WOMEN and THE HOME

Dorothy Dix's Letter Box

How to Treat Snobbish Neighbors—What Can a Young Girl Talk About to Hold a Boy's Attention?—Can a Father Who Has Money Be Made to Support His Family?

Dear Miss Dix—Our next-door neighbors won't speak to us. This is the first time anything of this sort has occurred to us, and we are hurt. Evidently they regard us as a species of inferior animal, for they pass in and out, never saying "How do you do?" or anything. Doesn't it say somewhere in the Bible, "Love thy neighbor as thyself?"

It is true that we live in two entirely different worlds, they in an aristocratic and exclusive circle, while we are just plain, everyday Americans. It is true that we go to different churches, and our ancestors came over much later, and from an entirely different land from theirs. But is that any reason for their ungodly, un-American and inhuman practice of complete aloofness and isolation? PLEBEIAN.

Answer:

Certainly not, Plebian, but just think how much more they are missing than you are and sympathize with them, instead of being hurt by them.

There are no people that I am so sorry for as I am for snobs. Think, to begin with, how uncertain any one must be of his own position who is in such terror of losing it that he is afraid to speak to any one that he doesn't know to be of his own class or the class above him!

A king, or a duke, or a lord, or any one whose rank is fixed and settled, can afford to hobnob with a guttersnipe if he finds the guttersnipe interesting. As a matter of fact, he often does have friends of the poorest social degree. It was said that during the war the Prince of Wales chummed with any Tommy who came along. But people who are holding on to society by their eyelids have to be particular whom they know, and when you see a man or woman who dares not speak to any one who is not in the Blue Book or Bradstreet's, they deserve your sympathy, because they have to put on the chains for fear of skidding.

Then think of all the snobs miss of warm human companionship! There is nothing in giving your neighbor the glassy eye that starts you out on the day with a cheerful, contented, God's-in-his-heaven-all's-well-with-the-world feeling about the heart. It takes the hearty handclasp, the kindly inquiry, the cheery greeting of those about us to give us that reaction. Why, there's a kick to it that nothing else has in just knowing that the people next door to us like us, that they are interested in us, that they keep an eye on our belongings when we are gone and care enough for us to bring our dog back when it strays away.

Not to have known the joy of having real neighbors, the kind that send you in half a pie when it is especially luscious, who fight with you through that awful night when the baby has the croup and every breath seems the last, and who are just as pleased and proud as you are when John graduates at the head of his class; why, that's to have missed one of the best things in life.

The snobs never have any neighbors. They only live near people. They never have any friends. They only have acquaintances. Nobody cares whether they are sick or well, happy or miserable. They are as lonesome in the heart of a big city as they would be alone on a desert island, and they are always peevish and discontented, because, the way we are built, we have to have somebody to share things with; we have to have somebody to tell things to, and there is nobody whose opinion we value so much as those of our neighbors.

So, Plebeian, quit worrying over your snobbish neighbors. Just be sorry for them, and cultivate a sense of humor. They are a great joke if you will only get the right slant on them. DOROTHY DIX.

* * * *

Dear Miss Dix—I am a young girl and am considered very pretty, but my trouble is not being able to talk to boys. What can a girl talk about to hold a boy's attention? MARION.

Answer:

If you want to grip a boy's attention and make him think you are a spellbinder, talk to him about himself. That is a subject in which most of us are eternally interested, and there is not the slightest chance of boring us as long as you keep the spotlight focused on our many perfections.

Very few boys are averse to hearing how good-looking they are, and what a killing they make with the girls and how wonderfully they drive an automobile, and with what grace they dance, and so on, and so forth, ad infinitum. Sometimes you have to temper your flatteries with a little deft reserve and imply things rather than say them outright, but mostly you can put the loud needle on the phonograph and repeat the record as often as you like.

Above all, never tell a boy about your conquests. Never brag about how many boys cut in on your dances, and especially about how many boys have been in love with you. It is bad sportsmanship and makes a boy feel that you will be exhibiting his scalp to the next chap who comes along. And never tell one boy what another boy did for you by way of giving you a good time. It makes him feel that you think he is cheap, and that is fatal.

Don't try to show off before boys, or be highbrow. Just be human, and young, and frivolous, and easy to get along with. That's their number, too, and you will soon be chattering like magpies. DOROTHY DIX.

