

Discontent Is Felt at All Ages, Belief

Blow of Disappointment Softened by Training, Jane States.

Feel free to comment on all problems which interest you. The best letters will be published.

DEAR JANE JORDAN—A recent letter from a young woman of 25, who, despite a fine husband and two children, found herself bored and restless prompts me to write this. For some time I have been playing with the notion that the age of 25 in a certain type of woman is one of spiritual impasse. When I was 21 I lived in a large club for women and had plenty of opportunity to observe girls. Many of them, when they reached 24 or 25, came down with a feeling of staleness, a restlessness that nothing seemed to satisfy, a feeling of what's-it-all-for-anyway? This is even though they had a good job, health, talent, beaux, lovely clothes and whatnot. Older women seemed to be too busy with everything from night classes to community dramatics to be at odds with themselves.

I thought then that restlessness was due to the fact that the girls were not married and had no children. However, there have been a number of news stories about young women of that age who committed suicide because "life held nothing for them." Most of them were married. Twenty-five is a period of recapitulation and time of planning for serious life.

Having matured physically, women have a feeling of power which they want to use but don't know how. Not recognizing it they can't interpret it and so there's bound to be a feeling of frustration and restlessness urging for an unknown something. Those who cannot find an outlet for this urge are those who commit suicide. A psychiatrist might have saved them. Does all this sound like sense to you?

So long as I'm writing I may as well get this off my chest, too. Recently a book appeared with a title, "Be Glad You're Neurotic," followed by articles like Helen Welshman's "So You're Neurotic." Congratulations! These writers are trying to make something desirable of neurosis. My understanding of neurosis is that he lacks balance mentally and cannot cope with the problems of life. I don't know enough about it to spot the fallacy in these authors' writings, but I feel that their arguments are sophistry. If you'd devote a column to it, either debunking or upholding the authors, and set me right.

R. M. L.

ANSWER—Your letter is so well expressed that I regret the lack of space which prevents my using all of it. It may be that 25 is a sort of milestone in a woman's life, although I have no facts to prove it. I have not had the opportunity to observe a large group of young women except through their letters and as far as I know restlessness and discontent are not peculiar to any age.

Any woman who has failed to solve one of the major problems of life, such as love, occupation or social adjustment, suffers from a feeling of frustration at 25 or 26. The way a person reacts to disappointment depends more on the habits he established early in life than on his age. Some give up under pressure, whereas others are driven to find compensations. The problem of suicide is much more complicated.

If our readers could look back over their lives to the age of 25, perhaps they could find experiences which support your idea. I will be glad to publish their letters if they will take the trouble to write.

Your last question will have to be answered later. Give me time to read the book and let me know when and where the article was published. It has often been noticed that many of our writers are tubercular and that tubercular patients in general are sometimes quite productive, as if the disease stimulated them mentally. On that premise we can say, "Be glad you're tubercular?"

JANE JORDAN.

Color in Laces Is Fall Fashion

Laces and velvets have been mentioned with laces as among the luxury fabrics which seem the necessary mediums for this winter's pageant of luxury in fashion.

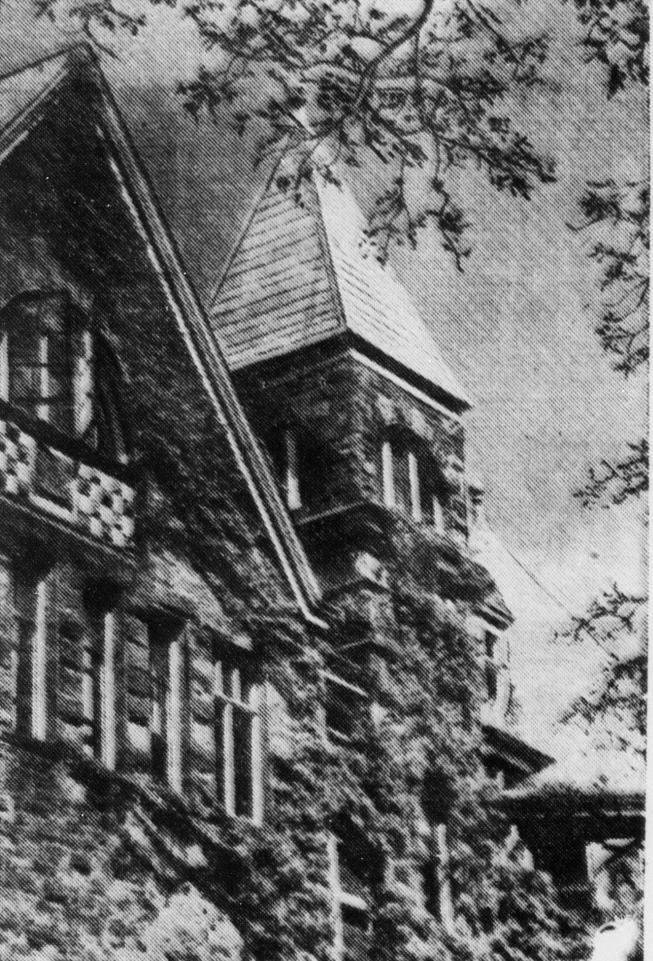
Color in laces, lame-underlined lace as done by both Molyneux and Jean Deses, lace blouses and bodices of all types with laces and velvets to give delicacy to what would otherwise be too heavy; the transparent skirts, the full volants, wide ones cascading around the side trained skirts, straight ones and even horizontal effects as done by Lanvin—all bring lace into prominence as one of the outstanding fabrics of the season.

