



# The Call's Magazine and Fiction Pages



## Women As Slaves To An Idea

By DOROTHY DIX

WOMEN are always complaining of domestic slavery, but they seldom seem to reflect that they themselves forge the fetters against which they chafe. They ARE slaves all right, but are mostly slaves to an idea.

Take the idea of neatness, for instance. Once let a woman get bitten by that particular mania and she is a downtrodden serf who is chained to a broom and a scrubbing brush for the balance of her life.

She can't be just ordinary clean and comfortable and let it go at that. Nor can she divide out her housekeeping labors, because she soon gets to the place where nobody else can dust a room or sweep under a bed to suit her.

She makes her house a place of torment for herself and everybody who comes in it. Her husband wipes his feet on the door mat before he dares enter. He feels his wife's lynx eyes on him at the dinner table for fear he will drop something on the tablecloth. He has to seek the back porch to smoke because she doesn't allow tobacco where it can scent up the curtains.

He never dreams of lying down on the couch, because the sofa cushions are sacred ornaments that are not intended for use. He even sits uneasily in his chair because he knows he has moved it out of its proper place, and his wife is edging to put it back again.

Her children have no liberty in their own home because their mother can't bear to have her floors tracked up and playthings scattered about, and so they escape to the street, or the neighbors, and are offered up as a living sacrifice to their mother's fetish of neatness. Even the casual guest in such a home is on needles and pins because he has always an awful foreboding that he is musing up things, and that his hostess is waiting with brush, pan and broom to sweep up after him.

Then there is the woman who makes a slave of herself to the idea of order. Everything has got to be done on a certain appointed day and hour, though the heavens fall, and though it could be done twice as easily and with half the trouble at some other time. There are women who must wash on Monday, and iron on Tuesday, and clean on Wednesday, and bake on Thursday, and sew on Friday, and darn on Saturday, and who are so absolutely dominated by this cut and dried routine that they simply go to pieces if anything happens to upset it.

You might invite one of them to go to the most delightful party on earth, but if it chanced to be on the day that was set apart to baking or ironing she would refuse. There might be tears in her eyes, but she would still refuse.

To such women to have dinner 15 minutes late is a tragedy, and to be asked to receive an unexpected guest or to do anything to break up their castiron order of doing things is to have the impossible demanded of them. They sacrifice even natural affection to it, and love no one well enough to be willing to make a change for his or her sake.

I was acquainted with a woman of this kind once who refused to go to the bedside of a dying daughter, who was calling pitifully for her, because the telegram summoning her came on the day on which for 30 years she had always swept the parlor.

It is because women get these fixed ideas, which are really a phase of insanity, about the importance of trifles, and the necessity of doing the same thing at the same minute every day, that they complain of the monotony of housework and call themselves domestic slaves. They could make variety for themselves by doing things differently, in different ways and at different times, and thus keep out of getting into ruts.

In reality housework lends itself to this more than any other kind of work. There is no reason why, if Monday is a bad day, that the wash shouldn't be done Tuesday, or why on a matinee day a woman shouldn't put off her baking if she feels tired and blue and go to the show, and bake another day. It's a good thing to change about in work just merely to keep from getting to be the slave of the idea that you have got to do things at a certain time and in a certain way. Order may be heaven's first law, as the poet says, but it isn't all of them, and it's fun to break the law just to show that you are free.

