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Nebraska

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

1933
W. H. Brokaw, Director, Lincoln

EXTENSION CIRCULAR

1148

SO SOMETHING BESIDES WORK

By

Mrs. Clara Ingram Judson

What is WORK? Generally we define it, if we must, as something we have to do; toil and labor. That which provides or prepares our daily bread. Any definition would likely include the idea of toil and of necessity. Yet much that is laborious is not work; and fun is as necessary to the spirit as bread to the body.

Several years ago when it happened to be my privilege to spend a few days in the beautiful country of Switzerland, I received a new slant on this thing we call work. From the minute we entered the country I began to notice their lovely handicraft—the dainty lace, the rich embroideries of the women; the exquisite wood carving and ivory work of the men and boys. Never have I seen such lovely things!

One day as we took a jaunt from Interlaken we saw at the wayside a young girl embroidering while she was tending a small herd of goats. I exclaimed at her lovely work and she held it up for me to see. Such tiny perfect stitches! It almost made my poor eyes ache to see it and I thought of all the tiny ivories I had seen only that morning and was almost overcome. The girl's mother came up to us just then and I said to her, "Just think of all the hours of work spent in lace-making and carving in this country!" And my tone, I know, expressed distress.

"But madam," she replied, in surprised tones and excellent English, "why should you be sorry? It is their work! It is their joy! Work! Joy! Strange words to link together!

Last year I happened to be using Switzerland as the setting for a book I was writing so I made a careful study of the people and I found what the woman had told me was exactly true. The work of the Swiss people—that is, their means of livelihood—comes through their summer labors with goats and cheesemaking and such. Their lace-making and carving is done mostly in the winter when cold and snow shut them in the little valleys for many a long week. It is only a matter of the last few years and quite incidental, that tourists and importing have happened to make profitable this type of labor. The lace-making and the carving have been done for decades before the tourists ever thought of Switzerland; it is their recreation; their hobby; we would term it; the joy of the Swiss people.

Here in our own country, we have been so busy carving out a living that we have had little time and less thought for work that is joy. Pleasure has come through accomplishment. We glow with pride when we think of our labor as toil—hard toil—which has accomplished something material; not joy; not fun. Work has been work.

Now we are grown up. All of us in varying degrees must think beyond work. We homemakers need not at this time go into the causes and ramifications
of our situation—enough to know that it is upon us. We realize, some of us for the first time, that something besides work is important; that man does not thrive by bread alone. And that it is the homemaker's business to provide and direct the something besides work which her family and herself are to enjoy.

Generally our thought will follow two lines; we want something besides work that shall be recreation—social contacts, parties, walks, games, all sorts of light, gay, and relaxing fun. And, second, something besides work that shall satisfy our desire to create beauty—usually we call this second need our hobby. What do you like best to do—knit woolens or rugs, paint pictures, embroider linens, crochet, bake, paint furniture? One could spend an hour listing favored occupations. Instead, let's hear what you have to say—what do you like best to do besides work?

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The above talk Mrs. Judson gave as the introduction to her round table discussion, then she asked those in the group to make suggestions about what they enjoyed doing.

One of the first suggestions was given by a woman who said she enjoyed an afternoon tea where the food was simple and where friends could rest and chat.

Another said she enjoyed having company and she had learned to serve easy menus so she could afford to have company often without too much trouble or expense. One-dish meals were mentioned as a help in making hospitality easy. Mrs. Judson said she used such menus as the following:

Chicken goulash (chicken or other meat), rice, tomatoes, peas, carrots, and celery. Cook it first and then bake it. Variations in the vegetables may be used. With the goulash, rolls, apple pie, cheese, and coffee (milk for the children) may be served.

Another menu which was given was:
Rice or noodle ring with meat in the center
Coleslaw
Chocolate or Ice box cake
Coffee (milk for the children)

A third menu was:
Patty shells made with bread fried in deep fat
Creamed fish or other meat or combined meat and vegetable
Sliced tomatoes
Baked apples
Coffee (milk for children)
Cookies

Following the discussion on menus, the group next talked about amusements for parties.

Hard Times parties were recommended as parties that may be easily handled and which produce much fun and laughter. Everyone comes in old clothes; perhaps a prize or honorable mention may be given for the most clever costumes. Refreshments may be planned in keeping with the rest of the party. Directions may be written on slips of paper and handed out for the guests to prepare different parts of the supper such as roast the weiners, make the coffee, arrange the table, etc.
A Backward party is another type of party in which many clever ideas may be planned. Mrs. Judson then suggested a Scotch party, such as is found at the end of this circular.

A number of games were suggested as:

- Treasure Hunt
- Game of Categories
- A Hidden Penny Hunt
- Twenty Questions
- Sardines
- Shouting Proverbs, etc.

The Agricultural Extension Service has several circulars that may be found useful in planning for parties. These circulars are free to the people of Nebraska and may be secured from the County Extension Agent. If you do not have a County Extension Agent, write directly to the Agricultural Extension Service.

