, 7.4 percent; family, 3.7 percent; management, 1.3 percent; other work, 3.7 percent, and miscellaneous tasks, 1.2 percent. But she still has 3.3 percent of her time for personal care, 36.9 percent for sleep and rest and 18.7 percent for leisure. With the exception of the outside tasks, there proved to be very little difference in the expenditure of time of the farm and town women.

If we do not have some time for leisure, it is time to call a halt and go over our daily schedules to see where the fault lies. Some women do drag around the kitchen all day, but others, with more to do, find time for trips to town and to neighborhood club meetings. Perhaps we do not plan our work efficiently, perhaps our

kitchen arrangement is at fault, perhaps we need better equipment instead of the old-time hand methods of doing things. Certainly every woman owes it to herself and her family to have some time for something else besides routine work.

Leisure does not necessarily mean just folding our hands and doing nothing.



ing. This type of leisure, which is really like the rests in the music score, should have its place in our schedule. It is worth while from the standpoint of physical relaxation alone and should be provided for in every daily schedule. Some one has said: "With us leisure has been a melodramatic escape into excitement, or a moralistic flight into self-improvement. We oscillate between night clubs and outlines of culture."

With all our love of excitement, an increasing amount of our leisure is spent in a passive way from a physical standpoint. Someone has suggested that we are approaching an "arm chair millenium" and when we stop to think that we are witnessing football games, drama, grand opera and the best of music at the turn of the dials of our radios, and that when we seek amusement away from home we find it either in watching a handful of men playing a game, or in the thrills of a movie, we realize just how far we have progressed toward this Utopia. With the marvels of television just around the corner, we wonder "what next."

What are some of the constructive uses of our leisure time?

Certainly there should be a place

for physical recreation in our programs. We all need some actual physical play. Heart trouble, abdominal disorders and obesity are serious handicaps, which would be very largely done away with if we gave sufficient thought to our physical requirements. We women do get a good deal of walking in our daily household tasks. Recent figures show that a woman walks a mile an hour doing ordinary housework, and that simple meals require for preparation and serving 4.5 hours and 2.8 miles walking each day, while the more elaborate ones requires 8.3 hours per day with 6.8 miles of walking.

Although we do walk much in our housework, it is still worth while to have some definite exercises which tone up the whole system. These are much more fun if they are done by the whole family.

More meals should be eaten out-of-doors, perhaps in a corner of the yard, perhaps in a picturesque spot in the pasture. One difficulty is that picnic weather and the busy season often come at the same time, but we all can have occasional simple picnics if we want them.

We have a popular misconception that leisure must all be amusement. Leisure need not all be of the hilarious type. A change of occupation is often more refreshing. We do not need to recover from it. George Batten Cutten has a most stimulating book in which he emphasizes that our civilization depends upon the quality of our leisure. He feels that there is more danger in being untrained for leisure than for money spending. Wonderful civilizations of the past, such as that of Rome, have failed because of the wrong use of leisure and with the new pleasures and luxuries possible today, our own is at stake.

A part of our leisure should be spent in reading. Even if the mending has to wait, every one of us should spend some time each day reading. The world has been progressing so rapidly that we women who have been busy rearing our families for the last few years need to get up-to-date. It is a

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I won't ever have any use for this unit.

Kids are too hard to teach anything. "You see they were very frank, which was just what I wanted.

"As a whole the unit was hard to teach. To work up interest was hard when the question uppermost in their minds was, "When are we going to cook?" A few times they responded so well that they did their own planning and work with very few directions from me. This was true of the party problems. I think I can do better next time."

Let's all do that!

CORRECTION: In the November issue, the section on "What's Doing in Vocational Home Economics in Iowa," through a mistake was changed to read, "At Iowa State."

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(Continued from page 2)

pathetic sight, but all too common, to find a mother whose children have outgrown her. She has slaved for them, putting in hours of drudgery in baking for them and mending for them, watching over them in their illnesses, spending the countless hours in doing for them the things which only a mother knows about, but she has failed to keep up with their growing interests. Now that they are grown, she is figuratively pushed back into the corner. They still accept her services, but she has no share in their real life and interests.

Our clubs offer wonderful opportunities for the constructive use of our leisure time. Two-thirds of the women belong to at least one club. It is safe to say that from the standpoint of the pleasurable intercourse with other women, practically all clubs serve a beneficial purpose. But most of us have enough other social intercourse that we should expect more from our clubs than spending a pleasurable afternoon discussing those who do not happen to be members. Just at present our clubs are in the balance and many are found wanting.

Women's clubs have done a great deal of constructive work in the past. "There is scarcely a town in the country that is not cleaner, happier and lovelier because of the work of its organized women."

If women do not grasp their opportunities for constructive use of their leisure, they are guilty of one of the greatest wastes in the home.

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