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THE VALUE OF TIME

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

The fault of the age is a mad endeavor To leap to heights that were made to climb By a burst of strength, or a thought most clever, We plan to forestall and outwit Time. We scorn to wait for the thing worth having; We wait high noon at the day's dim dawn; We find no pleasure in toiling and saving. As our forefathers did in the old times gone.

We force our roses, before their season, To bloom and blossom for us to wear; And then we wonder and ask the reason Why perfect buds are so few and rare.

We crave the gain, but despite the getting; We want wealth—not as reward, but dower; And the strength that is wasted in useless fretting, Would fell a forest or build a tower.

One of the best resolutions you can make is to utilize the days (or, rather, the moments comprising the days) in a wise manner. It is wonderful what can be accomplished if we do not fritter away time—that most precious possession which belongs to all men equally, and upon which no trust or syndicate can obtain a "corner."

No matter what regular occupation may employ you daily, there are moments which can be used for recreation or mental improvement if you are in health. A half-hour given each day to reading will astonish you at the end of six months with the number of volumes completed.

Fifteen minutes before breakfast, fifteen minutes after dinner, will not be missed by you if you make your resolution to take them every day.

Frittering Away Time.

You will find you have just as much time as you had before you began this system, for you have been frittering away more than those fifteen minutes morning and night, without being conscious of it.

Then, if you are musical, arrange to give twenty minutes every night to sight reading. You can manage it if you are determined to do so. I knew a busy, young, self-supporting woman who had only a rudimentary knowledge of music to make this resolution, and it was amazing to see the progress she made in one year's time. With only twenty minutes each day devoted to this one purpose, she surpassed many professional musicians in her ability to read difficult music at a glance.

If your life is an indoor one, on account of your occupation, snatch five minutes after rising and ten before retiring, to physical exercise. Any book on physical culture will illustrate a few movements for the development of the chest and the reduction of super-

fluous flesh, and for the general benefit of the whole system.

If, on the contrary, your work is of an exhausting nature, take a half-hour or even fifteen minutes some time during the day and sit or lie down and relax your whole system.

Do this as regularly as you eat your dinner or comb your hair. Immense benefit to your whole being, mental and physical, will result.

Think of nothing—the most difficult thing to do, but do it; or merely imagine yourself a plant growing in the soil, with a sweet summer rain dropping upon you, washing and refreshing every leaf.

You will rise indeed refreshed for your occupation. With the exception of a time set apart for thinking of nothing, teach yourself to always think of something worth while the remainder of the day. Many people going to and from their daily occupation, and indeed scores of people who have no occupation, fall into a habit of shiftless thinking on the street or in public conveyances, or in idle moments elsewhere. The mind roams about like a lost lamb in the wind, resting nowhere.

Try Character Reading. Study the faces you see and try and form some idea of the characters of their owners. Notice noses, eyes, mouths, chins. Observe how few beautiful mouths and ears you will find, compared with other features. It is an interesting use of your mental powers, this study of faces, and will teach you sympathy, if nothing more.

If you find yourself without faces to study, then memorize verses, phrases or numbers, to retain your memory. Learn to recall the numbers of a dozen or a score, or the names of the months, instead of always referring to an address book.

Commit the words of songs to memory—even if you do not sing—it will make you popular with people who do or mean to sing elsewhere.

Force the matter of the odds and ends of time, and you will make the most of yourself.

SUNDAY'S MENU

BREAKFAST. Steamed Herring. Red Raspberries. Prized Bacon. Creamed Potatoes. Sliced Tomatoes. Coffee.

LUNCHEON. Fried Cucumbers with Cream Sauce. Toasted Bread. Currant Shortcake. Iced Chocolate.

DINNER. Broiled Beefsteak. Baked Potatoes. Baked Stuffed Tomatoes. Olives. Blackberry Pie with Whipped Cream. Coffee.

CYNTHIA GREY'S CORRESPONDENTS

Two Queries. Dear Miss Grey: Is it proper to pick one's teeth at the table? How are baked potatoes eaten? H. P.

It is never permissible to use a toothpick in public or in the presence of anyone. Baked potatoes are broken with the fingers. They may be seasoned and eaten from the skin or removed from the skin to the plate.

