

# Collier's

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## Woman's Place

By Quentin Reynolds

*To say that woman's place is in the home is understatement—so far as Adolf Hitler is concerned. Certainly she's not to be allowed in the library. Intellectual life, as well as all business and legal affairs, is a purely masculine enterprise in the Third Reich. And the women, most of them, in hysterical devotion to their leader, obey. Mr. Reynolds, in a series of brilliant pictures, presents the women of modern Germany—triumphant and desperate*

**L**ITTLE Gretchen Schmidt is eighteen and she is beginning to have a vague suspicion that there are perhaps things in the world more important and certainly more pleasant than the preparation of food for her father's evening meal. She is pretty and she is intelligent and her father is quite well off. Little Gretchen stretches her slim arms, takes a look at the world and says to herself, "Let's see what this is all about."

Now what shall she do? She has finished the German equivalent of high school. Shall she enter college? Shall she enter the business world? Shall she marry? She considers these things and finds them delightfully confusing, as do girls of her age in America, in England and, for all we know, in Timbuctoo.

Now Gretchen is "going around" with a young man a bit older than herself, a very personable young man whom even her parents like. She notices that of late he has seemed a bit worried and downcast and she resolves to find out the reason.

"I never told you," her young man says grimly, "but my grandfather on my mother's side was Jewish. Because of this I have lost my job and because of this I must stop seeing you."

Gretchen stares at him numbly. This is her first experience with the outside world of trouble which up to now has been a stranger to her.

"But what matter is that of ours?" she asks in dismay.

"Matter enough, Liebchen." He knows that according to the political tenets of the National Socialist Party, which today is Germany, he is a Jew, therefore he is an outcast, an enemy of the state who for the good of the state must be exterminated, painlessly and easily if possible, but in any case exterminated. The fact that he is a personable, intelligent, hard-working twenty-year-old lad whose only ambition is some day to marry Gretchen and bring little Gretchen and little Fritzes into the world makes no difference.

Gretchen, however, is made of stern stuff. She knows little and cares less for politics. She doesn't know a *Stahlhelm* from a storm trooper and she couldn't tell the difference between a Reichswehr man and a Boy Scout. Hitler to her is just a man in Berlin who happens to be ruling the nation. She insists upon continuing her friendship with her little man and daily she grows more fond of him.

*Women of the Reich***Gretchen is a Good German**

One morning at breakfast her father, reading the paper, exclaims sharply. Without a word he hands the paper to her. Under the headline "Local Girls Who Go Around with Jews" she sees her name. There are other names there of girls who have been seen with Jewish boys or with boys who had Jewish ancestors. This does not happen in every city in Germany. It happens in a great many.

Such a list as we mentioned was published every day for some time last summer in the *Hakenkreuzbanner* of Mannheim. The heading was "The Pillory." Now what does Gretchen do? Does she give up her young man? You bet your life she does. Gretchen is not a coward. She would gladly risk death for her country, for she is a thorough German and loves Germany. She would risk her life for her father and mother if need be—but she gives up her young man. If she didn't her mother might be pulled through the streets with a placard around her neck saying that she was not fit to bring up children. Does this seem fantastic? It happened in Kassel last August.

If Gretchen kept on going with her young man dire things might befall her, too. She might be grabbed by a group of stalwart storm troopers. They might shave the hair from her pretty head. They might lead her through the streets with a placard reading "I want a Jew for a companion." A crowd of two thousand might follow her and their jeers break through her numbed consciousness and penetrate and destroy her brain.

Does that seem fantastic? Does that seem medieval? Does it sound like sheer anti-German, pro-Jewish propaganda? It does indeed. But it has happened. It happened last August in Nuremberg. The girl's name was Betty Suess. She was young, beautiful, rather frail, and she fell several times as the jeering crowd pushed her on, led her through the brilliantly lighted streets of Nuremberg, paraded her through the big hotels, held her up so that those on the outskirts of the crowd could see her. I was in Nuremberg that night by sheer accident and I was one of the mob following her, watching her reactions, suffering for her, and still hardly believing what I saw.

I told the story to my newspaper colleagues in Berlin and even they found it hard to believe. Fortunately I was not the only spectator. The son and daughter of the American Ambassador



A Nazi phenomenon—the mass wedding. Fifty couples, some of whom are remarrying just to make it official, are being feted by the state after their group nuptials

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to Germany were with me and they, good friends of Germany, winced too at what they saw. What of the girl Betty, Suess now? Three weeks after this "incident" she was taken to the Erlangen Hospital. The Erlangen Hospital is an insane asylum. Betty Suess was hopelessly insane. She is still insane as I write this.

