











## The House Without Clocks

By ELLIOTT FLOWER

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Perhaps it is incorrect to speak of it as the house without clocks. That depends upon your definition of a clock.

If you consider anything larger than a watch that has a dial and moving hands as a clock, this house had several of them; but if you hold that a clock is not a clock unless it tells the time, why, this house had none.

There were only some clocklike wedding presents that looked pretty. That is why Henry Homer Hoskins bought an alarm clock, and announced that it was to be the autocrat in the future. He was tired of leaving the parley at 5:20 (by the parlor clock) and arriving in the dining room at 5:45 (by the dining-room clock).

It was most annoying and confusing; and it was even worse when the maid rang the rising bell at precisely seven by the kitchen clock, which resulted in getting Mr. and Mrs. Hoskins fully dressed at 6:50 by the bedroom clock.

"Then, if it happened that breakfast was served by the dining-room clock, there were more complications. There are many deceitful things about marriage," commented Henry Homer Hoskins, bitterly, "and easily



"I Am Running This Clock."

first among them is the wedding present clock. It is seldom you see anything that combines so much of beauty and unreliability."

Thereupon Henry Homer Hoskins set all the clocks by his watch and began the task of regulating them. But in this he was discouraged by his wife.

"You're getting me more confused every day," she complained. "I used to know exactly how much the bedroom clock lost, so all I had to do was to remember when it was set and then take a pad of paper and a pencil and figure out the hour. Now it loses one day and gains the next, and I have to hunt up my watch when I want to know the time."

Of course every one knows how hard it is for a woman to find her watch, when she carries it from one part of the house to another because she has no place for it in her house gown and yet has to refer to it from time to time.

So, after various experts had tinkered with the wayward clocks and failed to make them absolutely reliable, Henry Homer Hoskins brought home the alarm clock and declared himself in no uncertain voice.

"I am tired," he said, "of getting up before I wake up, of having breakfast before I get up, and of getting to the office before I start. I am also tired of constantly reaching for my watch to verify the rising bell, bedtime, the breakfast hour, the dinner hour and eighteen or twenty other things. I have here a clock that isn't pretty, but it is accurate, and it speaks in a loud tone. It is my purpose to manipulate this clock myself; no one else is to touch it, and in all matters relating to time I will not permit its decisions to be questioned. It is guaranteed."

For some unaccountable reason Mrs. Henry Homer Hoskins decided that this was a reflection upon her and her management, and she was not pleased.

The fact that twice when she had let her watch run down her husband had derived much amusement and satisfaction from the complications that ensued had a tendency to make her even more resentful, but ostensibly she bowed meekly to his will.

When a woman does this, it is time for her husband to be awake nights looking for trouble, the rule among wise men being "the meeker she is, the greater the trouble"; but Henry Homer Hoskins had not the wisdom that comes with wide experience.

"I desire to have rest, real rest," he said. "I don't want to worry about the time; I don't wish to be forever wondering whether I am getting up tomorrow or the day before yesterday. We will dispense with the rising

bell and rely on the clock. Let the maid leave breakfast at the proper hour, and we will be there."

That night he wound up the alarm, and then set it—incidentally he set it off, owing to the fact that he wound up the alarm before changing the dial hand.

"Do you think it necessary to notify all the neighbors that you have purchased an alarm clock?" his wife asked sweetly.

"I am running this clock," he retorted.

"The alarm informs us that it is time to get up before we have gone to bed," she suggested, "and the clock is the autocrat."

"It will be after this," he answered doggedly. "I've got the hang of it now."

Barring the fact that he made a mistake of fifteen minutes in setting it, all was as it should be the first morning, and the second it was absolutely correct.

"Now," he announced jubilantly, "we have things down to a system. Hereafter I pay attention to nothing but the autocrat."

"This is dusting day," Mrs. Hoskins remarked. "Don't you think we'd better put it—"

"I think," he interrupted, "that it is only necessary to let it alone and say nothing. It is doing all right as it is, and I don't recall that your ideas have helped matters very much heretofore."

