

THE HOUSEHOLD.

WHY HAVE WOMEN NO TIME?

BY JUNIUS HENRI BROWNE.

Men seldom complain of lack of time, out of business hours; but women complain of it habitually. Whether at home or absent from it, they are ever occupied. They always have a hundred things to do; they are never able to finish, before going to bed, what they have planned in the morning. Husbands frequently speak of this without capacity to understand it. True, women have far more to do than men; true, their work can never be finished. But is it true that they have no time? And if it be, is not the fault measurably theirs? As has often been said, they have all the time there is. If the days were forty-eight hours long would they have any more? Not a particle. Persons who uniformly feel and say that they have no time, are predestined never to have any.

Why is it that women have no time? Chiefly because they are without system; secondly, because they do not take advantage of odd minutes; thirdly, because they are always trying to be polite. The fact that men act very differently may account for their usually having time to do what they wish. While women's time is liable to ceaseless interruption; while they have no hours, as men have, still, might they not adopt something like system? They generally know, when they get up in the morning, what their occupations will be until the hour of going to bed. They should devote different periods to different duties, and adhere to them as rigidly as they can. In theory, they often do; in practice, they do not. They obey impulse and the convenience of the moment. They permit themselves to be turned aside from the thing in hand to something else; and each interruption involves thrice the loss of time that the mere interruption costs.

The duties become confused, their intentions tangled, and when the day has closed they find various things neglected which they had fully made up their mind to perform. The next day they think they will not fail of performance; but the same circumstances intervene, with the same result. And so it goes from week to week, from month to month, until the poor women, constantly struggling, constantly resolving, constantly failing, get very nervous, and despair of ever accomplishing what they undertake. They keep bravely and actively at work; but the consciousness of regularly falling behind must ultimately affect their spirits and weaken their determination. They are inclined to attempt more than they, or any one of their nature, in their circumstances, can possibly achieve. If they would attempt half as much, and complete the half, the effect would be salutary. Nothing is much more disheartening than the memory of not doing what we had purposed. A series of such memories will, in season, weaken the will, and thus impair capacity.

Women are more courageous, morally, than we are. When we would despond, and lose our hold on life by repeated failure, they retain their confidence, and still grasp their aim. They hope against hope; they are cheerful in the face of disappointment. They believe after ten or twenty years of never having had time to do what they wish, that they will yet have all the time they crave. Beautiful faith! Sanguine women!

As an example of a want of system, a woman decides to appropriate two hours of morning—from ten to twelve o'clock—to a certain occupation. She is at it when, at 10.30, some ordinary acquaintance calls, having no right or reason to interrupt her. Does she ask to be excused, as a man would? By no means. She thinks that she ought to see the acquaintance, presumably feminine, for it would be a pity to send her away after she had taken the trouble to come, etc., etc., in the typical manner of woman's over-compassion. She sees her: she consumes an hour or more of valuable time, and then that engagement must be deferred. The next day arrives, and she begins again. At 11 o'clock, a letter from a dear friend is brought in. It is delightful to read; but it demands no answer at any given date. It has, however, touched her heart: she will reply while her emotions are warm. She spends two or three

hours in that way, when fifteen minutes would have sufficed (how women waste themselves in writing superfluously long letters!) and again the special duty is deferred.

These interruptions continually occur—they are of great variety, but commonly of a more or less social character—and so interfere with routine as to render it impossible. A man would not admit of any such encroachments on his business or duties, and therefore saves his time for his own use, instead of distributing it miscellaneous among his fellows, who are not at all benefited by what is a positive loss to him. The serious mistake of women is in their effort to combine the social and the practical, to be attractive and efficient simultaneously. Who has ever known a woman having any relation with society to say to a visitor, "I have just five minutes to spare and then I must go?" She may say, "I am in a great hurry; I have an important engagement"; and at the end of an hour she will be so interested in the conversation as to be unmindful of her hurry or engagement. Occasionally a woman is so energetic, so practical, so severe as to look at her watch, and discontinue an interview abruptly, on account of the warning it gives her. But she is regarded by her own sex as unconventional, eccentric, unaccountable. The majority of them would rather be behind in any number of obligations than be guilty of behavior so disagreeable. To be disagreeable is, in their eyes, the deepest of sins, the most unpardonable of blunders.

Quick as women are in thought, rapid as they are in execution, they seldom know how to profit by the brief intervals between various kinds of work. They do not have time to avail themselves of bits of time. They are so very busy that they cannot think of trifles. Their minds dwell on important labors. They do not wish to begin what they cannot finish. Consequently, they lose, nearly every day, an hour or two, composed of divided minutes which they have refrained from employing on account of division. Women, too, frequently lack executive power; they are inclined to believe that they must do everything themselves. They talk so incessantly of having no time that the idea grows to be a bugbear, and they come finally to have no time.

