

WOMEN AND THEIR INTERESTS

Little Mary's Essays

Nerves and How They Affect Women as Compared With Men

By DOROTHY DIX



Nerves is something that ladies get about the same time that they get pearl necklaces and automobiles. Poor people do not have nerves. They cannot afford them. Nerves make people that have them very tired. They also make other people very tired. It is very fashionable to have nerves, and a sign that you do not do your own housework any more. When a woman cooks and washes and makes the clothes for the family, and walks the baby that has the colic, she complains about her back aching, or her feet hurting, but when a woman says, "Oh, my poor nerves," you know that she does not do anything but read novels and go bargain hunting. Nerves are the most elegant kind of disease that there is. They are also the most convenient because if you have nerves you do not have a fever or look sick, and you can eat anything you like or do anything you want to do. You don't have to work because it makes you nervous to work, and you don't have to go to church because it makes you nervous to go to church. You can play golf all day because golf rests your nerves, and you can go to the theater because it quiets your nerves. When a lady has nervous prostration it makes her very happy, because she sends for the doctor and he tells her husband that she must get away from home and the children, and that she must go on a long and beautiful trip, and that he mustn't worry her by telling her that times are hard and that she must economize. The lady rises to the occasion. Then the lady puts on the black and lace negligee, and her boudoir cap with the pink and blue roses, and she telephones for her lady friends to come and see her, and when they come she says, "I have got nervous prostration," and they all say, "You lucky dear!" When a lady has nerves you don't just cross her, and you keep out of her way because she talks right back to you if you are her husband, and she scolds the servants and slaps the children. My grandma says that when a woman used to act that way they called it temper. And my papa says that nerves are a modern improvement. Then my grandma says, "Poor John," I wonder why. When a lady has nerves she always has lots to talk about. She can talk about them almost as much as she can when she has an operation, although of course nerves are not quite so exciting as having your appendix taken out. But they are more refined, and they last longer, and you can always have something new happening to them. There are a great many kinds of nervous prostration. There's the kind you have, which comes on sudden, when you get a letter that your husband's mother is coming to pay you a visit. And there's the kind of nervous prostration you get when you want to go to the seashore in the summer. And there's the kind of nervous prostration that you get when you want to break up housekeeping and go and live in a hotel, and there's the kind of nerves you get when folks won't do things your way. I speak there of a million kinds of nerves, and some women have got them all. Men don't seem to have so many nerves like ladies. But when a man has nerves they smell funny, like my papa's whisky bottle. I saw Mr. Brown one day when Mrs. Brown said he was awful nervous, and he walked terrible queer and couldn't find the door, and she put him to bed, and put ice cloths on his head, and when my mamma has nerves my papa bangs the door and slams his head against it. People who have nervous prostration do not die, and they look awful well and wear good clothes, but their families look sick and have on last year's hats.

TERRIBLE ITCHING BURNING ERUPTION

In Water Blisters On Hands. Spread All Over Body. Could Not Sleep Or Rest Or Put Hands In Water. Used Cuticura Soap and Ointment. Hands Completely Healed.

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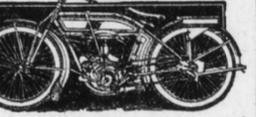
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STATE HIGHWAYS REPORT ANSWERS

Charges of Excessive Overhead Charges Are Met With Statements of Cold Figures

A resume of the annual report of the State Highway Department for the year ending June 1, 1914, completely upsets the contention of various newspapers and candidates and their echoers that "overhead" expenses of the department have run over sixty per cent. In fact, the cold figures of the report show that instead of money having been paid out as charged that there is a large balance in bank. The ridiculous assertion that sixty-eight cents out of every dollar expended by the State Highway Department goes towards overhead charges is riddled by the logical exposition of the truth told by the figures. These facts are made clear in the report: It is not true that \$14,905,541.33 has been "turned over" to State Highway Commissioner Bigelow. It is not true that the Legislature has appropriated that amount of money for the direct use of the department. It is not true that \$9,344,468.65 has been expended in overhead charges. With regard to the amount appropriated, the truth is that \$12,657,352.90 is the sum total of all funds

which the Legislature has set aside for the direct use of the present State Highway Department. Out of this amount \$2,553,270.14 was in the State Treasury unexpended on June 1, 1914. This makes the amount actually expended \$10,104,082.76 instead of \$14,905,541.33. It is a mistake to assume that even this \$10,104,082.76 has been handed over to the State Highway Department to expend it as it saw fit. On the contrary the Legislature specifically designated the various purposes for which the great bulk of this money was to be used and the department had no authority to spend these funds except in the manner and for the purposes laid down by the Legislature and has not attempted to do so. For example, out of the \$10,104,082.76 of appropriations expended, the Legislatures required that \$1,900,000 could be used solely for State aid, the expenditure of which must be initiated by the counties, townships and boroughs and that \$2,000,000 could be expended only for maintenance and for no other purposes. There were various other restrictions as to how the department was to be permitted to use the money. As a matter of fact only \$5,700,000 was appropriated by the Legislatures for the actual work of construction of State highways. Another important fact is that, in addition to the \$12,657,352.90 mentioned above, there is the sum of \$2,248,188.43 which must be considered solely as a fund over which the department could exercise no discretion other than that of trustee. This sum included the township bonus funds set aside by the Legislatures of 1911 and 1913 and the turnpike purchase fund. There is also to be taken into account the automobile license expense which has to do with the licensing of motor vehicles. It has properly no relation whatever to highway construction or maintenance, although it collects and turns into the State Treasury more than a million dollars a year. To set up the contention that the department has expended \$9,344,468.65, or anything like that sum, in overhead charges, it is necessary arbitrarily to classify as overhead charges such items as the \$2,553,270.14 unexpended balance in the State Treasury, the existence of which is ignored by the critics of the department; the trust funds of \$2,248,188.43 referred to above, over which the department exercises only custodial care; the \$295,000 cost of operating the automobile license division; the \$640,045.55 which the Legislature directed should be expended for surveying, plotting and inspecting all of the 8,800 miles of highways taken over by the State under the Sprout act; the \$269,337.23 for the making of county maps

showing all State and township roads, which maps the Legislature ordered to be made for the information of the public; the \$12,342 expended for permanent metal signs and sign posts for the benefit of the traveling public; the \$366,121.98 expended for machinery, tools and equipment, which constitute a substantial asset; the \$22,707.07 for advertising of bids for construction of roads and bridges and for the purchase of material and equipment; the \$3,031,743.24 expended for maintenance of State highways and State-aid highways. To assert that these and other similar items must be considered as overhead charges simply because they do not enter into contact awards for actual road building is manifestly absurd. With reference to the so-called "percentage contracts," it should be said, in the first place, that this system is used quite generally by corporations, especially in railroad work, and the construction of large buildings. It was employed, with varying degrees of success, by the State Highway Department in the early days of its existence but has been abandoned. It is not hard to give an appearance of high mileage cost of road construction by picking out instances where big engineering difficulties have confronted the department and by disregarding the fact that much of the work in the beginning of modern road building in Pennsylvania has been done where the greatest of these problems existed. As an instance might be cited the twelve miles of road through the Lewistown Narrows, the construction of which involved the cutting away of the mountain side for long distances.

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