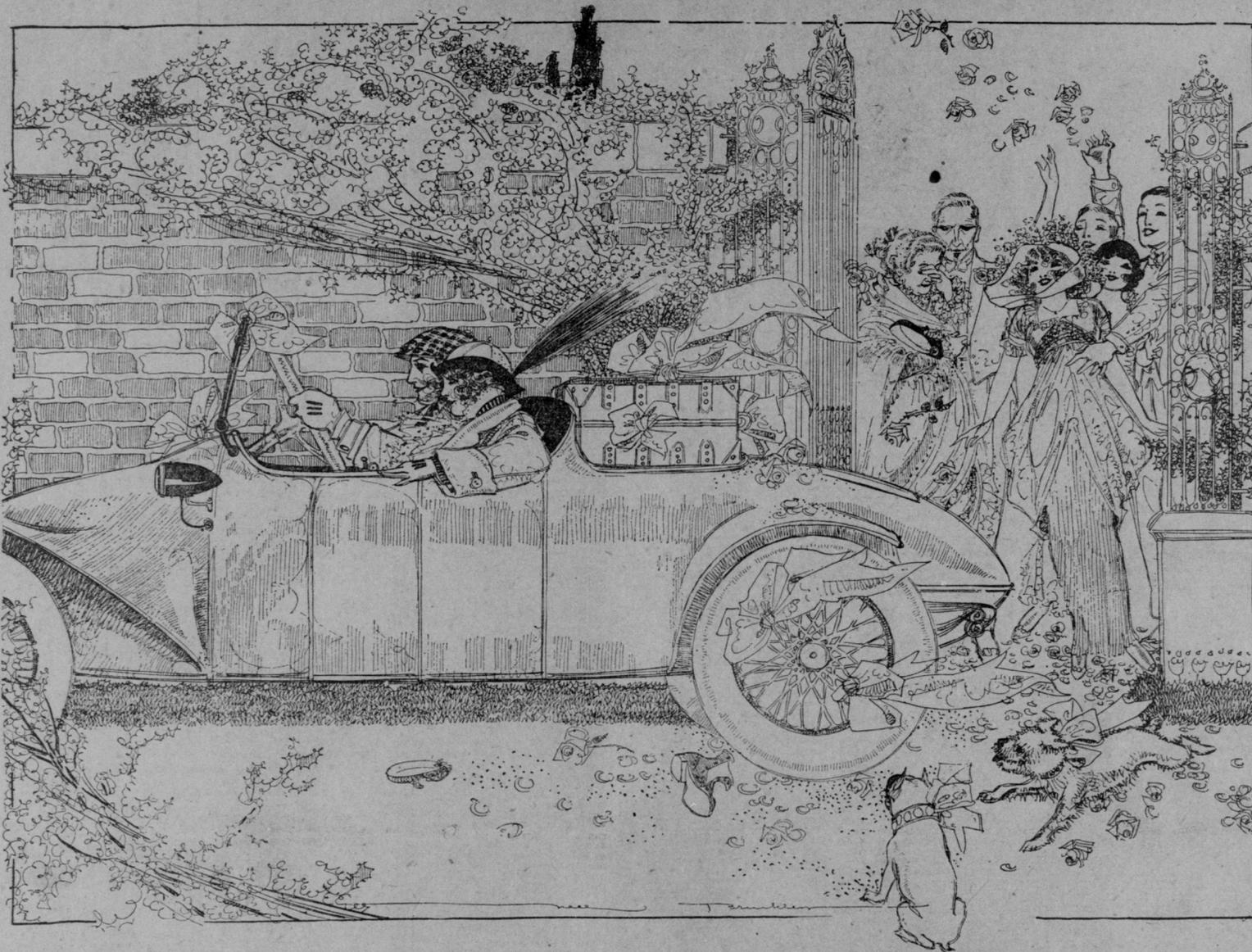
Break up this slavery to your ideas, you who complain of the tyranny of the home. Rebel. Make a strike for your freedom. Dominate your work instead of letting it dominate you. Run your house. Don't let it run you. Don't get in a rut. Thus will you save yourself from growing old and getting wrinkles in your face and your temper.

There is no slavery more grinding than the slavery to an idea, and it doesn't help matters to know that you rivet your chains on yourself.

## In the Garden of Eden—II—Today

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By Nell Brinkley



## The Manicure Lady

By WILLIAM F. KIRK

"I SEEN a item from Washington the other day," said the Manicure Lady, "that tells how the wife of Vice President Marshall is a baseball fan. I wonder who got that in the paper for her."

"Why?" asked the Head Barber. "George, you can be thicker some mornings than a Russian serf, or whatever it is they call jaspers over in Russia. Why, don't you know that the wife of a vice president, or the vice president himself, or any of his folks, is supposed to be head ones so far as newspapers is concerned? When I read that item I noticed the heading in the paper, and it said, 'Mrs. Marshall a Baseball Fan.' I says to myself, 'Marshall, Marshall, where have I heard that name before?' Honest to goodness, George, if I had asked you quick would you have been able to tell me the name of the vice president?"