Many an exemplary husband has become alienated from his wife by hearing perpetually that she has no time. He remembers, before marriage, that she always had time to write him love letters, and he draws his deduction between then and now.—*Ladies' Home Journal.*

MRS. BEST WASHES FLANNELS.

This happened at our sewing circle. We had been talking over our crochet patterns and exchanging our pet recipes. I fancied Mrs. Best looked depressed. She has little to do with crochet work and fancy cooking in these days. But Mrs. Best's opportunity came; the conversation took a different turn.

"I should like to have my children wear all-wool flannels, especially Lucy, with her lung trouble. But I have given up the idea, after several trials. The garments shrink, sometimes even in two or three washings, so the children can hardly get them on."

Mrs. Best looked up quickly. You must know that there had been some difference of opinion among us about inviting Mrs. Best to join the society. Some of us thought she could hardly feel at ease among us as things were.

Before Mr. Best died there would have been no question, for, though they were not exactly what one would call well-to-do people, Mr. Best belonged to one of our respectable old families, and no one could be more lady-like, in a most unassuming way, than Mrs. Best.

But now,—well, it did seem odd to sit with Mrs. Dr. Loring on one side of you and her washerwoman on the other.

"It did seem a pity," some said, "that Mrs. Best would not choose some other way of earning her living than by taking in washing. To go out as housekeeper in some good family, for instance, would be different."

Mrs. Best said she wanted to keep a home for her children. She had been successful; Mrs. Dr. Loring and several others had thought it worth while to pay

her prices—somewhat higher than the usual rates—for the sake of her careful and reliable work.

Mrs. Best did not take nearly so long to accept her opportunity as it has taken me to write this interlude.

"I can tell you how to wash flannels without shrinking," she said. She spoke as simply and naturally as if it had been a matter of a new clover-leaf edge.

"Make a good suds, as hot as you can bear your hands in. I prefer, myself, some of the hard white soaps. Add pulverized borax, a tablespoonful for each pailful of water. If the flannels are much soiled, I also add a little ammonia,—say a scant teaspoonful to a pailful of suds. Flannels ought never to be rubbed on a board, and not even with the hands unless some very soiled places refuse to come clean without rubbing.

"Take plenty of time to toss them about in the suds, pressing the water through and through them with the hands. Rinse in two waters, and be careful to have the rinsing water as hot as the hands can bear.

"Many people pour scalding water on flannels, but I have not had the best success by that method. Wring quickly, with as little twisting as possible, and shake and pull out the wrinkles. Hang out to dry immediately.

"I think freezing hurts flannels somewhat, and I choose my washing days carefully in the winter. But I prefer to let them freeze, if they must, in the open air, than to have them drying about the fire and absorbing kitchen odors.

"I have had flannels appear nearly as soft and pliable as new at the end of a second season's wear, washed in this way, but a single careless washing will do them harm beyond repairing."

Mrs. Best took up her sewing again. "This should come under the newspaper heading, 'Important, if True,'" said the minister's wife. "If I can borrow a pencil and paper, I shall note one or two of your points down, and consider you have done me a great favor, Mrs. Best."

Mrs. Dr. Loring said, afterwards, "No one but a born lady could have faced us with that air of perfect self-possession to tell us what she had learned as a practical washerwoman." Mrs. Best and Mrs. Dr. Loring are great friends now.

Those of us who tried Mrs. Best's rule found it a good thing to know. Mrs. Dean and Mrs. Prescott sent a year's accumulation of blankets next day for Mrs. Best to wash. They had been afraid to trust them to their kitchen girls.

Now if we had decided not to ask Mrs. Best to join us, on the ground that she had almost no interests in common with us, or if Mrs. Best had been ashamed to add her share to the conversation, because the subject she could talk best on was so very homely, or if—

But why speculate? It all happened as I have reported it.—*Household.*

HOW TO BE WELCOME.

The secret of making one's self an agreeable guest, warmly welcomed when one comes and sincerely regretted when one goes, does not always lie in the possession of conversational talents or general accomplishments. This little authentic dialogue, which took place between Mr. and Mrs. Parkins the evening after their Aunt Sophronia Greene had ended a week's visit at their house, indicates a surer means of making one's self welcome:

"How lonesome it is," said Mr. Parkins, "now that the children have gone to bed! I wonder what it really is that makes Aunt Sophronia's visits so especially delightful?"

"Why, I suppose it's because she never finds any fault," said Mrs. Parkins.

"Are all our other guests accustomed to find fault with things which go on about the house?"

"No, but—"

"But what? Aunt Sophronia seldom says anything particularly pertinent or entertaining. In fact, she says and does very little."

"That's true; but she is always good-natured in a quiet way."

"But lots of other people are good-natured, and yet nobody's visits give us so much pleasure as Aunt Sophronia's. There must be some other and positive reason."

Mrs. Parkins knitted on silently for a few moments, as if in a brown study, and then, dropping her work, exclaimed:

"William, I know what it is."

"Well?"