Let us get back to our Gretchen. This is a story, not of persecution, not of an anti-Semitic crusade but a story of the women of Germany. It is the story of Gretchen Schmidt and thousands like her. What is their future? What is the future and the place of women in the Third Reich? I for one do not know. All I can do is to present a series of vignettes. Perhaps, after viewing them, one can prophesy just what place women will have in the Germany of the future.

Now Gretchen's young man has disappeared. Perhaps he has gone to some other city where they will not have heard about his grandfather on his mother's side. Gretchen, being only eighteen, mends her more or less broken heart and again surveys the world. Love is barred to her, she tells herself. From now on she will devote herself to the arts, to business, to the uplift of her less fortunate sisters.

But first she says to herself she must be educated. She will go to college. She is not a peasant girl, remember. She is a normal, healthy, intelligent eighteen-year-old girl—the kind you meet in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Butte or on Main Street. So she goes perhaps to the University of Berlin and applies for admission. She is asked a great many questions. "What would she like to study?"

"I would like to be a lawyer," she says suddenly.

"A lawyer?" the dean of admission asks solemnly. "But don't you know that profession is barred to women?"

"But I want to help people who are in trouble," young Gretchen cries. "If I can't be a lawyer let me study political economy, government. I shall be a member of the Reichstag. I . . ."

"But, my dear girl," the dean says sadly, "next you will be saying that you want to be a soldier. Don't you know that no German girl can enter either the government, the law or the military professions? That is the decree of the party."

"But what can I do?" Gretchen asks in dismay.

"Marry," he says bluntly.

**It Pays to Be Starving**

Now Gretchen, perhaps for the first time, learns that she is not an individual. She is merely a minute cog in the huge machine which is the state. She reads the words which come from the oracles of the party. She reads the speech of Lydia Gottschewski, head of the German Women's League, in which the position of women in the Third Reich is set forth.

"A woman," Lydia Gottschewski says, and she speaks for the government, "must think only and always in terms of service to the state. The silly busi-

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ness of hand-kissing and murmuring *gnädige Frau* must go. A woman should marry, help her husband to be a good Nazi and train her sons to be stalwart soldiers of the state."

Gretchen reads the speeches of Hitler. She finds that he has revived an old phrase first used by the former Kaiser when the woodchopper of Doorn said that women should return to the *Kinder, Kirche und Küche*. This alliterative phrase sums up to some extent the position of women in Germany today—and for that matter tomorrow. *Kinder, Kirche und Küche*—children, the church and the kitchen, those should occupy women. Anything outside of that falls within the province of men.

Recently Hitler issued an edict providing that "the employment field is to be relieved of women, who in accordance with the National Socialist program are to be led back into their own domain."

Women, however, are still encouraged to wash their own babies, their own clothes, and do the housework and the mending. But our poor Gretchen has no babies, no housework, no clothes to mend or wash. What of her? What of her future? At this writing she does not know.

If only Gretchen were a peasant girl, a shop girl, or an unemployed girl who was facing starvation, her problem would be solved in short order.

Let us consider the case of Elsa. Elsa is a shop girl, a domestic servant or the daughter of a family which is destitute. She faces starvation. She is utterly discouraged. The future to her is a tortuous road which she hasn't the strength to climb. What does she do? She applies to the right quarter and is shipped forthwith to an *Arbeitsdienst*, which is, roughly speaking, a work camp. There are four hundred of them in Germany and about two hundred thousand girls are living, learning and working in them at government expense. Any girl between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five is eligible for admission. Nearly all of them are unemployed girls who had nowhere to turn. The one at Spandau is typical of the rest.

Here about a hundred girls under the direction of two splendid women, *Fräulein Lotte Streit* and *Fräulein Erna Will*, are quartered, and a whole day spent at this camp gives one a thorough idea of just what the girls do, just what they get out of it, and just what these camps are contributing to the welfare of Germany.

Many of these hundred were once domestic servants. Others were factory workers, stenographers, and three of them were actually university students. They are all dressed in attractive blue uniforms and they are a sun-bronzed, healthy, happy-looking lot well satisfied with life.

### Gratitude to Hitler

Each day they arise at 5:45 and, after fifteen minutes of setting-up exercises, are given a "small breakfast." After making their beds and cleaning their rooms—they sleep in dormitories each holding about twenty girls—they are

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Frau Magda Goebbels, "the Lady Astor of the Third Reich," and her husband, Dr. Joseph Goebbels



divided into three groups which work alternately in kitchen, laundry and field.