"I don't think I would," admitted the Head Barber.

"Of course you wouldn't," said the Manicure Lady, "and neither would three other people out of four. You see, George, the vice president of a great nation is like the vice president of the Audubon society or the vice president of the New York Giants, or the vice president of anything else. They have to wait till the main squeeze croaks before they go to the tailor for a new wardrobe. Everybody hopes they are well and happy, but nobody sees their name in the paper and wouldn't know who it was if they did see it in print.

"A treasurer is some guy, George, whether he is the treasurer of a dry goods firm. There is something kind of solid about a treasurer and his name looks cute on a check. You may not think him as great as a president, but you always see something beautiful about his rugged features on payday. And a secretary is a kind of important gink, too. He has to read the minutes of the last meeting and attend to the correspondence. A secretary may not be so much in a firm, but he can make more noise dictating to the stenographer than the president makes."

"You seem to know a whole lot about the business world for a simple girl that never had to work nowhere except in this shop," said the Head Barber.

"I ain't as learned as a barber," said the Manicure Lady lolly, "but read more. When I pick up a paper I start in at the front page and skip the racing dope. It's just the opposite with you, George. And if you know anything at all, you know that I am speaking the truth when I say that a vice president is like the letters 'gh' in 'straight.' A vice president that gets his name in the papers to any extent must be some press agent."

"Oh, I don't know," said the Head Barber. "Tiddy Roosevelt got his name in the papers a whole lot when he was vice president and after he was out of it altogether."

"Yes, but Tiddy is different," said the Manicure Lady. "I often wondered what he would have did if he had been Emperor of Rome when there wasn't no newspapers at all. I'll bet he would have jumped into the Tiber."

"What was the Tiber?" asked the Head Barber.

"Didn't I tell you all you knew was racetrack dope?" exclaimed the Manicure Lady. "You poor simp, the Tiber was a lake just outside of Rome."

## Advice to the Lovelorn

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX

AS YOU THINK BEST

Dear Miss Fairfax: I am invited to an automobile outing, and we are to be a party of 12 (six couples).

The arrangement was that the young ladies are to meet their partners at a certain place. Now I do not approve of this arrangement.

Do you think it right of me to tell the young man I am to go with what I think and ask him to call for me?

The other girls did not seem to have any objections.

A CONSTANT READER.

If you object to the plans, you certainly have a right to say so. But, on the other hand, have you considered that it would be most inconvenient and cause a loss of time for every man to call for his partner? There could be no impropriety in six girls waiting at the same place for their escorts.

HE IS NOT TOO OLD

Dear Miss Fairfax:

I am a girl of 19 and am deeply in love with my sister's widower, who has two children who have been put away in a home and whom I love very dearly. He is living with us, and my people object very highly to my speaking with him, much more to my wedding him, thereby causing a great disturbance in my home. He is 14 years my senior.

EDNA.

If their objections are based solely on his seniority they are not worth considering.

Was he a good husband to your sister? Is he a good business man? Are his morals good?

If he is the right sort of man it seems to me it would prove a good match for you, and mean happiness for his motherless children.

CERTAINLY NOT

DEAR MISS FAIRFAX:

I am a young man 29 years old and am deeply in love with a young girl 17 years old, and I know my love is returned. I am earning a good salary and have no bad habits. I have asked this girl to marry me and she has accepted, but do you think the difference in our age is too great?

S. W. M.

You are not a day too old for her. There is just enough difference to make you more considerate of her and to give her a greater respect for you.

## Their Married Life

Warren Buys an Eighty Dollar Hat for a Fraction of Its Price

By MABEL HERBERT URNER

It was a small millinery shop in the Rue Daunou. There were only three hats in the window. In Paris the fewer the hats displayed in the window the higher the prices in the shop.

Helen had paused to look at one of the three hats. It was small, extremely simple, and the same shade of blue as her traveling suit. Another moment's hesitation and she entered the awning shaded door.