Farmer Brown's Boy Fears For Safety of Reddy Fox As the Hunters Go Forth

By THORNTON W. BURGESS.

Farmer Brown's Boy went down the Long Lane across the Green Meadows and up to the Old Pasture. On his freckled face there was a worried look. He was worried. He knew that the neighbor who had lost many chickens had fully made up his mind to get the Fox who had been stealing these chickens. That very morning he had come over and borrowed Bowser the Hound. A party of hunters was to start out with Bowser and other dogs to try to run down the thief. The thief might not be Reddy Fox or Mrs. Reddy, who lived up in the Old Pasture, but Farmer Brown's Boy was fearful that it might be.

"If Reddy Fox should be killed, the Green Meadows, the Green Forest and the Old Pasture never again would seem the same," thought Farmer Brown's Boy. "Those hunters will shoot any Fox they get a chance to shoot, without knowing whether or not they have the real thief. I do hope those dogs will find the trail of some other Fox. If they happen to find Reddy's trail, they will be almost sure to find where he and Mrs. Reddy are living over in the Old Pasture, and if they happen to be caught at home, it will be the end of them. I do hope neither of them stole those chickens."

Farmer Brown's Boy had known for a long time just where that home was. He went straight there now. When he was near there he kept a sharp watch for feathers. Presently back of a big rock he saw what he was looking for, and what he didn't want to find. Scattered about on the grass and in the bushes were feathers. They were the feathers of a hen. They were speckled feathers.

Farmer Brown's Boy stood looking sadly down at those tell-tale feathers. He knew that the only speckled hens in all that neighborhood were the hens of the neigbor who had borrowed Bowser that morning, and who had been losing his chickens for some time. He knew beyond a doubt that either Reddy or Mrs. Reddy had stolen those chickens. Those speckled feathers so close to their home were absolute proof. He knew that if those hunters should find those feathers they would do their best to kill Reddy and Mrs. Reddy.

Farmer Brown's Boy stood looking sadly down at those telltale feathers.

What do you think Farmer Brown's Boy did? He went to work picking up those feathers. It was quite a job, for they were scattered all about. He even went way back to the house to get a paper bag to put them in. When he had picked up the last feather he sighed with relief.

"Now if those hunters come this way," said he to himself," they won't find any proof that Reddy or Mrs. Reddy had anything to do with the stealing of those chickens." Somehow he felt happier as he went over to the entrance to Reddy's home and tried to find out by the footprints in the sand at the entrance whether or not anyone was at home. He was so intent on studying those footprints that he failed to see a single little speckled feather caught in the bushes close to the doorway. If he had seen and picked up that feather it might have made a great difference to Reddy and Mrs. Reddy.

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The next story: "The Feather Is Found."

DARKENED WINDOWS

By CORNELIA KANE RATHBONE.

The Third Voice.

Graham lingered so long behind the swinging door in the passage interviewing his soul, that on his return to the library he found that the coroner had arrived during his absence, and, after receiving Inspector Breitman's report, had permitted Mr. Hurst's body to be removed to his own room. Only the blood-soaked blotting paper remained now to tell of the tragedy of the night. Dr. Jordan, friend and family physician of Mr. Hurst, was also there. He had come to the house, it appeared, with no knowledge of the crime, and was quite overcome by the news. He assented at once when Graham begged him to go to Evadne. He had heard Breitman's report, therefore needed no explanations, and with a muttered, "Poor child! poor child!" hurried from the room.

"We will have the servants up now," said the coroner.

Flint left the room at that, and soon was marshaling them in one by one. Two hard-faced, middle-aged Swedes, cook and chambermaid, came first, and were in turn quickly dismissed. They had left the house early in the evening, and, lacking masculine escort, had gone together to the theatre. They had nothing to report. Denis, too, had no light to throw on the mystery. According to his statement, he had started shortly after 8 o'clock on an errand for Mrs. Hurst. He liked the fresh air and so had walked to his destination. It was some distance, yes, West Eighty-sixth street, but he liked walking. He had received the parcel which now lay on the table where he had dropped it, close to the bloodstained blotting paper, and had then returned home. The parcel he explained, contained some valuable lace which Mrs. Hurst had been having cleaned and mended. The first he knew of the murder was when he had seen his master lying dead. He had noticed nothing suspicious downstairs. The doors and windows were all secure. Checked by the coroner when he broke into an excited accusation of Mrs. Hurst, unsupported by proof or by evidence except her bloodstained sleeve, he went muttering out of the room through a door masked by a section of the bookcase, the door for which Graham had looked when first he heard Sergeant Bassett's step on the stairs. The door stood open now, swung back by some hand which knew the hidden fastening, in order to permit the passing of Mr. Hurst's body.