Each group vies with the others in friendly competition, and if Group No. 1 clears two acres of ground this week Group No. 2 will attempt to clear three acres when its turn comes to go into the fields. If Group No. 3 does an exceptionally good job in the kitchen this week Group No. 1, whose turn it is next week, will plan culinary surprises to put its rival group to shame.

The most interesting group to watch is the field group. In blue smocks and shorts they look as though they had all been born to the land as they wield rake and hoe, pickaxe and spade. They perspire under a warm sun but it is a friendly sun and they love it. Occasionally they break into song and the sight of forty clear-eyed girls laughing, singing, tanned to a golden brown, bending their backs over stones, wheelbarrows, harrows, is really a beautiful thing to see.

Each group is given its orders in the morning. Thereafter they work without supervision. If a girl tires she throws herself on the ground and rests. I watched them for an hour. If these girls weren't enjoying every minute of this they were giving a fine imitation of it.

Two months ago this soil where the girls were working was a jumble of rocks, tree stumps, weeds. Now the late crop was thrusting green heads above the brown soil in regular rows and the girls pointed with pride to the result of their labors.

So they work on until 10:30 and then they are given a substantial breakfast. They resume work at eleven and keep at it until two. A good dinner and now there is nothing to do until four. They are never worked to the point of exhaustion. They sleep or rest or write letters or walk until four. At four they engage, on alternate days, in sport, swimming, listening to lectures on citizenship, the care of children, the duties of a wife, proper speech and manners—all given by qualified lecturers from Berlin or Munich. At seven they have supper and at 9:30 they retire.

These girls make their own clothes and do everything for themselves except mend their own shoes. There is a similar camp for men near by and the girls have made a reciprocal arrangement whereby they mend the clothes of the



Good Nazi mothers in the making.  
Scenes in an *Arbeitsdienst*, or girls'  
work camp

boys, and the boys mend their shoes.

The building where they live was formerly a poorhouse. It was given by the city of Spandau to the government for use as an *Arbeitsdienst*. The girls themselves replastered the walls and ceilings. They painted the house, inside and out. They made cupboards and cabinets, chairs and tables—in short, they made a home out of a house. They made curtains, draperies, and the home is as clean and as comfortable as any girls' school in the United States.

In the largest dormitory there hangs a huge picture of Adolph Hitler. "The girls," Fräulein Streit explained, "are each given thirty pfennigs (twelve cents) a day for spending money. They saved their pfennigs and bought this picture of the Chancellor. They feel that they owe a lot to him. He has saved them from want, perhaps from starvation, and has given them new hope for the future."

This camp and the other 399 like it cost the government roughly fifty cents a day per girl. This includes administration expenses as well as food and lodging. Is it worth it? It is worth many times more than that.

It is pleasant for a Berlin correspondent to turn from his daily task of reviewing authenticated examples of brutality on the part of storm troopers, stupid blunders on the part of government officials, the absolute chaining of intellectual liberty and other depressing aspects of this new Germany to a contemplation of such a working camp, which helps to solve one problem better perhaps than any other country is solving it.



(image added)

*Women of the Reich***Fashions by Germans**

What of the little Elsa we mentioned a while ago? She comes to such a place as Spandau disheartened, a bit ill in body and mind, facing nothing but a precarious future. After six months at Spandau, what of our Elsa? She is healthy, bright-eyed, eager to find a place for herself in the Third Reich, convinced that the clean, healthy, outdoor life she has been leading is the best of all lives.

In every way she is an asset to her community and her country. She has learned a great deal about cooking, about farming, about housekeeping, about her country, and she has been taught a smattering of political science, geography, grammar and literature. Perhaps her intellectual curiosity has been aroused to the point where she will attempt further to educate herself. In any case it is up to her now. The government took a half-starved, hopeless girl who might have been on the verge of a rather horrible existence and after six months replaced her with an Elsa who would do credit to your kitchen or your shop or to the fireside of a farmer. The government, too, does its best to get her a job when she is ready to leave.

The tremendous good done by these working camps can best be shown by the answer to this question: "Where would the 200,000 girls now in working camps be and what would they be doing if the government had not provided these camps for them?"

Inevitably pictures of Paris, Vienna and even London streets after dark with pitiful slinking figures trying to eke out a precarious livelihood come to mind. Hitler has saved these girls from starvation and other things and has made useful women out of them.