Extension Circular 5598 - Recreation in the Home and Community

551 - Recreation Suggestions
540 - What Shall We Play and How?
501 - Let's Have a Picnic
542 - How About Another Picnic?
524 - Picnic Pointers
514 - Play for the Child and Grown-Up
598 - Favors
546 - Suggested Table Games

In the round table discussion, other types of recreation were suggested, such as taking a daily nap whenever possible. Some of the women thought short daily naps brought big returns and were very much worth while. If one is a good manager, it is nearly always possible to take a short nap. Short relaxation periods during the day help one to be a better manager. So very much of successful homemaking depends upon one's management ability that it is important to keep in physical "trim" to be equal to the managing of problems as they come along.

Walks out-of-doors are good especially if they help one to forget the home duties. To be able to enjoy nature adds to the pleasure of such walks. Sometimes a trip away from home alone, if only for a half day, will bring new enthusiasm to life. Mrs. Judson suggested exchanging duties with a relative or neighbor. Her suggestions for this sounded as though it would be an interesting experiment.

As a means of using one's leisure to create something beautiful the making of hooked, crocheted, or braided rugs was suggested. The knitting of garments is also fascinating. Screen may be made and decorated, or table linen and luncheon sets may be embroidered, linen for the household can be marked, or the making of hand-made underwear may be enjoyed.

Christmas or Easter cards made with wild flowers and to which a small package of seed is attached may be made for gifts.

 Beautifying the house and the home grounds can be thought of as a recreation and not as work. Stones may be picked up by the roadside and made into a rock garden or a lily pond and how the whole family may enjoy preparing such a place! They may also enjoy collecting plants for the yard or for the inside of the house.
Other things that may be done besides work which the woman suggested as they talked in their round table were: the collecting of poems, recipes, baskets, vases, old glassware, utensils, embroideries, toys, dolls, samplers, furniture, pictures of flowers or of scenery, maps, and many other interesting things.

In closing the round table discussion Mrs. Judson said: "And so it goes, all of us realizing that not idleness but change of occupation is the source of fun. What we need is not to be free from work; that would be deadly, but rather, freedom to do work that is our particular pleasure and joy. Freedom to play some every day, freedom to read, freedom for friendships. It is important that we realize the value of putting free time into our plan for living.

"For today let us go home, enjoying all these fine ideas and remembering that work alone does not make a complete day; something besides work which adds savor and inspiration is a necessary part of happy living."

The following party idea was given by Mrs. Judson in a radio talk over WLS, Chicago, and she told about it in her round table:

A Scotch Party

Even a simple party is work for the hostess, but it is a delightful form of work—giving variation from the routine of everyday living and leaving behind the warm comforting thrill of having made a good time. What is a better end of labor than that? And the woman who can make a good time at a cost consistent with her pocketbook is doing a fine social service—over and above the mere fun of the occasion.

This afternoon we are planning a party for young people that can be adapted to any age almost, and any season. We call it a SCOTCH PARTY and thus take advantage of the prevailing desire for thrift in every amusing way possible. You will, of course, think of many changes and additions; we aim merely to set the ball rolling.

The invitations are on note paper with a very little picture at the top.

They say:

Mr. and Mrs. --(Yourself)-- invite
Mr. and Mrs. Blank

Mr. and Mrs. Blank
to a Scotch dinner
on the evening of______
at seven o'clock

Old clothes requested Please reply

(Cr, please wear old clothes)

Some of the replies when we gave the party were very amusing, our guests having gone to the trouble to hunt up postal cards from Scotland and send acceptances on those. Others wrote on brown wrapping paper (very thrifty those), while a couple of others made the usual formal replies. The guests appeared in equally different array. Some wore everyday sport clothes; two of the men wore hunting and riding clothes; some of the girls wore gingham work dresses and others went to considerable effort to put great patches on their frocks, making them look very ancient and well preserved. This small amount of dressing up is no more trouble
than one wants to take and it does help a party get started when there is something amusing to talk about from the minute of arrival.

When everyone had arrived, we asked the men to go to a table in the hall and get their instructions. There they found place cards of Scotch Highlanders, clipped to bags of potato chips. The cards were for the men and each card had on it also the name of the man's dinner partner. The card said, for instance, "Will Mr. Mac Jones take Miss Mac Smith to dinner in Glasgow?" That was a bit puzzling but, of course, Mr. Jones could at least hunt up Miss Smith and puzzle about it with her.

While he was doing that, we quickly set up folding card tables in the living room, covered them with plaid crepe paper covers, put on paper cups, forks, spoons, etc. In the center of each table we stood, tent fashion, pictures of cities in Scotland. These pictures were cut from travel advertisements and mounted on cardboard. There was an Edinburgh table, a Glasgow table, and an Aberdeen table. Had we had more than twelve guests we could easily have found pictures of more cities.