After Denis had withdrawn, the kitchen maid, Molly Brady, was called. It quickly developed that she, unlike the others, had a story to tell. Breathing heavily and twisting a coarse, much-embroidered handkerchief in her thick fingers she poured it out excitedly, prompted by an occasional question from the coroner.

"Yes, sir. Mrs. Hurst give us tickets, an' she says how them as has a young man was to have two. So I asks Jim Healey will he go, an' he says he will. He's a nice young feller that I've been going with. He drives for Mr. Jones, the grocer, sir. Well, I waited, an' waited, an' he didn't come, an' all the other girls went off, an' I set in the kitchen with me hat on an' me two tickets in me hand, an' I cried, I felt that bad. No, sir, I couldn't hear anything as went on upstairs, the kitchen is back. I set there because I didn't want to seem to be watchin' out like, in the front. An' by and by, just to cheer meself up a bit, I went upstairs, meaning to take a peek into the drawin' room. I does that sometimes when the family is out. I like to look at the fine things. No, sir, I didn't go no further than the top of the kitchen stairs because the family wasn't out after all. They was talkin' awful loud, quarrelin' as you might say. No, sir, I couldn't hear what they said, sir. No, sir, I couldn't say who all was talkin'—there was a man an' a woman, I know that much—an' maybe there was another man—I ain't sure. Do I think it was the mistress, is it, sir? No, sir, I—" she hesitated. That is—I don't know, sir. I ain't sure—I—I——"

Graham, for no reason he could account for, suddenly turned and glanced across the room. In the open doorway, through which he had disappeared stood Denis making imperative signs behind the backs of the detectives, to the girl who faced him.

As she stammered into silence, Flint leaned forward and whispered to the coroner, who nodded.

"If you aren't sure whether or not it was Mrs. Hurst's voice you heard how about it's being Miss Hurst's?" he asked. "Did the woman's voice sound to you like hers?"

The question took Graham by surprise. He glanced again across to the door. The old man was still there. He was glancing across at the girl, his head thrust forward, his fingers curving, clawlike, as if making ready to strike, like some fierce bird defending its young. The impression was only momentary; the next instant Graham was looking into vacancy; Denis had vanished; not however, before he had imposed his will upon the girl.

"No, sir, oh, no, sir—it couldn't have been her was there. I seen her going out this evening, I remember now. With me own two eyes I seen her, so I couldn't have heard her, could I, sir?"

"Not very well if she was somewhere else," smiled the coroner, who had what some people called a pleasant way with him. "But now tell me, did you hear a shot at any time?"

"No, sir, I heard no shot; I heard nothin' but Jim Healey's whistle what he gives when he does be waitin' on me outside. He doesn't come in often, not likin' the cook, sir. I heard it tonight while I was listening to the scrap, an' I slips down quick an' goes out to him—havin' me hat on, an' me two tickets in me hand like I said, sir."

"Did you look at the clock before you went out?"

"I did, sir, at the kitchen clock I looked. It was terrible late—twenty minutes past eight it was. We lost a lot of the show. The way Jim come to be late, sir——"

"I'm sure he had a good excuse," interrupted the coroner jocosely, "but just now I want to hear something more about that second man whose voice you thought you heard. You can't be sure about it, eh?"

"Well, I'm pretty sure, sir, but I wouldn't want to swear to it. Once or twice I thought I heard another voice—not so thunderous."

"And whose was the thunderous voice?"

"Oh, Mr. Hurst's, sir. I know his voice—it frightens me when he's put out, sir."

"Hello! this is interesting," he exclaimed. "Looks as if Mr. Hurst had been changing his will, doesn't it? I, Hannibal Hurst, etc., etc., hereby revoke, etc., etc., last will and testament. That's it, isn't it! Then Est—isn't the daughter's name Estelle, doctor? Yes? Well, there we are. He was making a new will, that's sure. The big question is: "What was he meaning to do? Was Miss Estelle Hurst going to benefit or was she going to lose? It might make a lot of difference if we knew that. Do you know what the will was which he seems to have been revoking, Mr. Graham?"

