

The Bee's Home Magazine Page

Doors that Slam

By WINIFRED BLACK

Bang!—said the door—
I turned over in my sleep—
Rattle-bang!—there it was again. If I could only think of some way to stop it!

It really was too bad—there I was so tired, up all night the night before, and busy all day that day, so tired, so weary—and no one cared, no one seemed to notice how drawn my poor face was—no one even said they were sorry—that's always the way—a woman could work herself to death and that's all she would get. Biff!—there's that door again!



The rising wind took a delight in that door and the wooden slam of it. Sometimes the door didn't bang; it simply rattled—R-R-R-R-R-rattle, rattle, rattle, like a train of cars going over a shaky bridge—rrrrrattle, rattle, rattle, there—there is water under that bridge; you can tell by the sort of rattle in the rattle—shake, shake, shake—someone must be there; no, it is only the wind again—shake, shake, shake—well, come in if you want to so badly.

Not a soul in the house will get up and shut that door tight, and let me sleep.

Along about daylight I rose, walked over to the door just a few steps, turned the key, and it was done—the door banged no more.

My train ceased to run over bridges, and I fell asleep—at last peacefully, calmly, sweetly asleep, and yet—outside the wind blew—I could hear him singing in the bare boughs of the great oak—like some entranced musician loath to leave his music—and I was neither younger nor more blessed in any way than before. Yet I slept as if I were sweet sixteen, with all the world waiting to lay garlands of roses at my feet when I designed to awaken a glad world with my presence.

It didn't take a minute to work the miracle—not any genius or inspiration. Just plain sense and some little resolution for the instant, and the troublesome night and the uneasy dreams turned to refreshing slumber—and the door was the same door, only it wasn't locked when it banged.

I wonder—

How often have I turned upon a easy pillow and let the door bang—rather than to get up and shut it?

A hundred times, I fear, and more than that.

The cook leaves the gas burning in the range when she doesn't need it. What an extravagance!—It irritates me every time I see it. I turn it out, but the next time I go to the kitchen there it is, blazing away at so much a blaze—I hated to speak of it—cooks are such sensitive souls, and this one makes such delicious waffles. Last week I took my courage in my hands and called the cook into the pantry.

"Mary," I said, "there is something I want to speak to you about—the gas you are so careless about—please turn it out the minute you are through with it, will you?"

"Yes," said Mary, and she did it; and now I like to go into the kitchen. The secret irritation that must have disturbed her as much as it did me is gone—all by a few calm words spoken at the right time.

I didn't hear from my old friend for a while. When I met her she seemed odd. What could the matter be?

Last week she gave a party and didn't ask me—I didn't care for the party—I couldn't have managed to go anyhow—but I sat down and wrote and asked her what was the matter.

"I love you," I said. "Don't you care

The Choice She Made

:-:

By Nell Brinkley

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By NELL BRINKLEY.

Here are two pictures—one of the woman she is and the other of the woman she might have been. The woman she is sits around on the porches of the hotel—just now she is at a winter resort in Florida—and gossips of the latest scandals among her friends and of the new arrivals, who relieve the monotony of her day.

Sometimes at dusk comes a vision to her of what might have been—a real home and a husband to love and care for her, while they both were

Interested in their child.

Years ago she made her choice. She liked the thought of traveling around and doing nothing, and took the rich, old man with his hoard of money. She left the poor young man, who loved her and whom she loved—and now she reaps the reward of her choice—but that vision will come to her at the dusk, when she is tired of her empty life, and she'd give all she ever has had or ever hopes to have for the clutch of childish hands and the sound of childish prattle.

Two Men

By ALBERT HUBBARD.

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Came to the stage entrance the other day a man and inquired for me.

So I went to the door, and there the man stood in the alley. There was a familiar, foolish grin on his face.



"Don't you know me, Bert?" he said. And I knew him, although I hadn't seen him for full forty years.

When I saw him last he was a totally different individual from this man who stood smirking, leaning at me out of warty eyes.

His mouth was wobbly, his teeth all gone, save two lone sentinels, one above and one below. His face was streaked with tobacco. He was bowed, rheumatic, undone.

I just looked at him. I forgot to say anything until he aroused me with a second interrogation. "Don't you know me, Bert?"

"Yes, I know you," I answered, and I mentioned his name.

He was 150 years old; yet he was born the same year I was. We grew up together until we were 14, when our ways parted. We attended the same classes in the little country school, wrestled each other's clothes off, played tag and anty-over.