So it happened that he was awakened about one o'clock the following night.

"Shall we get up?" she asked sleepily. "The autocrat has spoken."

"The blamed thing is crazy!" he exclaimed. "Somebody must have been fooling with it."

"I told you it was dusting day," she returned, "and I saw the maid examining it with some curiosity."

"Why didn't you say so?" he demanded.

"Interfere with the autocrat?" she asked with mild surprise.

He gave an angry exclamation, and devoted five minutes to setting it by the light of a match. But he forgot to wind the alarm again.

In consequence, when he next woke up he found his better half standing in the doorway, fully dressed.

"Don't you think you'd better get up, dear?" she asked solicitously. "Breakfast was ready fifteen minutes ago."

"Great heavens!" he cried. "Why didn't you call me?"

"The autocrat was to do that," she answered pleasantly, "and it would hardly do for me to interfere with anything so reliable. Nothing else is to be depended upon, you know."

He recalled his oversight, and dressed hastily without further comment. But he was not in good humor. However, the clock worked to perfection for the three succeeding days, and his equanimity was restored. In fact, he commented with some pride on the fact that, for the first time, the house seemed to be running on a system. Then, one morning as he was dressing, he noticed that his wife was eyeing him with idle curiosity from her couch.

"Sick?" he asked.

"Oh, no," she answered. "Aren't you going to get up?"

"After a while," she replied with a yawn.

"Laziness," he announced, "is something I detest."

"So do I," she acquiesced carelessly, "but it's disagreeable to get up so long a time before breakfast."

## HOW OCEAN CABLE DIFFERS FROM TELEGRAPH LINE.

—Although an ocean cable is in fact a telegraph line, it is so differently constructed that the rules for working land lines are almost entirely dissimilar. With the first long cables, great difficulties were encountered in sending through them a current of electricity of sufficient power to record the messages rapidly. The methods for overcoming these difficulties, and in use at present, are described as follows:

Keys which, when depressed, transmit positive and negative currents, are employed at the sending station in connection with the regulation battery. The current of the battery does not pass directly into the cable, but into a condenser, which passes it into the submarine line.

This greatly increases the force of the current used and serves to cut off interfering ground currents. The instrument first employed in receiving cablegrams was a reflecting galvanometer. Upon the magnet of this instrument is carried a small curved mirror. A lamp is placed before the mirror and behind a screen in which there is a vertical slit. Flashes of light moving across this slit as the needles moved from left to right, indicated to the trained eyes of the operator the letters in the message being transmitted.

But this method of recording messages was found to tax the eyesight of the operator severely, a few years' work often rendering them almost, if not totally blind. Recognizing the fact that there must be something wrong with such a system, inventors set about repairing the defect, which resulted in perfecting the syphon galvanometer, which has all but superseded all other receiving devices.

## BIG FLOCKS ONLY SOLUTION

Why Idea of "A Sheep for Every Family" Would Be of Little Value.

The idea of "a sheep for every family" is good in intent and purpose. Both manufacturers of woolen goods and meat distributors would like to see a larger supply of raw material. Sheep raising, however, is not like gardening, says the Albany Journal. To be successful it must be conducted in the open and on a large scale. Breeding itself is a large and complicated matter. Also, the nature of the wool-growing animal is unsuited to combined commercialism and domesticity. The family who had a sheep running around the doorway would form an attachment for the animal that would cut the latter on the footing of a family pet, that could be separated from its valuable wool only if the sheep's comfort were considered.

As for the use of a family sheep for meat, such would be rare. "Lamb like a lamb to the slaughter" has more than a literary meaning. One who could see a sturdy steer felled by a hammer blow or an uncouth and squealing pig slashed in the throat, would turn from the sight of a lamb, without fight, held helpless while slowly bled to death. Most people like lamb or mutton, and most people require woolen clothing, but for both food and warmth the sheep-raising industry will depend upon commercialized flocks.