What does this prove? Does it give us a clue to the future of women in Germany? Not at all. It is only another vignette to be put beside the rest, all forming a jigsaw puzzle which may or may not mean anything when we complete it.

Let us turn to another aspect of feminine life under Hitler. There is, for instance, the comparatively frivolous subject of woman's dress. Did Paris but know the plans being made by the Deutsches Modeamt (German Ministry of Fashions) to dethrone her as the fashion capital of the world Patou no doubt would throw up his hands in despair and Chanel without further ado would dive headlong into the receptive waters of the Seine.

The Fashion Ministry comes under the direction of the Bureau of Propaganda and Enlightenment, which is headed by the violent Dr. Paul Josef Goebbels, the man of many speeches.

Let Herr Hans Horst, chairman of the board of three which controls this organization, tell of its plans.

"Above all," Herr Horst tells us, "we want to encourage German designers. We want German women to wear German-designed clothes, and the first step in that direction is so to encourage German designers that they will progress in their art to a point where they will

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be as good or better than the Paris fashion dictators.

"All of our film stars will wear only German-made clothes in their pictures. Within two years we expect these clothes to be every bit as good as Paris models—and of course they will be less expensive."

"But, Herr Horst," one couldn't help but ask, "what if German women refuse to fall in with these plans?"

"They will not refuse," Herr Horst said coldly. That is true. German women now do as they are told. Many of them do as they are told because they are convinced of the truth and beauty of the Nazi doctrine, that service to the state is the highest possible aim.

At the great convention of the National Socialist Party held in Nuremberg the last week of August, Hitler said: "Real beauty lies in usefulness. Thus it took thousands of years before people realized that the real beauty in a woman lies in the highest perfection of the usefulness of her body."

In short, the most beautiful woman is the woman who serves the state the best. It is an ideal borrowed from antiquity and it has caught on tremendously in Germany. It may seem odd to American women but to Germans it seems perfectly logical, perhaps because their beloved leader (and that Hitler is beloved in Germany is not an opinion but a fact) voiced this doctrine.

### Germany's Lady Astor

One of the world's most charming women is Frau Magda Goebbels. She is actually Frau Doktor Goebbels, because her husband is Doktor Paul Josef Goebbels and in Germany a wife profits by the degrees her husband has taken. Frau Goebbels is the only woman to emerge from the vortex of the new Germany as an individual. In a manner of speaking she is the Alice Longworth of Germany, the Lady Astor of the Third Reich. She is as feminine as a breath of perfume, a cultured, beautiful, intelligent woman.

It is at her charming home that Hitler often takes his rest. Here he knows that he will be free for a time from the multiplicity of worries and problems that crowd into his day. Here he listens to music, of which he is passionately fond, and here in quiet, cultured surroundings he soothes his ragged nerves. Frau Goebbels and he are good friends—as close as is possible with Hitler, who being sheer energy and vitality and thought seldom makes any such human concession as to allow anyone really to grip his affections.

Frau Goebbels recently talked about the position of German women in the Third Reich. Speaking alternately French, English, German, her eyes sparkled as she talked of Hitler or his views and of the country's future.

"Such foolish ideas are abroad about our women," she said, laughing. "We are on the threshold, I believe, of an era of strong men. In such times women must not struggle for the place of men but must fulfill their own important destiny. Men are manly in



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Germany now and women must be womanly. There are three professions, three callings, we close to women. They are the law, government and the military career. Beyond that, such women as do not marry must find their *metier* elsewhere and they are certainly not to be discouraged. Only for-married women have been actually bidden their jobs now.

"When it is a case of choosing between marriage and a career the German girl will always be encouraged to choose marriage because that is without doubt the happiest thing for a woman. And our leader means to rebuild the German home to make Germany once more a great power in the world. Without the help of women he cannot do that.

"One reads in foreign papers that we are forbidden to smoke and wear make-up. As to that"—her clear laugh rippled through the sunlight which filled her hotel room at Heiligendamm on the Baltic and she waved a hand which held a gold-tipped cigarette—"that is sheer nonsense. I talked with our leader only recently about that and he said he disapproved of smoking not on moral grounds but only because he knew that excessive smoking harms the health. It is important that the coming generation of young Germans shall have healthy mothers. . . ."

### Weddings by the Lot

As a matter of fact the mass of the storm troopers do not quite agree with Frau Goebbels. They do not approve of smoking or make-up, influenced undoubtedly by the ascetic life of their leader. In many of the cheaper restaurants and night clubs one sees signs, "German women do not smoke," or "German women do not use make-up." Not long ago in Breslau a police order forbade women to use make-up in the territory under Breslau jurisdiction. The Breslau papers carried the story under a headline proclaiming, "No more painted women in Breslau."