"No, I don't, I never saw it," Graham answered, bending over to study the fragment of scorched paper. "My uncle drew it, I suppose—at least our firm had always had charge of Mr. Hurst's affairs."

"How long does Judge Graham expect to be out of town?"

"About a week, I believe. I shall telegraph him to return at once, though. The ladies will need somebody whom they know to act for them."

"Don't they know you?" queried Breitman.

"No; I am only the very unimportant junior partner, you remember. I have never met Miss Hurst till I met her on the steps this evening."

"Is that so?" commented Breitman in some surprise. "Then you approach the case without prejudice?"

"Absolutely," lied Graham glibly. The less his personal interest in the case was suspected the better, he felt. Otherwise the detectives would hardly take him into their confidence, and he must keep himself posted as far as possible as to the moves that Flint and Breitman, especially Breitman, might make against Evadne. That the inspector looked upon her with suspicion, he could not disguise from himself. No, his part must be that of the family lawyer, interested only in bringing the murderer of his client to justice; active in the service of Evadne only because she was Hannibal Hurst's wife. So far he thought he had played his part correctly. He searched the impassive face of Inspector Breitman for any indication that doubt existed in that mind trained to suspicion, as to the dispassionateness of his attitude. It seemed to him that it must be patent, even to a soulless animal like Breitman, that no man with blood in his veins could be other than fiercely partisan where Evadne Hurst was concerned.

Breitman, however, gave no sign of such perspicacity. Clearly Graham, Keith & Graham were standing surety for him; he was being considered not as a man but as a member of the firm which had the murdered man's interests in hand. Devoutly he thanked heaven for this junior partnership. But Flint now—Flint, he judged, had a keener perception, a subtler mind than Breitman. He was afraid of Flint. But Flint for the moment was paying no attention to him, he was busy pointing out to Dr. Jordan the spot where he had found the scrap of charred paper.

"Awfully clever of you," the doctor was exclaiming admiringly.

"Why, no, not clever a bit; just carelessness on the part of the other fellow," said Flint in his quiet, humorous way. "You see, I was looking for it, and you can always find things you are looking for if they are there to find."

"But why were you looking for it?" asked the doctor, much interested.

"Well, you noticed, of course, that Mr. Hurst must have been shot while in the act of writing; pen was still between his fingers. But whatever it was he was writing was gone. Naturally I looked in the fireplace. Amateurish job, leaving the pen there—or an interrupted one."

"No weapon found anywhere I suppose, Flint?" questioned Breitman.

"I haven's found any. Amateurish job again! Why the dickens didn't the fellow leave it to suggest suicide! From the position of the wound Mr. Hurst could easily have fired the shot himself. Looks to me like a green hand and an unpremeditated crime." Flint's tone was one of gentle complaint. He liked a neat job and one which taxed his powers. "I wonder whether Mr. Hurst kept a pistol here," he added.

"He did have one; he kept it in the right-hand middle drawer. I have seen it often," the doctor exclaimed. "It is not here now," he announced.

"But if that were the weapon used it would mean, wouldn't it, that the person who shot Mr. Hurst knew where to find it?" The doctor asked the question with a startled indrawing of the breath.

"Precisely," replied Flint.

"I don't see how, if Mr. Hurst were sitting at his desk, anybody could open a drawer and take the pistol without his knowledge," said Graham.

"That is a bit of a problem, I admit," returned Flint.

"There is more than one answer to it, though," boomed in the inspector. "The person may have possessed himself, or herself, of it before Mr. Hurst seated himself at the desk, some time, let us say, during the quarrel overheard by the kitchen maid. Or, again, it may have been taken earlier in the day and held in readiness for a convenient opportunity."

Graham was thinking quickly. "Or may not the house have been entered after the servants left," he interrupted, "and the pistol been found by the thief, who, surprised by Mr. Hurst's return, caught it up in alarm and concealed himself—behind those curtains, for instance?" He spoke with intimate knowledge of the curtains, they being those behind which he himself had hidden for a breathless five minutes. "Then, if discovered," he went on, improvising rapidly, "may he not have fired in self-defense? This occurs to me, because when I carried Mrs. Hurst to her room I found a window open there; somewhat unusual, I thought, in weather like this."