## TORCHES FOR THE TRENCHES

How Uncle Sam's Soldiers in France Will Be Kept Warm.

School children in many cities are making trench torches to be used by the Sammies across the sea.

The torches are made from newspapers, which are cut in column widths. Eight of these columns are required for one torch. The paper is rolled, one strip at a time, until the article is complete. Then it is boiled four minutes in paraffin.

The torches are to be used to warm the hands of the men in the trenches and to boil their coffee. They first originated with the Italian soldiers in the Alps. One and a half million have been used by the Italians. They are only slightly more than two inches high, but burn a long time.

How Binder Twine Is Made From Palmetto Trees.

At last the palmetto tree is coming into its own. It has been posing for two-thirds of a century in Southern poetry and Southern oratory, and now Florida and South Georgia and other Southern states have turned upon it and said: "Now you be useful as well as ornamental. You shall take the place of Mexican sisal for the manufacture of cotton bagging and binding twine and, instead of being used for broom-making to sweep ignoble floors, you shall become useful to the nation."

A newly invented machine spins the fibre out of the palmetto leaves. They are stripped green from the trees, fed into one end of the machine and emerge balls of binder twine from the other end.

In four months the stripped tree will have another coat of leaves which will be cut off at their stems and fed to the machine, and so on three times a year.

## ALL-WHITE GOWNS

Sheer Organdies, Swisses and Linens Are Used.

Among the New Materials Arlette, With Texture Between Georgette and Crepe de Chine, is Favored.

Looking at it from a fashion point of view, one realizes that after all there is really nothing more becoming than white, and summer is to see decided prominence given to the all-white costume, says a correspondent. There is a smart morning costume of simple tailored blouse and skirt, usually of linen or one of the new cotton materials; then for afternoon one changes to a more elaborate hand-made frilly blouse of batiste, with just a bit of fine lace, and completes the ensemble by a skirt of silk or satin; and for the summer evening frock nothing is lovelier or more satisfactory than white net or point d'esprit.

The charm of summer frocks lies not so much in anything startlingly new or conspicuous, but rather in exquisite daintiness. Sheer organdies, summery looking swisses and delicate nets and georgettes are all fashioned into the most adorable gowns, and as they are usually put together with the finest of handwork, the result is always distinctive. Among the new materials none is more beautiful than Arlette crepe. The texture is just between georgette crepe and crepe de chine, and there is a cross weave that gives character without in any way detracting from its filmy, delicate look. The range of colors is very wide, and it may be fashioned into the simplest of morning frocks or the most elaborate of evening creations. In dark shades it is admirably adapted for street wear as it is so delightfully cool.

Foulard and georgette offer unlimited possibilities for combining different materials in interesting ways, and they are so summery and cool-looking even in dark colors that they make ideal frocks for warm days.

What could be more attractive for summer wear than the shirtwaist frocks of crepe de chine or georgette made in the simplest fashion with tucks and beautiful collars and cuffs to give an air of immaculate freshness so essential at all times?

A very pretty model is of liberty blue georgette; it has bands of blue and white foulard put on in a very effective way. The collar and waistcoat are of white organdie, beautifully embroidered and an odd touch is given by the bow and ends of lighter blue ribbon. Completing the costume is a hat, very chic and quite unusual. It is made of dark blue taffeta and for trimming has a plaited frill of white batiste.

## COSTUME FOR FARMERETTE



For the girls who are following their brothers' lead in helping the land army and doing scout work this costume has been designed. It consists of a cotton khaki waist and skirt. The skirt is circular and opens all the way down the front. It is held in place by suspender straps.

## Pockets on the Decline.

Pockets have gone the downward road prognosticated for them some time ago. They still appear on frocks of muslin, silk or satin and in coats and suits. Perhaps they are not quite so usual as they were last autumn, but for that very reason they are more effective. And they are emphasized, not merely placed with a quiet idea that they may be noticed or unnoticed, as chance may direct. On some of the new suits they are emphasized with a band of fur at the top, and on some of the silk frocks they are quite baglike in shape and size. Of course, the new calico frocks have pockets, some of them, but they are quite prim and flat, bound off, as befits calico pockets, with a bit of the same material, cut bias.

