

The Bee's Home Magazine Page

Overdressed Girl and Matrimony

By DOROTHY DIX.

The old theory that "heavily adorned" is the most adorned has few adherents among women in this way and age. On the contrary, women as a sex pin their faith in the principle that "fine feathers make fine birds," and that if the plumage is gorgeous enough it will make any sort of a bird attractive, especially to the masculine eye.

This mistaken belief is responsible for one of the most pitiable spectacles in American life, that of the overdressed daughters of the poor—poor little jackdaws, strutting around in their peacock feathers and imagining that they are exciting the envy and admiration of all beholders, while in reality they are objects of cynical ridicule and contempt.



It is a common thing to see an American family in which almost the entire income is spent upon the daughters' backs. The father is worked to death, and often forced to go into debt in order that the girls may have the latest thing in gowns, and hats, and wraps. The table is pinched that the money may be spent on finery for the girls instead of food. Mother works her fingers to the bone that the girls may have twenty-button length kid gloves. Every other member of the household is shabby, while the girls look as if they were millionairesses when they appear in public.

The parents justify themselves in doing this by saying that they are giving Mamie and Sadie their chance, meaning thereby their matrimonial chance, for it is a hideous truth that even loving fathers and mothers groom their daughters for the matrimonial market as carefully and frankly as a horse fancier does his wares for the horse market.

Now, it is not to be disputed that a pretty face is all the prettier when framed in a picture hat; that a huscom form looks all the more willowy in a well-cut and well-hung frock; and that not even the grace of heaven can do as much to redeem a bad complexion and enhance a fair one as a sealskin coat does. It is also beyond argument that men, generally speaking, like to be seen out with well-dressed and stunning-looking women.

So far the clothes have the best of the argument, but there the matter ends. Undoubtedly "dressing a girl up to the limit" to use the slang phrase of the hour, will get her beaux, young men whose attentions are without intentions and mean nothing. But over-dressing a girl will do more than anything else in the world to handicap her matrimonial prospects.

The modern young man is an intensely practical individual, who wears his pocketbook over his heart, and when he begins to think about marrying a girl he also begins to figure on how much it would cost to support her, and when he beholds her clothed like Solomon in all his glory he gets cold feet.

"Gee," he says to himself, "that pink silk and lace thingumbob she's got on certainly does make her look like a peach, but I'm wise, I wouldn't get me back about two months' salary. None of this imported French stuff for mine. It's all right to take a girl out to parties and the theater whose clothes make men rubber, but when I marry I'll look about for some girl who can make her own dresses and won't expect me to tog her up as if she belonged to the four hundred."

It is only too true that a sensible, level-headed, ambitious young man, with his way to make in the world, is not only not attracted to the overdressed girl, but he is repelled by her, especially if he knows that her people are not in circumstances that would justify them in giving her such extravagant reinment. He sizes up the girl who is dressed beyond her means as extravagant, selfish and heartless, and these are not the qualities that he is looking for in a wife.

If she lets her mother wear the same old dress for three years, while she has a dozen new ones every season, but if she forces her poor, old, hump-shouldered father to work overtime to pay her bills, what will she do to a husband? He asks himself, and the answer is nothing that leads him to assume her shopping ticket.

To overdress a girl is the surest way to drive away from her the men who are worth marrying. It does the girl an irreparable injury in that during the most formative years of her life it impresses upon her plastic mind the idea that clothes are the most important thing in life, and the thing that she must get at any cost to others, and even at any cost to herself. The love of dress is every whit as dangerous to a girl as the love of liquor is to a boy, and the desire for fine clothes has sent just as many girls to the gutter as drink has sent boys there.

Of course, a pretty girl should have pretty clothes to a reasonable extent, but her dress should be in keeping with her means and station in life. To go beyond this, and to sacrifice a whole family in order to deck her out in finery is to do her no kindness, but a cruel wrong, for the overdressed girl is one of the answers to the perpetual query, why man don't marry.

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A Profession for Women and Girls

By MRS. FRANK LEARNED.

The profession of a trained librarian is a work which is dignified, pleasant and fairly profitable for a woman. There are openings for women who have the special training and the abilities for technical and specialized work. For those to whom the more personal, or what may be termed the more human side of the work, appeals, there are many opportunities.

