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Forgive Us This Day Our Idiosyns

Eda Lord Murphy

Iowa State College

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Try a summery collar with your old wool dress, and don't admit your shoddiness.

The Shoddy Time of Year

By HARRIET SCHLEITER

THIS is the shoddiest time of the year for the whole world. Even prim and precise Dame Nature isn't quite up to standard. Her gown of snow-white is growing sadly out of season. She knows it, too. Anything too early to don her green frocks, and flower trimmed creations, so she goes about garbed in the grimy gray that was once her snow-white gown. The rest of us feel the same way about our winter clothes, but we are such copy cats that we are afraid to wear our spring dresses until Nature takes the lead by putting on her's. We wear our coats over our shoddiness and plan lovely bouffant taffetas to wear a little later.

If you'll forgive me for putting it so crudely I'll say that there is no time like the present for doling up. I don't mean to go shivering along in gingham when the wild winds are still blowing, but a little touch of gingham or some other summery fabric is a great help. Try it out in a new little collar for your wool dress and you will surely want to leave your coat open at the neck to show your coat collar. Cutting a large triangle, topped by a narrow folded band, which is fastened around the neck and finished in the front by a little buckle.

And now may I beg of you all, please don't spoil the new collars you are going to make by wearing with them a knit row folded band, which is fastened around the neck and finished in the front by a little buckle.

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Perhaps you have the kind of a wool dress whose sleeves are fastened on a four-in-hand. They have their place with a starched shirt waist and some kinds or sweaters and suits. But they are worn about ten times to one in their rightful place. And they are the ruin of many an otherwise well planned costume. "Go easy on 'em!" please.

As for waists, you can buy cotton so cheaply now that it hardly pays to make one, except for the little touches of individuality one can add to them. A blouse of pongee with peasant embroidery in yarns is enough to make any dress perk up and hold its head high thru the remaining days of winter and early spring.

If your dress has loose three-quarter length sleeves, just leave them in and wear your blouse under them. I saw a most amusing wool dress of this type become a "chawming model" by the addition of a bright red crepe de chine blouse and a band of cross stitching in red and tan around the bottom of the skirt and the sleeves.

One's whole blouse isn't essential. You can make just enough sleeves to extend below your old sleeves, and it looks just as well, really.

I realize, however, that the leading problem of this day and age is not new sleeves and new collars. The thing that wrinkles the most fair brows is the lengthening problem. You can't just let down the hems, for the very good reason that many of the dresses are hemless. When it is possible they simply shriek of made-overness, which is an unforgivable thing in a dress. But let us raise a chant of thankfulness to wise Dame Fashion that she allows us the boon of an uneven hem line, swooping to the ground in places and curving up inches higher in other places. Have you tried that out on your dress that has a wide straight hem?

And for the hemless ones try a sash, a wide one on each side or narrow ones, or a wide one in the back that tries to pretend it's a train. Any kind of a sash is good and what could be simpler for the lengthening problem.

Panels are another of the easier methods; long panels on the side, and the rest of the skirt quite short. Black velvet panels inserted in a canton crepe are lovely. They may hang from the waist line or the hip line as desired.

If your crepe dress is too tight as well as too short, split it up the sides and wear an under slip of satin, or cotton.

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Forgive Us This Day Our Idiosyns

By EDA LORD MURPHY, Associate Professor of Home Economics

OUR sins of omission and commission have long been on our minds, but the little annoying personal traits, which for a better word we shall call "idiosyns," have always seemed justifiable. They do not appear important enough to be forgiven, (except daily and hourly by a more or less loving family.)

In the Atlantic Monthly of December, 1920 Frances Lester Warner wrote on this subject, calling her essay "Love's Minor Frictions." To read it is to chuckle. To have read it is to recognize yourself in the spotlight, guilty of causing minor frictions which have almost precipitated major operations.

From the grandfather who slips his tea with the sound of rushing waters and the grandmother whose ideas of convention do not preclude her tucking her napkin under her chin, down to the youngest child who frankly and freely tells the family affairs, brilliant, examples of our personal and peculiar habits may be enumerated.

In practically every family there is one person who dashes to the door to get the mail directly from the hands of the post man. If it happens to be a small brother it would be harmless enough, except that he holds it firmly in his fist while he makes deliberate distribution to the members of the household. One's annoyance is doubly aggravated by his trenchant comments. Big sister holds her breath until the ordeal is over.

This is a trial of faith that worketh patience. She, who aches to receive her letters inconspicuously and to hide in the corner to enjoy them, becomes the butt of such remarks as, "Well what did he say today?" or, "Who is the nut who writes to you on pink stationery?" or, "Oh! Gee! He's at a swell hotel, ain't he?"

This infinite curiosity about other persons mail is not limited to small boys, since theirs is perhaps not so much curiosity as it is the satisfaction of teasing. To grownups curiosity is perhaps the unaltered curiosity. Brave are they who, living in an apartment house, are willing for all the neighbors to shuffle the mail.

"I see you had a letter from so-and-so"
Visiting one another but the child will never stop probing the depths of the ions for the frivolous. The Sunday He is too curious and adventurous to will remember how irksome it grew to find among all of them that of the matter can be eliminated. The youth who enters the neighborhood because of this that children are the real guests of the world.