A July Wedding. Dear Miss Grey: I am to be married in July, and will have my sister as matron of honor. Would it be proper to have her husband as best man, if it is necessary to have a best man? Would you kindly tell me what arrangements you think would be nice and also a menu? This will take place about 7:30 in the evening. What kind of a travelling dress would I wear? MILDRED.

Having your sister for your attendant, it certainly would be courteous to ask her husband to attend the bridegroom, unless he has someone he wishes to fill the part of best man. It is always the groom's privilege to ask the best man.

For evening refreshments there seems to be nothing but the inevitable salad of chicken or sweetbreads with a frozen sweet, cake, coffee, and the usual accessories of nuts, olives and bonbons.

Where you go for your honeymoon governs largely what your suit should be. I would suggest a light-weight frock, with a waist of silk to match the shade, several linen ones and a long travelling coat of pongee.

Combination Birthday Dinner. Dear Miss Grey: Would you please give me some suggestions for a birthday party for my husband? My mother's and brother's come in the same week. I want to entertain my husband, but would like it to answer for the other like a good dinner, a 6 o'clock dinner, but something that is not too expensive. YOUNG WIFE.

Serve a nice dinner, and in the centre of the table have three small size frosted cakes, decorated with candles and a wreath of flowers around the triangle of cakes. This will make a pretty and suitable centerpiece for the occasion. You can have place cards with a sentiment written on each, and ask the guests to blow out the candles, making an original good wish for the honored ones. I do not give a menu, for I do not know just how you wish to serve, but I should have ice cream or a sherbet for dessert.

Giving One's Name. Dear Miss Grey: In giving one's name over the telephone should one say May Smith, or Miss Smith? In giving one's name at a store when an article has been ordered, should one say Smith, or Miss May Smith? (i. e., the article is to be called for in person. If the article is to be sent to one's home, which is proper?)

APPROPRIATE. Over the telephone be just as brief and explicit as possible. To tradespeople one always gives the title "Miss." This includes giving one's address at a store for goods to be sent.

Dear Miss Grey: Will you please tell me what is needful to take with me on a lake trip vacation, lasting about nine days, with two days to spend in the city? I do not want to spend too much on clothes, yet want to be appropriately dressed? I would a dark skirt, worn with tailored shirtwaists be in good taste? 2. If so,

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would need a plain outing hat? 3. Will it be necessary to have a different toilet for afternoons, or will one suit be all right for the whole day? Any suggestions will be much appreciated. MRS. L. W.

1. Yes. Excellent. Take at least four tailored shirtwaists, one dressy, white lingerie waist, also a colored silk to match your skirt.

2. A plain hat of a becoming sailor type would be best. You will also need a motor veil to wear while on the boat. Buy the veiling by the yard and hem the ends yourself. This is much cheaper than buying the veil complete. A most comfortable way to wear one is without the hat. Pass the veil around the head and knot just beneath the ears, leaving the ends hanging. This forms a sort of cap and keeps the hair in beautiful order.

3. I would suggest taking a white or linen-colored skirt for afternoon wear, but this is not necessary. A long dust or rain coat or a golf jacket will also prove a source of comfort while on the water.

HILMA

William Tillinghast Eldridge.

"You are a traveler," he suggested. "A great one," I agreed. "And if you should decide to make a trip?"

"You could not well stop me," he said. "Your sister," he suddenly exclaimed.

"Has found before I'm not good at keeping engagements," I answered. "Then we each looked at the other. He laughed aloud. I smiled, for it pleased me, and nodded. Then we clasped hands and parted."

"To where?" I asked. "To Keribad first. Then by horse to Zerkid. We will go on a half day by the ride across country. The woman will stick to the trains and lose on connections."

"Why not a special?" I demanded. "It's the state's business."

"And demands haste," I said. "Then we each looked at the other, wiring Paris and other points for right of way. I scribbled a note to Polly and threw a few things into my bag."

"Take riding togs," he suggested without turning, "and if you have a pistol—"

I nodded as I packed on. The thing that I never permitted to leave my side was a small pistol. He had turned from the desk and was looking down on me as I packed.

"I'm not snapping my bag together and rose. 'Well!' I said.

"We leave at ten for Paris and then on to Keribad," he answered with a smile.

"And we'll have the papers yet," he said. "God willing," he agreed.