Girls who have a genuine love for books, and who know what it is to feel at home in a room lined with books, are those who readily enter the training schools which are established in connection with many public libraries.

Girls who are living in their own homes and whose parents are moderately well to do frequently engage in the work. They like it and are adapted to it and not obliged to consider earning a large salary and yet wish to be more or less independent.

Salaries are not as high as in some other occupations, but a love for books and for the work, and the security of a perfectly protected position, these are allurements to girls who are not inclined to work as teachers or in offices.

Although the higher executive positions are filled by men in most of the libraries, women fill the minor executive positions and are occupied in special reference work or in branch work. In the smaller branch libraries there is interesting work in coming in touch with the people and helping them in the selection of books.

In the children's department of the libraries in cities, useful personal work can be done in influencing and educating the taste of children who come to look at books or to take books away. The library assistants are sure to be those who have an aptitude for interesting and amusing children. Sometimes there may be a corner devoted to the "story hour," when a librarian is surrounded by a group listening to her skillful telling of stories, or pleasant recitation of poems.

The practical rudiments of library work can be learned in a training class connected with a large library. But a girl who is ambitious and prefers to learn in a practical way, becomes a student in one of the library schools. Although

less time is required for a training class student and no charge is made for tuition, a girl has more advantage as a graduate of a regular library school.

There are a number of these schools in the United States. The course is usually for two years, although only one year is required in some schools. The charge for tuition is moderate. The requirements for admission vary. At some schools a complete high school course, or its equivalent, is required, or a college diploma, or an examination in literature, history, French and German. At other schools students enter on a competitive examination. Candidates must be at least 20 years of age, and must have references as to character and ability.

The training is in library science, cataloging, library handwriting, classification, appraisal of fiction, shelf-listing, accessories work, loan systems, reference work, bibliography, history of libraries, indexing, library administration and practical work in all departments. The course enables students to keep pace with all leading movements in the library world.

In addition to the regular schools there are summer schools conducted under the auspices of various colleges or state libraries.

A girl wishing to enter this field of work needs industry, accuracy, promptness, an intelligent, alert and receptive mind. Courteous manners and a womanly, dignified demeanor are essential to success.

Salaries depend on training, ability and experience. A beginner may not receive more than \$3 a month; an experienced worker may receive \$5 a month. The time for service averages forty-two hours a week; vacations average four weeks.

A Philanthropist.

"Yes, sir, I want to get married, and I thought you might give me an increase of salary of five dollars a week."

"So that's it, eh? You want to get married?"

"Yes, sir."

"A man who gets married these days is taking big chances. I am going to reduce your salary five dollars a week in order to keep you from making a fool of yourself. You will thank me some day."—Philadelphia Ledger.

The Wherewithal, or, Love and Money

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX.

The flutterings of the wings of the dear little god makes a soothing sound that lulls to sleep all disquieting suspicions of impracticability. One who feels the air stirred by his wings forgets the price of rent and bacon, and if breakfast obtrudes it is not with price mark attached, but enveloped in a sort of incense.

Neither remembers it will cost more for two, but each dreams how much more enjoyable every joy will be when shared by both.

If either, in a rare moment of sanity, asks a practical question, the other is amazed, indignant, angry, and then skeptical of the other's love. Each, knowing this, carefully conceals every symptom of sanity from the other. It is never a display of wisdom that pleases the dear little god. The blind have always followed most closely at his heels.

When the awakening comes, which, in common practice, means the wanting of the honeymoon, each accuses the other of the very faults which a few weeks before pleased the most. He wants to know of her why she hasn't mastered the art that makes a cheap cut of meat taste like porthouse. She wants to know why he concealed from her the fact that his wages are not enough to keep more than one, and the dear little god hears these questions and spreads his wings for flight.

Because even those who love must eat and be sheltered, and the grocer, the butcher and the landlord make no discounts because of ignorance and inexperience, it is almost amusing that a man should write me a letter like the following:

"Kindly inform me if it is proper for a young lady to ask me if I have any money. I have kept company with her for six months and am very indignant that she should ask such a question of me. Kindly advise me on the subject. I have no money."

Proper? Is it proper for a girl to let herself fall in love and be drawn into marriage with a man who hasn't enough money to keep her in shoes? Is it proper to give the heart and receive in return an empty home?

Is it proper to shut one's eyes and drift to disaster on the rocks? Is it proper to commit suicide by starvation?