Watching us as they hunted partners, the guests soon found where they were to sit. Then we asked the men to go to the pantry and get their dinner. This was a box lunch put up separately for each person, so every man brought two boxes. We might have put the dinner up for couples, one box for each couple, but we chose to do each person's alone. While they opened boxes and began dinner, I went around with a great enamelled coffee pot we have and filled cups with hot coffee. Then I set the pot back on the stove to keep the coffee warm for "seconds" later.

Each box contained a piece of fried chicken, carefully wrapped in paraffin paper and topped with a fried paper for safe handling, four sandwiches, an olive, a pickle, a radish, and some salted nuts. The sandwiches were egg salad, nut bread and butter, whole wheat bread with cottage cheese filling, and white bread with jam. Each sandwich was half of two whole slices. If you liked, you could use two sandwiches of a kind instead of one each of four sorts. All this, you see, could be prepared and packed during the afternoon so that the hostess would have nothing to do at the last minute but to make the coffee and bring in the boxes from a cool place where they had been kept. If your party is an afternoon or evening party instead of a dinner, do not have as much as a piece of chicken and sandwiches. I would make the sandwiches small and dainty, use smaller boxes (which by the way can be bought in several sizes at the dime store). For instance, have one sandwich with a ham filling or peanut butter, a cheese and egg salad, a jam with cottage cheese, and a brown bread with lettuce. Then have a small paper cup of fruit salad (well-drained so it isn't gooey) and use paper forks for service.

When the first course was finished we went around with a great basket and gathered up plates and debris and then invited the men to the pantry again where they were given plates containing a slice of ice cream and a generous piece of chocolate cake with coconut marshmallow icing, also tiny little paper bags of small candies. I passed "seconds" of coffee and my son-in-law refilled the cups of water.

When they finished we quickly gathered up all debris, table covers, and everything, folded up tables and gave each guest a small bag. We had hidden three
hundred pennies on the first floor (excepting the kitchen) and they were given
fifteen minutes in which to see who could find the most. The prize was one cent
and the rest of the pennies (in real Scotch fashion) were returned.

Then we had a treasure hunt which took them all over the house, yard,
garage, and basement before they found the prize, a can of salted nuts, hidden
in a golf bag behind the front door. Do you know how to plan a treasure hunt?
Select about eight good places for hiding clues; such as under the bird bath in
the garden, in a fork of a tree in the front yard; in the cover of the spare tire
in the garage, under the corner of the dining room rug and such. Decide on the
order you will use, choosing what will take your guests over the most ground—
from front yard to garage, to dining room, to garden, to basement, and so on.
Then write the clues on cards, one for each person playing. If you are clever
at jingles, make the clues in rhyme, though plain English is quite all right.
Silly phrases might be such as this: "To the garage run as fast as you dare and
you will find there's a clue to the spare." Don't be afraid to make them fairly
hard, someone is sure to guess and start the bunch going.

After the treasure hunt we played "Sailing". That's the old-fashioned
game of sitting around in a circle, being numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, and so on. The
person who is IT is blind-folded and stands in the middle. When all is ready we sing
"Sailing, sailing over the briny deep" while we sing, IT shouts two numbers
and those two try to change seats without being caught.

Then we played "Sardines" which is a modified hide-and-seek. In the game
the house is darkened, only a single light in some hallway being allowed. IT has
a count of thirty for hiding, then all start the hunt. As soon as IT is discovered,
the lucky person, instead of shouting victory as in other hunts, noiselessly slips
into the hiding place along with IT. Gradually the crowd roaming through the house
diminishes till finally almost all are packed like sardines in some small place and
the game is up. The person who found IT first is now IT and has the fun of trying
a new place. It is a jolly game and loads of fun, but be sure to set the limits
of the space, as for instance, first and second floor, or first floor and attic, other
wise it will be too hard to be fun.

This whole Scotch party is fun to do in a barn if you have one or in a
church or club parlor for a larger group, because everything can be planned and
made ready ahead of time. We had ours last summer when we could eat on the porch.
Do not do much decorating as that is not truly "Scotch". It also is a good kind
for a Hallow'een party and needs only a few minor changes in details to work it
out for that night. Use Hallow'een napkins, small candy corn, and goblins for place
cards instead of Scotchmen. I hope you will have the fun giving it that we did.
If you do, you will want to have another very soon.

Nut Bread (used in making the sandwiches)

To 1 1/2 c. whole wheat flour add 1 1/2 c. white flour sifted with 1/2 c. sugar,
1/4 t. baking powder, 1 t. salt. Add 2 eggs, 1 c. milk, and 1 c. broken nut meats.
Blend to a soft dough and pour into two small buttered bread pans. Let stand fifteen
minutes, then bake 45 min. in a moderate oven (350° F.). Bake the dry before if
the bread is to be used for sandwiches. When made with sour milk, add 1/4 t. soda
when sifting the dry ingredients.

(Arranged by Mary-Ellen Brown, State Extension Agent in Women's Work)

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