CHAPTER V. By the time the train reached Dover we had agreed the thing was well done. With a bound our acquaintance had ripened into knowledge, trust, and final belief. Danger makes friends. In truth the danger was not in sight, but, like a battle charger, we both scented it.

"I feel sure it was before us, laughing and joked as it were a day ahead."

"Karl," I said, using the Christian name purposely, "it's a good day."

"He answered with great seriousness, seeing the lead. 'It's fine weather.'"

"We laughed, shook hands again and leaned against the railing. Passengers near by looked at us in some surprise."

"For a while we said little, and then Karl turned to me and spoke as if uttering his own thoughts. 'John is a little kingdom tucked away in the hills of Southern Europe. In many respects quite English and a true American. He is a late comer to the States. I have met many of your countrymen. I can understand why his late majesty believed in America and Americans.'"

"We at least know how to do things," he said. "Sometimes we do them too quickly, very often we rush in as the saying goes, where angels fear to tread, but still one can only blame us for our impetuosity, and over-anxiety to do. A man can be pardoned for a thousand errors when he really does something."

"Aye, but you do them without error," he said. "Then I'm not an example. In giving up that envelope I committed a very grave error."

"I'm to blame for that," he said. "Well, it's only placed a trump card in your opponent's hands," I replied. "We'll draw it onto the table yet."

"You are encouraging, at least," he said. "I'm not," he laughed. "We were agreed."

"Good! And now what's the order? Do we stop in Paris?"

"No, we go on at seven."

"Just time to make it then."

"We must hurry. We have two days and two nights ahead of us."

"Your country is tucked away."

"Yes, so far away that one hardly ever hears of it, in truth," he laughed. "I'll venture nine-tenths of the world doesn't realize that Scarvania exists."

"Well, it's very real to me just now," he replied. "and I only trust I'll find it as interesting as I anticipate. Some way I've woven a bit of romance about the place. I'm a good deal of an air-castle builder, at best, Karl, and as I dozed coming down on the train, I had fine castles in the air of you and your country."

"Dreams go, by contraries."

"Not mine. I'm a true dreamer."

"Then let's hope you saw a crown held

over a fair head." "I only had my castles built when I awoke. I hadn't realized them as yet."

"When you dream again open the door and peep in," I smiled and nodded.

"By that time Karl suddenly exclaimed, 'I thought you told me the woman to whom you delivered the papers was all wrapped up in bandages, and that the room was very dark.'"

"I did, but remember I recognized on the hand that took those papers the same ring I picked up under your chair on the Chicago train."

"She must be one of Zergald's spies. By Heaven, I didn't think the game meant so much to him until I gathered the evidence of his duplicity. Fool! Fool! I should have watched more carefully. Kurimurt will never forgive me."

"Crying over spilled milk won't do," I warned. "We are to be in time when the trump cards are played, and it's from our own hand they are to come."

"Aye, you're right! You've been made a fool of by Zergald. Yes, I turn the trick or die in the attempt."

"And I'll help you do the thing," I said, "but I shan't lose. I've got too much respect for the joy of living, and can, if Fate turns the hand against me, make a splendid bluff."

"Don't talk of losing!" Karl exclaimed almost angrily.

"We won't be repelled, meaning plainly that we would neither speak of it, nor do such a thing."

"I can't change the train was quickly effected. On the way to Paris I wrote a letter to Polly, explaining matters a bit more fully than I had been able in the brief note written at the hotel."

I knew she would never forgive me for deserting in this manner, and I had her little satisfaction as to my whereabouts. "I have," I wrote in part, "a very important diplomatic duty to perform in the south of Europe."

My dear sister, the thing is so very delicate that I cannot even give you my destination. To this I should add, as you soon follow in Sir Charles' footsteps and take to the service. Alack-a-day, that you could not have furnished a wife to accompany me. But still, on second thought, Polly dear, a woman at times is not a desirable appendage, and so perhaps it is as well, for my journey is both dangerous and one that requires my whole mind."

"I am truly sorry to fail you and Frank at the last moment, but leave your address at the Elysée Palais, and I'll join you as soon as my present mission permits."

The first day out from Paris a good opportunity presented itself, and Karl gave me in brief some little insight into the state of affairs in Scarvania.

"One year ago, to begin with," he explained, "our king died very suddenly. He and his brother, the Grand Duke of Murwuth, were driving when the horses became frightened and ran away. Both were killed instantly, being thrown over a steep precipice."

