

**M**OST of us should hesitate before we take over the responsibility of "interior decorating" our homes. It isn't the house that matters really. What matters is that we give ourselves away—we reveal our taste, or the lack of it, to hundreds of persons perhaps who have the discrimination to know better. And that's bad. Far better to find an expert who knows the job. And even they are few and far between.

There's a Melbourne firm of architects who run their own staff of experts for the design of interiors, furniture, fabrics, etc. That's a wise arrangement—if the client is wise enough to hand over the job.

Many of us, on the other hand, have a real flair for what is "right." In colour and line and arrangement we can fling a glance over a store's entire stock and place our hand unhesitatingly on the "inevitable" thing. If we have definite ideas, mental pictures, of what should be we should never relax until we get our "effect." Furnishing departments may not have the fabric we want. Well, why not try the dress department?

It acts both ways. One of the most charming evening gowns I've seen was made from a muslin curtain. Also, my favourite in drawing-rooms belong to a certain titled woman in Chelsea who searched London and ended up with mattress ticking for her curtains!

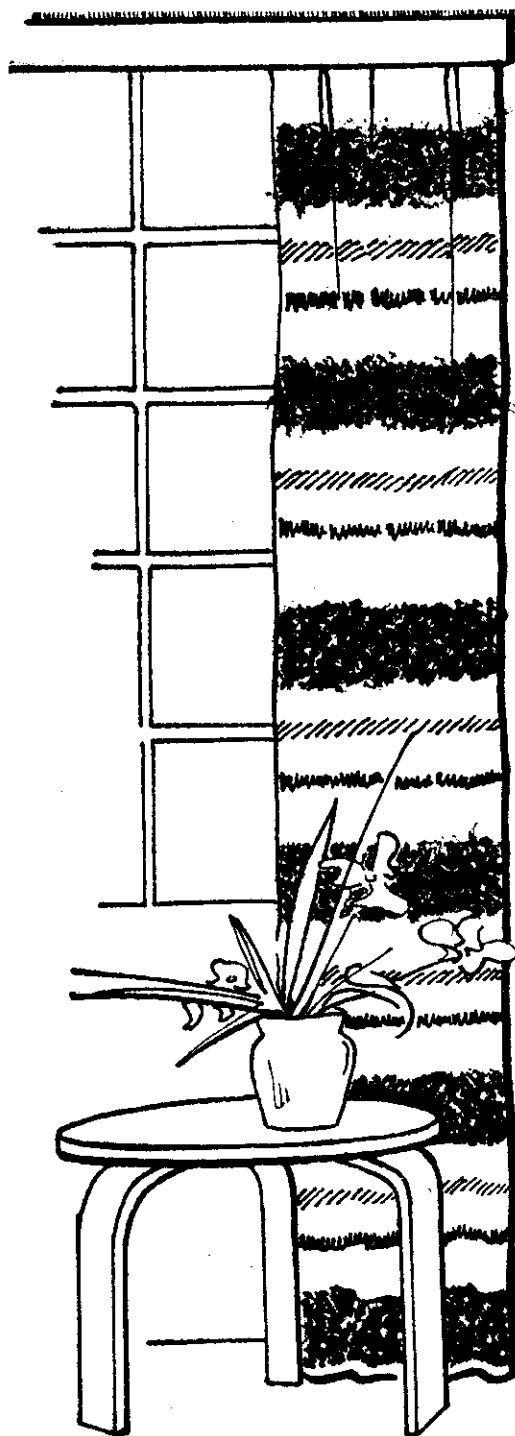
It's mainly a matter of shedding conventional ideas. In decoration, effect matters. How you get it matters nothing at all.

—W.V.