He was a brilliant fellow; at least we used to think so. He made a great impression on the girls as he grew up. He made some money, wanted it, took to booze and patent medicines; settled down into a mudsuck and has just existed.

All this I knew at a glance, reinforced, possibly, by a few things that I had heard and forgotten, but which now came back to me.

I gave him a comp and he saw the show. I watched him as he leaned over the balcony. He didn't understand what I was talking about, but his wobbly mouth worked and his bleared eyes tried to smile me a welcome.

After the show he came around again, and this time it cost me a dollar to dispose of him.

I tried to shake off the impressions of my old-time schoolmate, but I thought of him that night and I cast my eyes around the audience, thinking possibly he might come back.

However, as I passed the canteen over the footlights and the giggles gurgled sleepfully under the comic leg scuppers, straight looking level into mine eyes was a man I knew—another man—and this man, too, I had known—in my youth, although when I was a boy he was a man grown. For him I had great respect. He had big, fat horses. He was a strong, simple, bronzed, hard-working individual.

But he had a bad and the bad was mathematics. My father told me of this. Mathematics, to me, at school, was a bugaboo. But here was a man who knew the arithmetic from cover to cover and he could work any example in it right in his head and do it instantly. He could divide 16,201 by 7.8 and do it as fast as he could put down the answer. You could write down columns of figures, and when you drew the line across the bottom he would write in the total.

This man's name was Christian Ropp. So there he was, white of beard, but clear of eye, intelligent, smiling, appreciative.

Christian Ropp has used his brain. He is a Menonite. And the Menonites are people who work with head, hand and heart. Ropp has a firm hold on the primal virtues—industry, economy, good health, right thinking.

And so, as I talked, I signaled in wireless that he should come around to the stage entrance after the show, and his ready brain caught the message.

When I came off the stage, he was the man in his eighties. He had a copy of his new book, "Ropp's Ready Calculator"—the latest edition that he had brought for me. He came in and sat down in my dressing room while I changed my clothes. He told me of his book.

In mathematics we have worked from the complex to the simple. All of the theories in the old-time school books for working out mathematical problems were cumbersome, complex, difficult. The business of Christian Ropp has been to comprehend the miracle of numbers. To him it is supremely simple. He loves his work. He has used his brain. His heart is young.

And the moral of all this seems to be that every man is his own ancestor. We are preparing for the days that come and we are what we are today on account of what has gone before.

He who puts an enemy in his mouth to steal away his brains will eventually have no brains, for the enemy will do the grand larceny act, and the end is as sure as the laws of mathematics.

Nature designed that when we die we should die all over, and the brain should be the last organ to abdicate. It should sit secure and watch every faculty decline—interested, curious, wondering, hungry to know.

All life is pleasurable if we live the life of activity tempered by meditation, the life lived by that most able man, Leonardo of face, calloused of hand, mathematician and gentleman, Christian Ropp, of Illinois.

and women in the audience giggled loudly. In another play, containing a world-gripping scene, in which a poor, half-dying unfortunate is asked her name, she replied: "Mary," "Mary what?" To the inquiry, "You must have some last name," "Well, call it Magdalene," she says tremulously. And at this some of the spectators laughed audibly.

"Why did you go out in the middle of that play?" I asked a man who had left his seat at the end of the second act of a celebrated performance. "Couldn't you stand it?"

"Yes," he replied savagely. "I could stand the play—heart-tossing as it was—but I could not stand the audience."

What Quality Should a Woman Have?

There Are Fewer Things That Get on a Man's Nerves Quicker Than to Have to Keep Up a Continuous Performance of Giving the Glad Hand to a Woman

By DOROTHY DIX.

What qualities should a woman have to make her the ideal wife? Here's what a California preacher thinks is necessary:

"The ideal woman for a wife," he says, "should have the voice of Melba; the talent of Paderewski; the figure of Venus; the grace of a sylph; the vivacity of a coryphe; eyes like the soft glow of a moonlit eve; an alabaster complexion; the virtues of a nun; the charm of Cleopatra; the meekness of Moses; the patience of Job; the forbearance of Lazarus; the zeal of Trojan; the constancy of Caesar's wife; the capabilities of a charwoman; the purse of Hetty Green, and half of her own."



That's some order for a wife, isn't it, and if men waited to find such a paragon before committing matrimony the old bachelors would be a record breaker.