## POLKA DOT LOUNGING GOWN



The outstanding feature of this exquisite lounging gown is the profusion of polka dots with which it is adorned. The makers have employed wisteria silk to convey the full effect of their original design. Wool embroidery is used on the overblouse of polka-dotted satin.

## WEAR GINGHAMS DURING WAR

Paris Takes to the Material Which is Popular With Many in America.

Now we may know that this is war time. If we have not had it brought home to us before, we are realizing it now. For France has taken to gingham—bravely to gingham for the duration of the war, notes a fashion critic. We wore gingham last summer and wear them this summer. It doesn't so much matter what we wear. But Paris in gingham is a different matter—and we bring out our last summer frocks with a new kind of feeling and look them over to see what can be done to make them just a little more Frenchy and complete.

In the first place bits of darker color—black, or a deeper shade of the same, help a great deal. Big hats go with them, sometimes made of gingham, too, and a durable sort of parasol is not amiss to finish the effect. A pretty suit is made of checked blue and white, with a white lawn gilet, and a plain blue taffeta ribbon tie, and white seam cording. It is cut higher in front than in back, showing the gilet plainly, and the white belt. The way the tie crosses and comes down through a slit on either side, hanging well below the waist, is new and pleasing. The skirt is full, but somewhat held in at the hem. The white seam cording edges the coat and sleeves and goes around the top of the hem.

A smart basque frock is made of gray madras or chambray, with white linen collar, cuffs and gilet effect. This is tight around the waist, coming well down in front, trimly. White under-sleeves come down under the sleeves, which are full and flaring at the bottom. The neck is one of the quite high, round ones—like the Eton school-boys. A little black tie finishes it, and tiny buttons come all the way down the front of the basque.

A dress of yellow gingham with a plaid gingham knife plaiting is excellent. The blouse falls full over a belt which shows only in the front and under the belt slip the ends of the collar, which form a deep fichu. This is coatlike in effect, with a deep turnup at the bottom of the blouse. The plaid knife plaiting edges the collar and cuffs and turns smartly up at the blouse hem and around the skirt.

When we stop to think about it we readily acknowledge that there is nothing which so makes or mars the tout ensemble so much as the appearance of the neck.

## MODISH IDEAS

Organdie or batiste folds are in general use for trimming purposes on cotton and silk dresses.

Hats of gingham are mentioned for the little girls. They are usually of the mushroom or poke shapes.

Fillet lace trimming and hand embroidery are prominent on sheer white voile and organdie summer dresses.

For dressy wear the newest black satin slipper has a narrow collar all the way round, of cut jet and no buckle.

Perhaps the most modish coat collar is the one which is rather wide, softly draped and merging into long revers or an elongated vest front.

Black velvet handbags are to be used this summer with the lingerie dresses. These new bags also come in very dark brown and blue, with ivy-rose frames.

There are many sleeve innovations—some revivals of old fashions that are quaint and pretty, while others are new ideas smartly carried out in new materials.

## Garden Apron.

The necessity of some place to put seeds when making garden gives one this idea: Use any desired material for an apron with a plain bib to pin on dress. Make a large pocket, reaching halfway up the apron and from one side to the other. Sew this into various-sized pockets. An apron made of heavy cotton cloth will last for years and be greatly appreciated by the user.

## Brass Beds.

Brass bedsteads will keep in much better condition if occasionally rubbed over with a little sweet oil; afterward wipe well with a dry duster and polish with a leather.

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**SUNDAY SCHOOL**  
**LESSON**

By Rev. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D.,  
Teacher of English Bible in the Moody  
Bible Institute of Chicago.)  
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LESSON FOR AUGUST 18

SOME ACTIVITIES OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

LESSON TEXT—Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35; 6:1-4.  
GOLDEN TEXT—Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless his name.—Psalms 100:4.  
DEVOTIONAL READING—Psalms 122:1-4.  
ADDITIONAL MATERIAL—Mark 11:35-37; Acts 10:33; 1 Corinthians 3:9; 12:4-29; Ephesians 4:1-16.