### Blessing in Disguise

Cows would seem to have more uses than the ordinary milk-producing one. We give you this experience of one of our readers for what it is worth;

"Mothers nowadays do not always have their children vaccinated in infancy. 'Gert and Daisy' in a recent humorous sketch touched delicately on the 'locus' of such vaccination. However, country mothers may find themselves indebted to the cow for medical as well as financial assistance. An attack of cow-pox, though not looked upon as a fortunate happening, does bestow immunity from, or protection against, small-pox in the one so attacked. That the effect lasts many years I have proved personally, for while it has been necessary for me to undergo vaccination both in New Zealand during a small-pox scare, and also in Australia where I was forced to submit to vaccination, in full view of my fellow travellers, before I was allowed to cross the border from New South Wales to Queensland, the vaccination did not 'take' in either case. Doctors



were puzzled at the time, and thought I must be 'naturally immune.' Only recently I heard of the cow-pox protection. In my infancy I caught a severe attack from a pupil teacher.

"Is it too late to say 'Thank you?'"

—A.E.B.

## WHILE THE KETTLE BOILS

Dear Friends,

A greeting to you all through our Woman's Page of *The New Zealand Listener*!

I like to think that every one of our women readers will enjoy these pages. If, also, we can be of service to you, then our efforts will be doubly repaid.

Did the sun shine all over New Zealand last week? Here in Wellington it brought the first touch of Spring.

Spring is blamed for lots of things. For Spring cleaning—Spring fever—Hay fever—even "a young man's fancy lightly turning to thoughts of love!" But that is by the way. Spring is a grand season. In the country it means the sowing and growth of new crops—a new world and a new promise. To the city-dweller it means the end of cold days; of cough-mixtures, gamps, goloshes and macintoshes. We can pack away our furs in moth-balls, and turn our thoughts to the engrossing choice of a Spring wardrobe.

Even the male bird is preening his plumage and turning his eye to summer tweeds and the like. But Spring is essentially feminine. When we talk of Spring we think of Spring hats and summery clothing and all those delightful etceteras that claim a feminine gender.

Hats are to be as saucy as ever. They are of the small pancake variety, worn well forward over the eye, lavishly trimmed, and banded across the back with flowers, ribbon, or what have you?

The veil still holds pride of place. A veil is flattering to all women, and it can transform an ordinary chapeau into a thing of distinction and charm.

This is to be a jacket season, bolero and the cardigan variety. They are being featured in lovely coloured linens and airy woollen fabrics. This style suits every type of figure. A jacket hides a multitude of sins. Worn over a plain dark frock it transforms it into an attractive ensemble. Its charity goes deeper still. A jacket will help to disguise a too full bust and that spare tyre about your middles.

I suppose most of you have done your share of reading during these winter months. A cheery fire and a book are the natural accompaniments to a lively gale blowing outside and a ripe frost on its way.

One of the best novels I have read lately is Pearl Buck's "The Patriot." The story deals with the present-day struggle between China and Japan, and is unfolded through the lives of a young married couple, one a Chinese and the other a Japanese. This intensely human and moving tale is Pearl Buck at her finest—and best. Those interested in autobiographies should read Netta Syrett's "The Sheltering Tree." It is a fascinating progress among well-known people and places—told in a delightful style with a cheerful optimism.

It is a far call from a book to the kitchen, yet both of these have their compensations.

I have a recipe here for American Plum Sago Pudding and Hard Sauce which the whole family will enjoy. You'll enjoy cooking it, too:

Beat 1½ teaspoonfuls of butter and 1 cup of sugar to a cream. Add 4 tablespoonfuls of sago, previously soaked overnight in a cup of milk; 1 cup of breadcrumbs, a pinch of salt, 1 large cup of mixed fruit, ½ teaspoonful of mixed spice, and vanilla essence. To this mixture add ½ teaspoonful of baking soda dissolved in a little milk. Steam in a buttered basin for two and a-half hours.

**Hard Sauce**—Beat 2 tablespoonfuls of butter to a cream. Add gradually 1 cup of icing sugar and 1 tablespoonful of brandy or sherry. Whip till sauce is stiff. Serve with hot pudding.

Yours cordially,

*Cynthia*