Of course, Mrs. Harris would say, "There ain't no such a person," but if there were no man in the world would want her. As it is, there is no other earthly affliction worse than having to live with even a "superior woman," and heaven alone knows what the sufferings would be of a poor man tied to a wife who was nothing but a bunch of perfections.

It's all very well and highly enjoyable to go to the opera and hear Melba warble occasionally, or to listen to Paderewski perform every two or three years, or to muse upon the fascinations of Cleopatra, or to rubber at some peaches with an alabaster complexion as she passes you on the street. Likewise wish on times every man could wish on to his wife the meekness of Moses and the patience of Job, and the silence of the tomb, but no man wants a continuous performance of any of these prizes and virtues.

There must be times when Mr. Melba feels that if Mrs. Melba utters another squawk he will choke her, and when Mrs. Paderewski has to sit on her hands to keep from seizing an axe and splitting the piano into kindling wood, and it's a matter of history that Cleopatra's various husbands were fascinated to death.

Also there are times and seasons when

a man wants his wife to answer him back, and not sit up with that patient, sanctified, forgiving air that makes him want to throw something in her direction.

No. The one best bet is that if this preacher's ideal could be incarnated she would be an old maid. No man, in the first place, would have the courage to ask such a wonderful creature to marry him. Nor would he want to. He would know that he would look like the great original human shrimp and pinhead by the side of such a queen, and it would be far from him to institute such a comparison.

Nor would the state of ecstatic admiration that he would always have to be in appeal to him. There are few things that get on a man's nerves quicker than to have to keep up a continuous performance of giving the glad hand to a woman, especially one who is a mere wife. On the contrary, the thing that makes a real hit with the masculine persuasion is for the process to be reversed, and for women to lead the applause that celebrates their achievements.

Hubby has a well developed affinity for the spotlight himself, and wifey gets into it at her peril. The best loved wives are not those who occupy the pedestal in their own homes, but those who are discreet enough to elevate husband to the throne, and who industriously employ themselves by burning incense before him.

And that's perfectly natural and human. It is so much more soothing and agreeable to be admired than it is to be called on to admire that the attitude of the wife to the husband in this respect makes an infallible test of the state of their domestic felicity so plain that a blind person could read it.

In those households where the wife corrects her husband's grammar and manners, and sets him right in his political statements, you can see the shadow of divorce hovering in the background, whereas the woman who prefaces every statement with "John says" presents a guarantee of conjugal happiness that couldn't be any stronger if it was backed up by the affidavits of the entire community.

The truth of the matter is that, while a man may admire a woman for her perfections, he loves her for her faults, and when a husband lectures a wife on her weaknesses, and desires her for her follies, he doesn't really want her changed. In reality he likes her faults because it makes him feel what a great big, superior creature he is to her.

When a man berates his wife for, in-

stance, for her extravagance, and recounts the number and prices of the dresses and hats she has had a reform think not that he wants her to reform and buy only the cheap, serviceable garments that she really needs. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred he doesn't want her to spend a penny less, or have a single less dress and hat. His lecture is only his way of bragging about how well he dresses his wife, and what luxuries he indulges her in.

Nor would the man who ridicules his wife because she can't keep her accounts straight, and gets cheated by tradesmen and taken in by beggars, have her changed. It's her incompetence that appeals to his tenderness, her softness of heart that he finds adorable.

That's the reason that the little fluff-headed kitten of a woman, who can't put two and two together, can marry all

around the sane, sensible, practical man, who never makes mistakes, or has to be scolded or petted. There's nothing in the perfect woman that fires the masculine fancy. That's the reason why the women who are really fitted to make the best wives never get a chance to do it.

Just what qualities make a woman an ideal wife depends upon the taste of the individual man, but, generally speaking, if a woman doesn't nag, if she is lively and companionable, and willing to give her husband a butler's privilege of a night off now and then, she may have a face homely enough to stop the clock, a figure like a feather bed, make biscuits like armor plate, and never make her allowance come out even, and her husband will still go about bragging that he drew the capital prize in the matrimonial lottery.

Theater Manners on the Decline

By VIRGINIA TERHUNE VAN DE WATER.

"The manners of the New York theatergoer are no worse than are those of play-going folk in other American cities," declared a playwright to me.

I looked at him skeptically. Can it be possible that all over this broad land of ours persons who attend the best dramatic performances are as atrociously rude, as inconsiderate of others, as they are in this, our own city of New York?