"A second-story man—that's your idea, eh? But Mrs. Hurst's account is that she was in her room until after the murder," Breitman reminded him.

Of course, that destroys my window theory," Graham admitted. "But there are other windows—or a door may have been left unlocked."

"Sergeant Bassett found the front door open, you remember," said Flint.

Graham could have blessed him. A sudden thought flashed into his mind. How was it, he questioned for the first time, that Sergeant Bassett had found the door open? Had it, after all, not closed when he thought he had heard it slam to? Or had somebody else been in the house while he was following that cry in the dark, somebody who had slipped away while he was on the floor above—somebody in haste?

Breitman's voice called him back to the present.

"The idea is possible, but not probable," the inspector was saying. "A burglar, an ordinary burglar, that is, doesn't shoot; it's too dangerous if he's caught. Besides, there is the time element to be considered, and the voices—a woman's voice, mind you. A man doesn't quarrel with a burglar—he calls the police."

"Or gets shot," persisted Graham; "and mayn't we have been making too much of the time element? If Mrs. Hurst hadn't been frightened and misstated the hour at which she entered the library, time would have entered less into the question. Now see, according to Colonel Sanford, Mr. Hurst must have returned home shortly after eight o'clock; according to the kitchen maid, the quarrel was going on at twenty minutes after eight—when it started we don't know, but according to my uncle's housekeeper, Mr. Hurst telephoned at half-past eight, so presumably the altercation was then over. Now, it wasn't till well after nine o'clock that Sergeant Bassett discovered the body. That gives from three-quarters of an hour to an hour for all sorts of things to happen. Why isn't it possible for Mr. Hurst to to have left the libary and gone to his room, so giving the thief the opportunity to enter, ransack the desk, come upon the pistol, and, when startled by the sound of—say an opening door, instinctively seize the weapon and dart behind the curtains?"

"Huh!" growled the inspector. "You've some imagination, Mr. Graham."

Graham bowed. "You flatter me, Inspector," he laughed. "I will imagine some more, then. We will suppose that Mr. Hurst goes to his safe, gets out his old will—to burn it, perhaps, or who knows what—and returning to his desk, leaves the safe door open. The thief behind the curtain just opposite watches. Let us say that he sees something in the safe when the door is open that he wants the worst way, wants so much that he would risk pretty much anything to get it. Mr. Hurst out of the way—and it's his. Mr. Hurst is busily writing. Out from behind the curtain slips the thief, pistol in hand. It is a ticklish thing to do, for a turn of Mr. Hurst's head and he is discovered. He edges his way along the wall silently, step by step. After an endless time he reaches that table there, just in line with the desk." Graham crossed the room and took up his stand by the table. "Just here, say. Mr. Hurst can't see him unless he turns completely around. The man can hear Mr. Hurst's pen scratching—scratching—it sounds so loud to him that he is afraid it may be drowning the sound of possibly approaching footsteps. He waits for a moment to steady himself. Then he steals across the room, stealthy as a cat. Mr. Hurst is so absorbed in his writing that he hears nothing. The thief is close behind him now. Aroused at last, Mr. Hurst turns with a start. The thief raises his hand—so, and fires. The shot enters Mr. Hurst's temple; he falls forward on the desk—dead."

The three men were watching Graham breathlessly. The doctor gasped audibly. "You might be the murderer yourself," he exclaimed.

(Continued Tomorrow.)

DRESS

By MARY MARSHALL

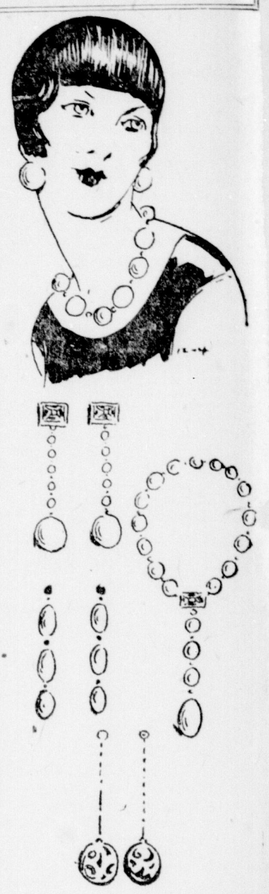
Young Girls Look Forward to Earrings as Their Mothers Did to Long Skirts and Turned-up Hair.