"This left the House of Rulburg her royal highness, the Princess Hilma as regent, until the king's brother, the Prince Joachim, son of the king's brother, who was killed, and the Grand Duke of Murwuth, brother of the king, had arrived and uncle of the Princess Hilma and the Prince Joachim."

"Now, the natural order of events, the son of the Duke of Murwuth, the Prince Joachim, is heir to the throne and would be crowned at the appropriate time."

"I see," I interrupted, "and you prefer he should not be compelled to bear the burdens of the kingdom?"

"You are right, Prince Joachim is neither a fit man to rule our country, nor safe one. He is entirely in the hands of the Grand Duke of Zergald, who is now prime minister, and who has nearly ruined the state and the personal fortune of our late king."

"The Duke of Kurimurt, brother of the king, naturally favored his niece instead of the prince. In this nearly all the people of Scarvania join him. She is the idol of one and all."

"I never, however, by the laws of our country is in full power until the grand dukes select the late king's successor, and that selection, as he controls the grand dukes, will be beyond a shadow of doubt be Joachim."

"But I can't see what earthly claim your princess can have," I objected. "The prince is the rightful heir, no matter how undesirable he may be."

"That is where these documents come in," Karl explained, speaking very low. "The prince's father, the Grand Duke of Murwuth, visited England and was away six years. During his absence the duchess died, presumably giving birth to the prince. I have been to America, however, and the affidavits now lost prove that the Duchess of Murwuth died in September, 1879, while the Prince Joachim was born in June, 1880."

"Aye—," I nodded, understanding the thing now.

"The Prince Joachim has no title to the throne, and is, as Kurimurt has always contended, an impostor, the illegitimate son of his brother, the Grand Duke of Murwuth."

"But is this generally known?"

"Only by a very few. Zergald undoubtedly knows it. Of course he will conceal the fact for his own personal advantage. If he can crown Prince Joachim, he will readily control matters, whereas, if the Princess Hilma becomes queen, Kurimurt will be in charge."

"But I protested, 'suppose you do prove Prince Joachim illegitimate; I fail to see how you have gained your object.'"

"Why not?"

"You wish to place your princess on the throne?"

"Assuredly."

"If you prevent Joachim, you throw the natural line of succession to the king's younger brother, not to the princess."

"No! No!" Karl protested. "The law does not hold in Scarvania. Has not—for let's see—not for the past three hundred years?"

"Then the princess would be the next in line?"

"Assuredly. You see, the Salic law held with us until back somewhere in, I think, the seventeenth century. Then it was changed by the grand dukes for much the same condition as now exists. The princess as the daughter of the late king can succeed to the throne if she has no brother or first cousin."

"Then all you have to do is to prove that Joachim was born after the duchess's death," I said.

"And these affidavits are alone needed," he said. "And they are lost."

"But isn't Zergald taking pretty desperate measures to keep himself in power?"

"The affidavits not only deprive him of power by proving Joachim illegitimate, but show that he has misappropriated our late king's fortune and a part of the state's to his own personal use. I and that he holds vast interests in your country, and he could only have acquired them by mismanagement of his trust, for he had no private fortune."

"Then his game is desperate."

"So desperate," Karl replied, "that you are in personal danger, who you join forces with his opponents. A man like Zergald will hesitate at nothing. He sends me a forged cable. His spies secure the evidence I hold. If we attempt to secure that envelope again his next move will be by the hand of the assassin."

A very delightful country, this Scarvania of yours," I remarked dryly. (To be continued.)

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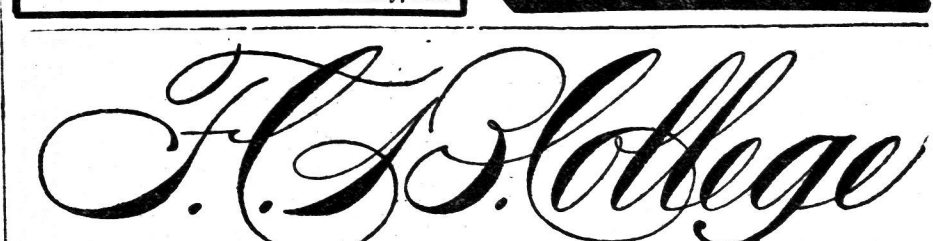
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