"Whenever Aunt Sophronia opens her mouth to speak, it is almost always to bring out, either flatly or else in some round-about way, some good quality of one of the children."

"I guess that is so," said Mr. Parkins, raising his eyebrows as if searching his recollection.

"And did you ever hear her to as much as refer, in all the times she has been here, to any one of their numerous failings?"

"Never!"

"Then we've found her out."

"Yes, we've found her out, but she can't come again any too soon!"

RECIPES.

DOUGHNUTS.—One and a half cups of sugar, half a cup of butter, two eggs, two cups of sour milk, two teaspoonfuls of soda, and flour to make stiff enough to roll out.

DRESSING FOR FOWLS.—Dip slices of bread into cold water, squeezing out most of the water, then crumb fine into a dish, all but the crusts; season this well with salt, sage and melted butter. Stir in an egg if you like, but it is not necessary.

PUMPKIN PIE.—Line your plate with crust and for your filling use one large cup of pumpkin, one cup of sweet milk, two large eggs, half a cup of sugar, one teaspoonful of cinnamon, half a teaspoonful of ginger, and a little sweet cream, if you have it.

PUDDING SAUCE FOR THE SAME.—One teacup of sugar, half a cup of butter, one tablespoonful of flour, beat all together and add three gills of boiling water. Flavor and color with cherry or berry juice. Let it just come to a boil, then set on the back of the stove until ready to use.

BANBURY TARTS.—Make some shells of puff paste and fill with the following mixture: Boil one cup of stoned and chopped raisins, the grated rind and juice of one lemon, one teaspoonful of corn-starch, one cup of sugar and one cup of water until it jellies. Cover and bake in a moderate oven.

LEMON TARTS.—Make your tart shells of puff paste and fill with the following mixture: One cup of sugar, the juice and grated rind of two lemons, two eggs (reserving one white), three tablespoonfuls of flour and a pint of boiling water. Boil until thick, clear and smooth, stirring constantly. Frost when cool.

BREAD FRUIT CAKE.—Two cups of bread dough, very light. Add to this one cup of butter, one cup of sugar, three eggs, one nutmeg, one teaspoonful of allspice, one and a half teaspoonfuls of soda, a cup and a half of raisins stoned and chopped and two tablespoonfuls of jelly. After putting it in your tins let it rise half an hour before baking.

CHERRY BIRDS' NESTS.—Make a nice baking powder biscuit dough, as soft as can be rolled out. Roll to a thickness of about half an inch and cut with a large biscuit cutter. Cut the centres from half of the cakes; moisten the edges of the whole ones; put a spoonful of drained and sweetened cherries on each, lay the rings on top, and press the edges together. Bake or steam until done, and serve with plenty of rich, sweetened cream.

CRANBERRY JELLY.—Pare, quarter and core twelve good-sized tart apples (greenings or any juicy apples preferred); place in a porcelain kettle with two quarts of cranberries, cover well with cold water and stew until soft, then strain through a jelly bag. Add to this juice two pounds of coffee sugar and boil as you would any jelly until it falls from the skimmer when you dip it in. Skim off any froth that arises while boiling. Pour in moulds and let it get firm before using. This seldom if ever fails, and the color is beautiful.

SCALLOPED FISH.—Pick fine the remnants of fresh fish left from dinner, either baked, boiled or fried, removing all bones and skin. Butter a pudding dish and lay in the fish in layers, seasoning each layer with bits of butter, salt and pepper. Spread one-half of a cupful of cracker crumbs over the top, well buttered, pour enough milk over the whole to quite thoroughly moisten it, and bake twenty minutes in a quick oven. Any kind of fish will do, but fried halibut is the nicest. Halibut requires a little more milk than fresh cod.

PUZZLES.—No. 2.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

I'm in knowledge, not in truth,
I'm in manhood, not in youth,
I'm in wonder, not in wiles,
I'm in sorrow, not in smiles,
I'm in subject, not in mood,
I'm in riches, not in food,
I'm in evil, not in good,
I'm in purple, not in white,
I'm in golden, not in light,
I'm in water, not in ice,
I'm in wisdom, not in vice.
My whole is a sentence found in an exhortation given by Paul to the Hebrews.

HANNAI E. GREENE.

CHARADE.

Professor Macdonald was walking away,
In first to get relish for second, one day,
And while he was walking, on looking around,
My whole he espied on a grass-covered mound;
The turdus pilaris, thought he, and he took
Out his specs, for a careful examining look;
While this he was doing, away my whole flew,
But whither, Professor Macdonald ne'er knew.

ANDREW A. SCOTT.

SQUARE WORD.

Demonstrative Adjective.
An animal.
Trades.
A proof.

JOHN S. LEWIS.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES.—NUMBER 3.
DOUBLE CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—C. Dickens, Franklin.

ANAGRAM.—Fee fo fum.
CONCEALED PROVERB.—A good name is better than riches.