The young girl of today looks forward to her first earrings as the young girl of yesterday looked forward to wearing her first train and "doing her hair up on top of her head." Curiously enough no other article of jewelry has the significance that earrings enjoy. A girl may wear rings or not, a string of beads more or less around the neck makes little difference, nor do a dozen or so bangles. But an ingenue may be transformed into a seasoned vamp merely by the addition of a pair of well-chosen earrings, and some mothers declare that they will not permit their daughters to wear earrings just as if they were pronouncing an ultimatum against cigarettes for their sons. "I couldn't let Mary Jane wear earrings," says the mother of a seventeen-year-old. "If I did she'd be using rouge and lipstick next, and then it would be cigarettes, and after that a flask."

Yes, to tell the truth, there seems to be in many parents' minds the suggestion of something a trifle naughty about earrings, and that is undoubtedly why they remain in such favor with fashion.

There was a time when we felt that, with the bob, earrings would have to go. We couldn't imagine the combination. True, Spanish and other pirates are depicted with earrings—and short hair—but who wanted to look like a pirate? Aside from this earrings seemed as inappropriate to bobbed or shingled hair as mint sauce and roast beef or watercress and pork roast. But we soon get over that prejudice, and now most every bobbed girl you see has earrings in her unpierced ears. It doesn't seem to matter much whether her earrings are long or short, dangling or stationary.

The sketch shows some of the newest earrings worn by well-dressed women here and abroad. Tinted pearls still lead Paris by the nose—or one should say by the ear when speaking of earrings. The girl whose face is sketched in the cut wears large mauve, single pearl earrings, with a necklace of mauve and white pearls. Then there is a set of earrings and pendant necklace making use of light blue pearls and sapphires. Dangling earrings making use of a green, a pink and a mauve earring, and a pair of pendant earrings showing carved balls hung on a fine gold chain finish the picture



On head, large single mauve pear, earrings, worn with necklace of mauve and white pearls. Below that, blue pearls falling from sapphires, with necklace to match. Then a pair of three-pearl earrings, in pink, green and mauve, with tiny red beads between. Below those, large carved gold balls on fine gold chains.

each other to take inspiration from this source. Among the very newest frocks shown to the private clientele in France there are evening frocks of a delicious peach color, which bids fair to become one of the smartest shades of the late winter. Apricot is still in favor. Banana is very smart, and so is lemon, either ripe or unripe. Nut brown is one of the smartest browns in the French capital; crab-apple was spoken of frequently in this country when autumn styles were first discussed. Orange is used discreetly for trimming, pineapple is one of the less usual fruit colors spoken of last spring, tomato red was and is still a favorite, plum cloth frocks are reported as being worn by many fashionable French women, and Canadian women have followed suit.

FOR YOUR NOTEBOOK.

Here are the stocking sizes needed to go with various sizes of children's shoes: Sizes 1 and 0 take 4; sizes 2, 3 and 4 take 4½; sizes 5 and 5½ take 5; sizes 6 and 6½ take 5½; 7 takes 6; 7½ and 8 take 6½; 8½, 9 and 9½ take 7; from 10 to 12 take 7½; 12½ and 13 take 8.

WISE AND OTHERWISE

"AN APPLE A DAY."

Apple fool: Have ready a pint of sweetened apple sauce pressed through a sieve and a quarter pint of whipping cream beaten stiff. Both should be well chilled. Mix together and pile in individual glass dishes before serving.

FRUITY COLORS LEAD.

Often fashion goes to the flower garden, the conservatory and the woodland glade for color inspiration. She chooses American beauty, orchid, fuchsia, capucine or nasturtium, hydrangea, snapdragon and a hundred other floral tints. Sometimes she takes inspiration from famous painters of old, and makes much of Nattier blue, Van Dyke brown and Titian shades.

The daily bill of fare offers some inspiration for color producers; hence, for example, toast, "pain brulle," shrimp, coffee, mustard, cream, cinnamon, chocolate, spinach green—highly favored in Paris of late as epinard—and oysters.

Now it seems fruit colors have come into fashion, and French designers and dressmakers of distinction seem to have conspired with

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