Inside there was just one hat on a tall slender brass stem. Except for this solitary evidence of millinery the place might have been an undertaking establishment, so severely plain and austere were its dark green velvet hangings and polished brass rods.

Helen was beginning to fear that the simple hat in the window might not be so inexpensive after all. From behind a velvet screen, which shielded many shelves of bonnetboxes, swept an impressive French woman in a clinging, trailing, black satin gown.

She gave Helen just one swift glance, and then added in English: "Good afternoon, madam. Is there anything I can show you?"

"I should like to see the small blue hat in the window," answered Helen, somewhat disconcerted at so instantly being recognized as an American, but relieved at not having to depend on the sign language and her half dozen words of French.

"With pleasure, madam," sweeping over to the window, the trailing point of her skirt wiggling snakelike over the green velvet carpet.

"It's a smart little model, is it not?" as she took it out and held it up for Helen's inspection. "Won't you try it on?"

Drawing out her hatpins, Helen sat down before the long mirror.

The French woman stood back of her with the hat carefully poised. Watching the effect in the mirror, with the air of performing some difficult and delicate operation, she slowly lowered the hat on Helen's head.

"Voila, madam!" lapsing into French with an expressive gesture. Helen liked the hat. It suited her, and it fitted her head without the need of an annoying bando.

"The side view is perfect," purred the French woman, giving her a hand mirror.

A BIG PRICE

The hat was covered with lustrous blue moire silk, and the only trimming was a single uncurled feather beneath the rim at the side. When

Helen first glanced at it in the window she had thought 75 francs (\$15). When she entered, that estimate rose to \$20. Now she feared it might be nearer \$25.

"And the price?" She tried to ask it carelessly.

"Pardon, madam. I will just see," glancing at the little ticket inside the hat. "Four hundred francs, madam. That is about \$80 in your money, is it not?"

After the first second of blank amazement Helen was furiously indignant. Did this woman think all Americans were either fools or millionaires? Without comment she took off the hat and reached for her own.

Her silence was far more disconcerting to this supercilious French woman than would have been any criticism of the price.

"I can show you some other models—some very smart models that are not quite so expensive," hurriedly, as Helen started to leave the shop.

"No, thank you," coldly. "I don't care to see anything else."

Outside the indignant color still flamed in Helen's cheeks. Eighty dollars for a hat for which even the most expensive New York shops would not ask over thirty! It was almost an insult to her intelligence.

She walked on for several blocks, the incident still rankling.

Suddenly she stopped. For a moment she stood transfixed as she gazed across the street at a familiar figure with a familiar swinging stride. It was Warren!

Headless of cabs and motors, she started to rush across the street. He had now paused on the corner as though to take a bus. Fearlessly Helen darted through the maze of traffic, the drivers shouting at her.

Warren had raised his cane at an approaching bus and was just about to jump on when she rushed up and caught his arm with a panting: "Oh, Warren, Warren!"

"Hello! Where'd you come from?" unemotionally.

"Oh, I was so afraid I wouldn't catch you. Oh, dear, isn't it wonderful to meet this way on the street? It's the first time we ever have," incoherently.

SHE TELLS WARREN

"Well, that's no reason for your getting run over," as a cab wheel brushed her dress, and he drew her back to the sidewalk. "What do you want. It's almost 5 now. I've got to send a cable and then I'm through."

Want to go with me?"

"Oh, yes, yes," eagerly.

"Where've you been, anyway?" When Helen caught her breath she told him about the millinery shop she had just come from, about the hat and the exorbitant price.

"And it wasn't worth a cent more than \$26," she finished, resentfully. "I thought I wanted it so much I might have paid \$25."

"Did you offer her that?"

"Why, no, not when she asked \$80! What would have been the use?"

"You're easy. There's a mighty big difference between what they ask and what they'll take over here. If you want the hat, go back and tell her that you'll give her \$25. I'll wager you'll get it!"

"Why, dear, that's absurd. She might come down \$10 or \$15, but she'll never take \$25 when she asks \$80."

"I'd be afraid to try her if I didn't want the hat."

"Couldn't you come with me?" excitedly. "It's very near here."

"All right, I'm game. We'll call her bluff."