Even more recently the police president of Erfurt, the so-called "Flower City of Germany," requested all owners of restaurants, cafés and night clubs to warn women guests by signs to refrain from smoking. The signs, politely worded, said, "Ladies are requested not to smoke," but the enforcement is as rigid as though the sign read *Rauchen Verboten*.

Frau Doktor Goebbels, one fears, is among the minority. This fear is strengthened by the fact that she recently resigned several honorary posts which she held. She is a bit too modern, intellectual and cultured for the storm troopers, and even though she is the wife of the third most powerful man in Germany her advanced thoughts are too modern for this Third Reich.

Again what does this picture prove? Nothing at all. Just another vignette. Make of it what you can. Just fit it into our jigsaw puzzle. German women on the whole do what they are told. Some do it from fear. Most do it because of their worship of Hitler. A

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suggestion from him is a royal command. You don't believe it? Listen to this and remember we are dealing with facts, not fancies.

Recently the German Christian Church was accepted by the government as the official German church. All over the country men and women who had been married years ago by clergymen of other churches rushed to be re-wed. They thought that if they had not been joined in holy wedlock by an official Nazi clergyman there might be a flaw in the wedding and that fingers of scorn might be pointed at them. In almost every case it was the woman who insisted upon the remarriage.

Not long ago such a group wedding occurred in the Lazarus Church in Berlin, located in the poorer quarter. Fifty couples were married simultaneously. Two of them were being married for the first time but the other forty-eight were veterans of the matrimonial wars and many had brought their children along to see Mamma and Papa enter the holy state as sanctified by the Nazi government. It might have been ridiculous except for the look upon the faces of the fifty brides.

### No Place for Intellectuals

Thousands lined the narrow street leading to the church. Five hundred brown-shirted storm troopers kept the crowd back and made a path for the prospective brides and bridegrooms and their children, who looked a bit bewildered but happy in being the center of attention.

The procession entered the church preceded by twelve stalwart uniformed storm troopers carrying Nazi flags. They stood at attention, framing the altar, and the fifty couples advanced and knelt. It was simple, impressive and a bit pathetic. These fifty women, on the word—not even the command—of a dictator, were forgetting the marriage ceremony which had actually made them wives and were now feeling a spirit of exaltation because they were following the suggestion of their leader and becoming real Nazi wives.

When the benevolent-looking bearded preacher said softly, "Do you take these women for your lawful wives," there was a resounding crescendo of "Jas," followed by the wailing of many infants who had been awakened by the cry. The question repeated to the women with its traditional variation was answered by fifty shrill feminine "Jas" and the ceremony was over.

So the future of women in Germany is the future which Hitler has mapped out for them. They will not protest, for at present his word is more than law—it is almost a divine command. Rebels will be scorned. A woman must lose and submerge her personality in the state. She must become merely a servant of the state and be judged by the excellence of her efforts on behalf of the state.

She must be healthy, not because health is a desirable end in itself, but because the healthier she is the better she can serve the state. Right now German women are perhaps the health-

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iest and most moral women in the world. One sees groups of girls of high-school age marching through the Tiergarten in Berlin. They are uniformed and they carry flags and there is a bloom of health on their cheeks. They are smiling, completely, subjectively and objectively happy and contented to be serving the state. One sees the same groups on the country roads of Bavaria and far to the north on the shores of the Baltic. It is inevitable that a race of women healthy in mind and body arise from this training. Out of their ranks there will never arise a Frances Perkins, a Jane Addams, a Sarah Bernhardt, a Mme. Curie—but then Nazi Germany says coldly that intellectual tasks will be henceforth taken care of by men.

Looking ahead, one can come to only one conclusion: Woman's place in the Germany of the future is in the home. She must scorn night clubs, she must scorn frivolity, she must ignore all artificial pleasure and intellectual pursuits, and she must be happy in serving only the state. For Hitler has thus decreed and, so far, at any rate, Hitler can say no wrong. Thus woman—in the Germany of 1933.

Is there any hope, any real place for the cultured, intelligent woman in the Third Reich? If you can find it in these pictures you will bring joy to the hearts of thousands of such women who feel themselves to be individuals capable of thinking for themselves and women who feel that the self-realization of their potentialities is at least as important as a life of service to the state—a service which, because of their intelligence, they feel themselves unfitted to give.

*November 25, 1933*