**I. The Church Worshipping (Acts 2: 42-47).**

As the result of Peter's preaching at Pentecost about three thousand persons confessed Christ in baptism. That their conversion was genuine is evidenced by what they did:

1. Continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (v. 42).

Continuance and steadfastness are infallible proofs of the genuineness of one's conversion. They not only were steadfast, but they kept themselves in the school of Christ—came regularly to the meetings to be instructed by the apostles. Christians cannot grow unless they feed upon God's word. Trashy novels and story papers will not make Christians grow. The "sincere milk of the word" is essential to growth (1 Peter 2:2).

2. Kept themselves in the fellowship of the apostles (v. 42).

This doubtless means that they attached themselves to the church and sought the friendship of Christian people. Christian growth is helped by association with Christian people, not by withdrawal. One who expects sanctification in seclusion will be doomed to disappointment.

3. They went regularly to the communion table (v. 42).

In the "breaking of bread" they symbolically fed upon Christ. True worshippers will not neglect this means of grace.

4. They went regularly to the prayer meeting (v. 42).

Prayer is the very breath of soul growth. It is as necessary to spiritual life as breathing is to physical life. The result of such life was:

(1) Wholesome fear (v. 43). (2) A powerful ministry (v. 43). Many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. (3) Mutual ministry (vv. 44-45). Those who give themselves to Christ are large-hearted and generous, giving of their substance to help the poor and needy. (4) A constant worship (v. 46). (5) Unity and gladness (v. 46). (6) Gracious influence among the people (v. 47). (7) A perpetual growth (v. 47). Where such genuineness is manifest there will be growth. The Lord added to the church daily—there was a continuous revival.

**II. The Church Witnessing (Acts 4: 31-35).**

Note the characteristics of a witnessing church:

1. A praying church (v. 31).

For every want and every need they betook themselves to God in prayer.

2. A spirit-filled church (v. 31).

When they prayed the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together. They were all filled with the holy spirit. The spirit is given in answer to prayer (Luke 11:13).

3. A testifying church (v. 31).

The ministers had boldness in testimony.

4. A united church (v. 32).

They were of one heart and one soul, united in the one body to the one head by the holy spirit.

5. A charitable and generous church (v. 32).

They held nothing back from those who had need.

6. Its membership possessed unblemished characters; great grace was upon them all.

**III. The Church Overcoming Difficulties (Acts 6:1-4).**

Out of the beautiful fellowship of this early church grew a peculiar difficulty. Among the Grecian Jews there came a feeling that partiality had been shown in the distribution of funds. The difficulty was recognized at once and properly dealt with. The apostles refused to allow this to divert their ministry, so they proceeded with the initial organization in the church, the appointment of deacons. We have here set forth the qualifications of those who are to look after the business end of the church.

1. Good report (v. 3).

It is highly important that even the business affairs of the church should be in the hands of honest men. The church cannot afford to appoint men of doubtful reputation to do such work.

2. Full of the holy spirit (v. 3).

The temporalities of the church should only be entrusted to spirit-filled men.

3. Full of wisdom (v. 3).

The highest wisdom is required in the handling of the business side of church life, and this should be done by men other than ministers. Ministers should give themselves to prayer and preaching.

**Bible and Education.**

Men cannot be well educated without the Bible. It ought, therefore, to hold the chief place of learning throughout Christendom; and I do not know of a higher service that could be rendered to this republic than the bringing about of this desirable result.

—E. Nott.

**WELL PAID WOMEN  
BUY NEW CLOTHES**

Female Workers Taking Place of Men, Make Good Use of Their Income.

**DAINTIER FROCKS IN DEMAND**

Dinner Gowns and Evening Wraps Are Added to Many Wardrobes—Conditions Have Lifted the Art of Dress.