The girl has given you six months of her precious time; your attentions indicate that you want the rest of her life; and when she asks you if you have money your sense of propriety is outraged. My dear young man, the young woman is sane, and you are not. When you come back to your wits you will see that a girl who has the courage to ask a question like that of a man who has been monopolizing her time for six months is a girl much above the ordinary, and will make some man a splendid wife.

Advice to Lovelorn : By Beatrice Fairfax

Be Very Sure of Yourself.

Dear Miss Fairfax: I am a girl of 20 years and am engaged to be married to a man whom I do not love. At a ball a short time ago I met a man to whom I was greatly attracted and whom I have since learned to love. Subsequently he told me that he is married, but is not living with his wife, and as he is suing for a divorce he wants me to give up my fiancé and wait for him. My parents are very much in favor of my fiancé as he is in good circumstances financially. What do you advise me to do?

A CONSTANT READER.

I advise you to make haste very slowly. I have an idea that you do love the man to whom you have pledged your truth, and that the man of the world who has wooed you rather unconventionally has simply infatuated you with his clever methods. If he has made a failure of his first marriage perhaps he would not be a very good husband to you either. Learn more of his story and then make sure that you are treating the man to whom you are now engaged with absolute fairness.

Speak Emphatically.

Dear Miss Fairfax: I am 25 years old and engaged to a young man three years my senior, whom I have known for the last ten years.

A year ago I was introduced to a gentleman who calls once in a while to see me, at which time he sometimes meets my fiancé.

Although several times I have spoken

By ANN LISLE.

Life is full of odds and ends. Most of us check them off into a spiritual rag-bag. Little stray chances to be kind, uncalculated opportunities to find pleasure in trifles, extra bits of work, simple pleasures, are all unmarked incidents of our daily lives. We scorn the "odds and ends" of life and go about looking for big things. And the big things fail to occur because we ignore the little things that would have been stepping stones to the greater events for which we long.

As an example of how odds and ends

may be utilized, consider the practical facts of "making over" in dressmaking and millinery. Recently a girl I know saw a \$20 hat in a display window, the desire of her eyes and heart. But her weekly wage and \$20 hats had nothing in common. Was she discouraged? Did she satisfy herself with a \$3.50 chaparral, purchased at another store? Not she. She set herself on an investigating tour of the many hat stores. In one she found an old push hat of the vintage of 1908, and in another she discovered an old waist with fur bands at the cuffs and collar. With a yard of 10-cent white buckram, a bit of wire, needle and thread and ingeniously she actually managed to copy the \$20 hat. The old push was steamed over a stinging teakettle, the old fur was combed with a very fine comb purchased for 10 cents, and the 3-cent hat that resulted from the combination of these odds and ends is the admiration of all observers.

Just as in the practical world half worn odds and ends may be combined to produce very charming garments, so in all the other worlds—spiritual, mental and that of more enjoyment. A number of little things, each unimportant in itself, may be combined into a very attractive whole.

If your home is not a particularly sunny one and you bring to it a pleasant smile in the morning and a cheery greeting when you return at night; if your mother contributes a little extra care in seasoning the beef stew and remembers your father's fondness for apple turnovers; if your naturally un demonstrative father offers his wife an enthusiastic kiss from a departing or returning husband; if your brother remembers that "the old lady" likes carnations and brings her two or three some Saturday night, and if your little sister pays attention to the fact that mother likes to see department get a good mark on the report card, and that father likes to have his slippers laid out for him on his return from work, out of these seemingly trifling "odds and ends" you will be able to combine a unified and happy home life.

Talk This Over with Your Parents.

Dear Miss Fairfax: I am 18 and deeply in love with a young man ten years my senior.

Now, this young man is at present married, but is getting a divorce. He has asked me to wait for him.

Do you think I am doing right by letting him call? He has a good position and owns a house of his own.

ANXIOUS.

This is a matter on which I do not think an outsider should advise you. If they consent to your seeing the man you love in your own home I think there can be no objection. Because he was once unhappy need not shut him off from a happy marriage. But do you know whether he was a good husband who was wronged, or whether he made a fine woman unhappy?

Look over the details in your life at home, in the office and among your friends. Properly combined "odds and ends" make practically costless and attractive hats. And so to properly combine trifles make life a happy thing.

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