Novelties in fabrics include tweed-type laces and lace-type prints. Leather and velvet have been cut out in lace patterns, even felt has been used in this fashion. Lace effects seem to be the watchword of the day.

Water Cracks Nuts

Soak nuts in salt water overnight and kernels will come out whole when shell is cracked.

Coeducation Observes 100th Anniversary This Fall



When coeducation came to the ivied towers of Oberlin College (above) a century ago, Caroline Mary Rudd (below) first coed student, was hemmed in by Victorian conventions and prejudices.

First Collegiate Misses Brave But Prudish, Moderns Think

BERLIN, O., Aug. 30 (NEA)—Just 100 years ago America's first coeds packed their campus clothes and set out for Oberlin College, the first school in the country to allow men and women to sit together through college courses.

There was no sleeping through 8 o'clock classes for those first coeds. The Young Ladies—as they were called in 1837—were required to rise at 5 in the morning, and have their rooms in order by 8. Midnight bell sessions were not yet the style, for 10 o'clock was the prescribed and enforced bedtime.

Members of the Indianapolis branch of the American Association of University Women are to make plans for the celebration of the centennial within the next two weeks according to Mrs. Calvin R. Hamilton, president.

Food at Oberlin was more plain than fancy, and a good thing, too, for it was served by the coeds. Bread was the staff of life—bread with milk, bread with gravy, bread with salt, and bread and water. If a young lady preferred a more hearty diet than bread she paid an extra cent for a sandwich at a table where meat was served.

Waiting tables was only the beginning of the duties of those first coeds. They also scrubbed floors, kept their rooms and rooms of the men students clean, and washed and mended the men's clothes. Pay for this valet service was 2 cents an hour.

THESE and other regulations that governed these pioneer coeds packed their coeding have come to light through the centennial celebration of Oberlin, set for Oct. 6.

Church was not the coed's choice in those days. She went whether she wanted to or not. And religion was not confined to Sundays. A

prayer began every class, whether it was Cicero, the Acts of the Apostles in the original Greek, anatomy, physiology, or trigonometry. No coed-served meal began without grace, and there were prayer meetings, religious lectures, and chapel hours for them to attend. They were also allowed half time each morning for private devotions.

College life for the coeds of 1837 did not include fraternity and sorority dances, rumble seats, football games, or complicated campus politicks. Their outside interests were limited to literary societies, the Female Moral Reform Society, and the Musical Union. The Reform Society's most earnest endeavor was to adopt a resolution "that the disgrace of the gentleman who takes improper liberties with a young lady shall be as great as that of the young lady who permits such liberties."

Even though they were eager for the kind of education that had herefore been offered only to men, the first coeds could not always take it. There was the time when a corpse was exhibited in anatomy class and four coeds grew faint. There was also the faculty plan to combine the men's and women's English composition classes, and a subsequent petition from the ladies

that either from modesty or delicacy they felt reluctant to read their compositions in the presence of men. By means of the petition and tears, the ladies won their point, and they continued to read their written thoughts before a strictly female audience.

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about allowing the lady students to stay up after hours to look at the heavenly bodies."

Once every week the coeds were given a lecture by the ladies' principal on engagements, marriage, hygiene, politeness, dress and the qualities essential for a minister's wife. One student described the lecture in these words: "She holds up before us the great laws of life and health, teaches us that we are fearfully and wonderfully made and not guilty if we trample on these laws."

CHARGES OF laxness in morals



Coeducation was a daring innovation in 1837, and college authorities would have been shocked at the informal camaraderie enjoyed by the two modern Oberlin undergrads seen above.



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