New York.—A wounded Anzac had come to America to lecture. He bore some honorable scars on his body, which were symbolized by stripes on his arm. A woman touched the stripes and asked what were his worst wounds. He described one, which was a clean hole made by a bullet. In his informal Anzac manner, he asked if she would like to see it. She would. So would everyone else at the luncheon. So he showed her the bullet hole below the collar bone.

"How very disappointing!" she exclaimed. "I expected a great gash."

The Anzac buttoned his collar thoughtfully, and turning to the table said: "Now, I ask you, what are we going to do, with women if they begin to expect so much of men in this war?"

And what will they do with them? Men have begun to expect so much of themselves, that the situation is the most vitally interesting thing on this planet, next to the war, observes a distinguished fashion writer.

Women are gaining so much more by this war than they ever demanded, that many are puzzled and some are near-hysterical.

Once we were a contented race; then we became an unquiet sex; then we became a restless force; and then we became a militant power.

Those with the keenest visions saw ahead of them a long struggle. They outlined the propaganda of self-education for women; they lectured to men and of men concerning what we should have in the way of industry and commercial opportunity. Whenever men said that we were not sufficiently educated to take over the commercial burdens of the world, we retorted that we would never be educated if we did not begin to study.

**Women Spend More Money.**  
Of one thing the prophets are sure; that women, making money, will spend more. Not having to ask for it, they will cease to be petulant about it. When a woman knows there are three thousand jobs open to her and that she can command as good a salary as the man she sent to war, she is not going to be niggardly about getting new clothes, enjoying herself and refurnishing her house.

Human nature never changes, no matter what else changes on this planet, and spending will be a woman's antidote to hard work. If she has been

five knowledge of what other women want, and do not want. With training, which will give them a cool head, a smooth tongue and the ambition to rise, they will make admirable clerks, floorwalkers, heads of departments, buyers and shopkeepers.

It is toward the apparel business that they are rapidly drifting. That is their desire, and all their preliminary training of the centuries has fitted them for this particular sector of industry. Being in the business, they will spend more money on clothes, and they will influence the expenditures of other women.

This is the situation which all serious-minded women realize and which will probably dominate the country before peace is concluded.

It is useless to tell women that they must not buy clothes. The reformers mean well, but they are planting seed



Black satin, tulle and lace. There is a long tunic, which starts with a pointed bodice built of the satin and swings free over a tight petticoat of black Chantilly tulle. There is a shawl of black tulle, which stands well away from the shoulders and reaches to the elbows.

on barren soil. There must be some pleasure in this world, or we would all go mad with the pain and anxiety of it and if you ask three million women to work for their living, you must give them the chance to deck themselves out in a bit of gay plumage and go out and eat and laugh; otherwise, they will become useless for all service, patriotic or industrial.

**Demand for Evening Clothes.**  
Let me tell you an odd thing about this development of women's work, which has been brought about not only through their service in paying positions, but in war relief work.

It is the growing demand for evening clothes by women who have heretofore never indulged in them. We are only following in the footsteps of human nature as it has asserted itself in France and England during the last eighteen months. Paris has shown an extraordinary interest in this development, and the London thinkers and merchants have found it to be an engrossing by-product of the war.

Evening dress has always been a thing for the luxurious. It has been indulged in by those whose lives were more or less given to leisure. Millions of women have not considered it necessary to change their somber street clothes into low or half-low, fragile ones for the evening meal or evening gayeties. The street suit, with a few changes, has served during the waking hours. The shirtwaist and sport skirt have filled in the rest of the service needed.

But this condition no longer exists in Europe, and it has changed in America in the twinkling of an eye. Why?

Women have more money; they have more opportunities; industry, charity, war relief, hospital service and committee work have brought women from the depths of social obscurity into hourly contact with those who lead fashions and live leisurely lives.

All of this has lifted the art of dress instead of degrading it. It enlivens life; it brightens the prospect of our sacrifices; it is a light to our endurance.