But as Warren walked back with her toward the shop Helen's elation was mingled with misgivings. She felt sure the woman would not consider \$25, and she did not want Warren to pay more.

"One of those 'smart' little shops where they soak Americans, eh?" commented Warren as they approached the window to which the three hats and the green velvet curtain gave an air of exclusiveness.

The French woman could hardly restrain a smile of satisfaction when she saw Helen re-enter, for she felt sure of the sale now.

"I believe my wife was looking at a hat here a few moments ago."

"Yes, sir," beamingly, as she took the hat from the window. "It was exceptionally becoming to madame—wouldn't you like to see it on her?"

"That's not necessary. My wife likes the hat. Now, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you 25 francs—\$5—not a cent more."

The beaming smile froze on the woman's face.

"Why, sir, you're—madame must have misunderstood me. I told her the hat was \$80!"

"Yes, and I'm offering you \$25, which is about \$5 more than it's worth. But that's all right," generously, "since my wife wants the hat."

plained that the feather alone cost her more than that. But Warren was unmoved. He wrote the hotel address on his card and gave it to her with a brief:

"There's my address. We'll be at the hotel at 6 o'clock. If you want to have the hat there at that time C. O. D. all right."

"But that's impossible, sir! To accommodate madame I might take off the feather and let her have it for \$50—that's the very best I can do."

"No, we're buying it as it is. If you decide before 6 o'clock that you'd rather have the \$25 than that hat, send it around and you'll get the money. Good afternoon."

"Oh, you know she'll never send it," exclaimed Helen when they reached the street. "Why, she was furious—she was insulted at the offer."

"Don't be too sure about that. These French shop people aren't so easily insulted by offers as you think."

"But, dear, you know she won't come down that much!"

"She may and she may not. But she's mulling over that offer, all right. Show these people the money and give 'em a ladder—they'll usually come across. Now where are we? I've got to send that cable."

It was five minutes of six when they reached the hotel, Helen glanced eagerly around the lobby for a messenger with a bandbox.

"Not six yet," suggested Warren, noting her glance as he turned from the desk with the key and their mail.

They had just entered their rooms. Helen had not even taken off her hat when there was a loud knock at the door.

It was a boy with a large, white bandbox and a C. O. D. bill for 125 francs—\$25.

The next moment Helen was taking the hat from its tissue wrappings. "Is it all right?" Warren demanded, drawing out his wallet.

"Oh, yes—yes; it's PERFECT," trying it on before the mirror.

"Well, she wasn't so very much insulted," grinned Warren as the door closed after the messenger.

"It fits my head so well," exclaimed Helen, irrelevantly. "And it's just right to wear a veil with. I didn't DREAM she'd send it!"

"She found out we weren't so easy and thought she might as well nail that \$25. That's the way to handle these French tradespeople. They think all Americans have more money than brains. It's just as well to let 'em know there are some they can't bluff."

## Snap Shots

By LILIAN LAUFERTY

YET, though with a sense of grief

Comes from the falling leaf, And memory makes the Summer doubly pleasant.

In all my Autumn dreams A future Summer gleams. Passing the fairest glories of the present.

—George Arnold.

The poetry of the earth is never dead; When all the birds are faint with the hot sun

And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run From hedge to hedge above the new mown mead.

That is the grasshopper—he takes the lead In summer luxury—he has never done With his delirious, for, when tired out with fun

He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.

The poetry of earth is ceasing never. On a lone winter evening, when the frost

Has wrought silence, from the stars there shrills

The cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever, And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,

The grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

JOHN KEATS.

Let the sweet heavens endure, Nor close and darken above me Before I am quite, quite sure

That there is one to love me; Then let come what may To a life that has been so sad, I shall have my day.

—From "Maud."

When I sail to the Fortunate Islands

Over the violet sea, May one friend, my heart's friend, Be there, a-sail with me.

On the breast of the deep, sweet waters,

In the arms of the white spray, Sailing, sailing, sailing, Till we come to Haven bay.

In the peace of the Fortunate Islands,

By wood and hill and shore, May one friend, my soul's friend, Abide with me evermore.

—Louis McQuillan.

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