As the Sunday paper, it is well that there are easily divisible parts for the various members: "funnies" for the fretful, editorials for the editorially minded, pictures for the movie minded and fashions for the frivolous. The Sunday paper has been decried as offering unfair competition with church and Sunday school, but by its mere divisibility, it has prevented incalculable crimes.

A virtue that easily passes into the best idiosyncrasies is the love of fresh air. For the sake of health, there should be a fresh air fiend in every family. But how many a modern daughter, full of hygiene and good works, has been the bane of her grandmother! She would open windows that had been locked for years! She would air out the living rooms when they had just begun to get warm "of a morning," and have a howling draft blowing around your head in the kitchen. Doing good to one's family becomes an idiosyncrasy when distemper, dyspepsia and dissen- sion are aggravated.

Will Mr. Edison please answer the questions, "How do you choose records for the average family, and whose preferences should be considered when giving an informal concert?" Father of course hates jazz, never failing to make use of the well known bromide, "There isn't a bit of music to it. It's just noise!" His choice is an Irish policeman making love to a maid. The children cry for "Farnyard Frolics" or "Mr. Smith Mim- ies The Circus Animals." Big brother demands a male quartet arrangement of "Sing Me to Sleep." Mother usually waits till they are all out of the house, then listens carefully to Alma Gluck sing "Carry Me Back—." Nowdays, all persons can be divided into two classes, those who really drive cars, and those who really don't. Those who really don't are acknowledged by themselves to be invaluable in the back seat. No one has yet estimated the tragedies that have been averted by the far-sighted, and the near-sighted, and the cross-eyed persons on the back seat.

There is one man who intends to solve the problem by having a car built with five stationary steering wheels and two folding ones, so that all the persons in a seven passenger car may do as they see fit. Love will find a way, the coroner will find what remains.

Perhaps our individual preferences more or less savagely imposed on our loved ones, develop, in them, the saving grace of tolerance. Perhaps their idiosyns develop, in us, the will to "do unto others—".

The Youthful Guest

By ESTHER ELLEN RAYBURN

As long as there are children there will be guests. Grandparents might stop visiting one another but the child will visit as long as there is anything to visit. He is too curious and adventurous to ever stop probing the depths of the neighbor's house. Thus it is that whenever a new family moves into the neighborhood the children all know everything about the new family—what they have in the house, what they all look like, and a few of the family secrets long before their less curious parents ever do. It is because of this that children are the real guests of the world.

Infants behave in various ways when calling on friends. What a joy it is to find among all of them that "visiting go" one child who doesn't demand constant attention, who can amuse himself with what his hostess provides and can treat food in a calm manner. There are any number of children of whom a hostess quickly tires and about whom she says unpleasant things to her husband, but she finds few who know how to behave when visiting.

Think back on the days when you were receiving the visits rather than taking your own child to call and perhaps you will remember how irksome it grew to have your friend's child constantly interrupting the conversation and complain- ing because he couldn't find anything to do.

Good table manners are important in children. Perfection is not to be expected in the infant of one day even to the boy or girl of fifteen years, but there are some few things which help to make him an agreeable guest. It is pleasing for a hostess to behold in her small visitor some knowledge of the use of the silver and food on the table. What can be more disgusting than to see a child cram food hastily into his mouth as if it were a rare occasion and it was up to him to make the most of it!

Family history records countless whippings and severe scoldings which small people have suffered because they did not behave as they might when calling with mother. A guest is a curious sort of a person. Few people know how to act in such a situation and there are some who are quite at a loss to know how a guest should be treated. Since this is true it is small wonder that children are rather bewildered when they find them- selves in such a position.

If there has been no foundation of good manners and behavior given at home it is useless to expect that your child will be a model when he is visiting. Why neglect his training and then punish him because he is ashamed of his conduct?

Children are more or less, and considerably more, images of the people they imitate and do things as they see others doing them. Embarrassing moments for parents can be made less by home training. It is so easy to forget in your personal admiration for your child that hostesses cannot enjoy a naughty, bolstersch child.

A hostess has a real job on her hands if she entertains successfully a group of children. Children remember for a long time the unusually nice things that are done for them. In the hostess seeks to make secure a reputation as a real hostess she has only to get the approval of the loss mature members of the community.

It is very important that a child who is the only youngster in a group of grown- ups be not forgotten. The hostess must treat him as she treats other guests. Children are quick to notice and criticize. A mother's careful instruction and training may all be lost when a careless hostess does not live up to the things the child has been taught to expect of a hostess.

It used to be proper to allow the children to eat after all the grown-ups had finished. That has rather gone in to disregard and it is perhaps well. It rather tended to teach the children patience and the importance of elders, but how often it has hurt their small dignities to be shoved aside.

Mothers, children and hostesses are all involved in the question of whether a child is a good guest or not. The mother and child have of course the biggest part to do with it but even the hostess who fails in her part after the mother and child have lived up to theirs. Thus small guests need training. It is quite as important that the children appear well as that you do yourself. As they have been called the guests of the world, they are the guests of all guests to be carefully trained.