There were days when a woman used her motor coat for any chance evening gayety. Today she is asking for one of the vast assemblage of evening capes that the shops and dress-makers offer to this new type of buyer.

These new wraps have extraordinary charm. They are figured, whereas they used to be solid. They are lavishly trimmed with fur, regardless of summer weather.

Chiffon, in great Dresden patterns, is used over silver or gold metallic cloth, or a lining of plain satin.

Dark colors are chosen, as well as light. The two new blues, "Liberty" and "Blue Devil," are chosen in crepe or chiffon that has an immense pink, scarlet or white and yellow flower on it.

There are other wraps made of Dolly Varden, flowered white chiffon which are lined with lace, with mauve or pink chiffon as an interlining.

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**Realms of the  
Commonplace**  
By IMES MACDONALD

(Copyright, 1918, by the McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

Nell Bradley sat on the edge of her uncle's desk and swung her feet thoughtfully.

"Well, Winkie," said Mr. Bradley, "what's on your mind?"

"You know, Uncle Dad," she said gravely. "I believe I'll get married!"

Whereat Mr. Bradley's sense of humor overcame the gravity of the situation to such an extent that he lay back in his chair and roared with laughter.

"Have you decided on the victim?" he asked, finally.

"Well, no," she said thoughtfully. "I haven't."

"Then why worry about it until the right chap comes along?" he said practically. "You're young yet."

"I'm twenty-four," she reminded him, "and I'm lonesome. With all the nice young men in the world why should I be lonesome?"

"No reason at all, Winkie. But you've had plenty of chances," grinned Mr. Bradley, "and if you're so keen on matrimony why didn't you take one of them?"

"Too commonplace," she commented, vaulting on her feet.

"My dear," he laughed, "matrimony's the most commonplace thing in the world. It is the one thing that is done consistently, persistently, and over and over again until death does its part."

"Cynical old thing!" she said, making a dive at him and muzzing his hair as she skipped toward the door.

"Bet you can't pull it off in a week," he shouted at her, as the door shut.

She came back laughing. "How much?" she bargained.

He studied her with a grin. "Bet you a dowry of twenty thousand dollars against your staying single for five more years, you can't get married in a week."

"Make it a month," she said, after a moment of deep thought, "and I'll take you."

"Understand," he conditioned, "it's to be a bona fide marriage. No frame-up proposition. You've got to live with the chap as his wife for at least six months."

"All right," she agreed, "write it out."

"Now, you'd better get busy," he grinned, after he had written out the



"I'm Twenty-Four."

agreement and she had tucked it down into her blouse. But she only made a little face at him as she vanished through the door.

As she descended in the elevator, however, her mind was busily running over the eligibles of her acquaintance. Some of those who had loved and lost the charming Nell had married elsewhere; others of them were engaged or trying to be—also elsewhere. Anyway, they all belonged to the commonplace. The man who loves and loses always becomes commonplace to the one he's lost.

However, if you asked anyone in Bellington who was the most commonplace young man in the otherwise eligible class, the almost universal answer would have been, "Marcus Barnes." But strangely enough the image of Marcus Barnes had already taken shape in the back of Nell Bradley's hitherto particular mind. Never once had he called on her or even expressed the desire to do so. Never had he happened to be her dinner partner, nor had she even danced with him more than once or twice. And she suddenly remembered that he danced rather well, too, although she had never thought of it before, and she had known him for years!

In the meantime, Marcus Barnes, the most commonplace young man in Bellington, left the bank wherein he earned his daily bread and stepped across the street and down a little alleyway into a court where his roadster was parked. Two minutes later he turned down Spring street, and as he swung around the corner at Ninth, a new-born bond, he noticed Nell Brad-

ley standing at the corner waiting for a car.

"Hello, Nell," he grinned, as he slid up to the curb. "Hop in and I'll take you home."

"She hopped obediently, with a little laugh. "You running a jitney bus, Mark?" she asked.

"No," he chuckled, as he reached across her lap to draw the door shut. And then as they started with a jerk: "This is a kissney bus—pay as you leave—kindly have exact fare ready."