The worst of it is that their manners deteriorate rather than improve. I do not refer only to the people who come in late, after the curtain has been up for some time, making it necessary for those who are already seated to stand to let them pass; nor to the women who begin to adjust their scarfs and don their wraps and return their opera glasses to their bags for several minutes before the end of the last act—thereby making a stir over the entire house.

I do not suppose one can prevent people's doing that any more than one can interfere with the man who, when in church, "draws a watch" upon the preacher, and, after the first fifteen minutes of the discourse are ended, looks at the same timepiece at five-minute intervals during the remainder of the sermon.

Even women have acquired this watch-glancing habit, and it is amusing to note how, as soon as the sermon-text is announced, the heads of some of them take

a sudden tilt to one side, as each looks at the tiny watch pinned above her left breast. Nor can one protest when a woman next to one waits a fan noisily all through one's favorite anthem. Moreover, it is not considered good form to talk in church.

But it is evident that people who can afford to pay \$2.50 each for tickets do consider it good form to talk at the play. Who of us does not know how almost universal is the habit of comment during a theatrical performance? Such excited exclamations as "Watch now, her husband is coming in through that door at the back," or "I really do believe that man is her own father and she doesn't know it," are none the less audible because they are hoarsely whispered.

At one delightful production last winter a well-dressed woman and her escort sneered audibly at all the pathetic and sentimental passages. "Rot!" ejaculated the man at one of the children's speeches—a speech that many of us held our breaths to hear.

Another distressing peculiarity of some play-going people is their painful capacity for laughing in the wrong place. "Cry on, dear," says the heroine of one popular piece to the woman who has been tempted to do that of which she is ashamed; "cry on, the tears will wash the stain of sin from your soul." At which statement at least a dozen girls

Are You Happy?

If Not, Why Not? Ella Wheeler Wilcox Tells How to Gain Joys of Life

By ELLA WHEELER WILCOX. Copyright, 1913, by Star Publishing Company.

You men and women who read these lines, what are you doing to get the best out of the short life you are living?

I know what you are striving for, most of you men (American men), it is wealth and power.

And you do not want these things so much for yourselves as for the wives and children who bear your names.

But, good sir, are you not making a mistake to so utterly absorb yourself in business?

If you really live once happy, would you not attain the result sooner by giving them a little more of your time and attention as you go along?

I have talked with hundreds—yes, thousands—of wives of ambitious men, and the universal complaint is: "Oh, if my husband was not so tied down to his business—if he could only give a little more time to his family—take a few weeks now and then for recreation with us or even a day's outing now and then, how happy we would be. But he is so busy all the time and so tired and nervous."

Does it pay?

And you, madam, are you making your husband realize that you would rather have more of his leisure than more of his riches? or are you complaining that you do not live as well as your neighbors, and trying him on to renewed efforts by your petty nagging and restlessness discontent?

Many a woman, instead of being the solace and comfort to her husband as God intended her to be, is the whip that

drives him like a tired horse to overtax his strength.

Ask yourself if you are one of these. There have been hard times for men in the last ten years.

Have you your husband feel that you sympathized with him in the difficulties that he has encountered in these days of trusts and monopolies?

Have you been ready to take a philosophical and cheerful view of the economies and deprivations forced upon you, or have you been despondent, complaining or rebellious, or by a martyr-like attitude to the mortification of your troubled husband?

Have you tried to brace up his discouraged moods by your optimism, and to turn the temporary tragedy into a laughing jest? or have you driven him to the verge of despair and suicide by your half concealed contempt at his failures?

And you, sir, have you made your wife realize during these years of hard struggle that she is the dearest thing in the world to you, and that you appreciate her economics, and that her sympathy and companionship are more to you than all the honors the world could offer you would be without them?

Or have you left her to guess this to be the fact, that while you plunged deeper and deeper into business and rarely spoke to her unless it was to find fault and complain of small delinquencies, with no word of praise for great virtues?

Answer these questions honestly to yourself and then ask yourself what makes life worth living.

Is it not, first of all, a peaceful, love-warmed home companionship with dear ones, and the giving and receiving of simple pleasures and of sympathy and affection?

What use will a fortune be if you lose those joys out of life?

Would it not be wise to obtain and retain the best things as you go along? The end of the journey is not far—and the only thing you can take across is love.