"Why, how funny," she thought, as she laughed into his eyes. "I never knew he was like that." And she noticed how tastefully he was dressed, almost fastidiously in a conservative sort of way. But after a few moments of chatter on her part and a most surprising silence in his, they drew up in front of her home.

"Pay as you leave," he reminded her, as she stepped from the car.

"Silly," she said, turning away toward the house.

"Piker," said the commonplace Marcus Barnes.

"I'm not," she returned hotly.

"Well, I told you what the fare was when you got in," he said firmly.

"You don't expect me to be kissing you out here before all the neighbors, do you?" she demanded.

"Makes no difference to me where it happens," he said, shutting off his engine and vaulting out over the door.

It was the most commonplace moment of the most commonplace hour that the commonplace Marcus Barnes had ever known, as he marched the somewhat surprised Miss Bradley up the steps and into the hall.

She could see that she was in for it, but then, what did it matter? She would extend him one of those little impersonal and indefinite kisses which she reserved for very young or very old and feeble male relatives. But she hadn't counted on the commonplace Mr. Barnes. The first thing she knew she found that she fitted into his arms as snugly and tightly as if she were made to be there. She shut her eyes and waited, but he only held her a little closer. She flirted open her eyes a wee bit to investigate the cause of the delay and flushed to find that he was studying her upturned face with a strange and puzzled wonderment.

"I never noticed before how lovely you are, Nell," he murmured, and then he collected his fare slowly and deliberately, not once, but seven separate times, which wasn't so bad for the commonplace Marcus Barnes.

Everyday during the following week Nell Bradley expected to hear from the efficient fare collector, but it seemed that Marcus Barnes had had his moment and then shyly subsided. Ten days, a whole third of the allotted time passed and still there was no word. Miss Bradley was getting panicky, for her time was getting short, so with a prim determination about the set of her chin, and a suggestion of color under the smooth skin of her curved cheek, she decided to consult the assistant cashier of the First National bank about some securities she held.

The commonplace Mr. Barnes arose from his desk and looked just once into the eyes of Nell Bradley—and then believing in preparedness, he dismissed his stenographer.

The gallant Miss Bradley had begun to get cold feet. "It's—a—about those securities of mine, Mark," she started feebly.

"Securities nothing," said Marcus, the commonplace, reaching for the girl's hand. "South-bound cars, pay as you enter!" And he had already rung up three fares when the austere voice of the bank's president came testily from the doorway.

"For heaven's sake! Why don't you two young people get married—and do your kissing at home?"

"Shall we?" demanded Marcus Barnes of the girl in his arms.

"Let's," agreed Nell Bradley with a vague excitement in her thumping heart.

And the bank's president chuckled the news via the telephone into the amused ear of his old friend and crony, Nell's Uncle, George Bradley.

"Let this be a lesson to you, George! Never gamble with women—they have such winning ways—ha—ha!"

"Great stuff, eh?" said the cynical Mr. Bradley. "Couldn't have lost a bet in a better cause now, could I? Youth, and love and marriage—fine business!"

Meanwhile the commonplace Marcus Barnes, dragging Nell Bradley about with a commonplace marriage license in his pocket, was hunting a commonplace preacher to perform a commonplace ceremony.

**Too Much for Mother.**  
Patience—You know father's some talker.

Patrice—So I believe.

"When he makes a public speech mother says he doesn't know when to stop."

"He does speak for a long time, I've heard."

"Well, he was to make a speech last night, and mother asked him to be short, and father told mother when she wanted him to stop talking to raise her hand."

"And did she?"

"No. You see, about the time she should have raised her hand she was asleep with a lot of others in the audience."

**In the Stone Age.**  
"We're getting soft and effete," declared the first cave man.

"How?"

"Look at my brother's daughter. She's about to be married. You know the part of the ceremony where the groom taps the bride on the head?"

"Yes."

"Well, they're rehearsing with a stuffed club."

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