

Fashion Note

Obviously originality is to be our cue for summer dressing. So far as fabrics go the designers are all with us. It remains to study our type and match our moods with garments that express us most individually.

When it comes to house-frocking there's only one rule—shoulders wide, please. These are peaked audaciously to match the youthfully-placed bodice fullness. Note how it comes, inconspicuously from under the demure lace collar and retreats again into the shaped and stiffened belt. That, the front buttoning and the fully gathered skirt are undoubtedly derived from peasant vogues. This more sophisticated expression of them is altogether flattering. Try it out in the gay fancy stripes that are offering everywhere.

—A.T.

IS YOUR CHILD RICH OR POOR?

There is no doubt that extreme poverty spells hardship and unhappiness for the child. But extreme riches—and the pampering of the over-indulgent parent—can also end in hardship and unhappiness.

Physical and material benefits are by no means the only ones worth having, and the child who finds his play with sticks and mud at his mother's side can be rich in initiative and imagination—both invaluable assets to the grown man. His wealthy comrade, on the other hand, for all that he is surrounded by the comforts and extravagances that money can buy, may be the poorest mite for loneliness and boredom.

Of the two, assuming reasonable health for each, the "poor" child is by far the richer.

To provide proper play equipment is reasonable and good. The damaging thing is to anticipate the child's every wish until we've denied him the pleasure of wishing at all. Often the parents who indulge their children act from very real affection. They may have sprung, themselves, from very impoverished beginnings and wish, naturally enough, to shower on their children all the advantages they lacked in their own childhood.

It is not easy to be wise, to strike a balance in these matters, but it is well worth doing. The greatest, and the unpurchasable, gift is your own time and interest, your friendship and your active co-operation; and on this rests your child's ultimate poverty or wealth.

—KAY

The Garden

"DIBBLER," Karori, writes:

"Here is a hint from a Chinese Market Gardener that is worth the experiment. I have tried it.

"When you make holes for dibbling in your cabbage and cauliflower plants make the holes about nine inches apart, put the plants in alternate holes and fill the remaining holes with blood and bone manure. You will be surprised at the results."

"Your girl rang up and said she wouldn't be able to see you to-day."

"Ah well, that's a wait off my mind."

Masseuse: "It's going to rain, Madame. I can feel it in your bones!"

OF EARACHE

"I agree with what you said about earache, but I would like to mention that, although I have found a hot water bag effective, I have found an electric radiator placed near but not too close to the invalid's ear even better. This proves a less irksome way of applying heat when one is dealing with children."

—A.D., Oamaru



Home Doctoring

Just the "common cold" can be dangerous as well as infuriating to yourself and your family. It can do more than interrupt your work and your play. It can wear you down to the point when you are ready and likely to take any serious contagion that's going.

If we realise that it is largely a matter of "resistance," we are half-way to winning the battle. These are the things that "lower the resistance": bad ventilation, or stuffy, overheated air; draughts; and overheated body, either through exercise or too much clothing or bed-covering; adenoids, and unhealthy tonsils, over-eating; excess of starchy and sugar foods.

The first thing to do is to learn to blow the nose in the right manner — one nostril at a time, and with the head bent on that side, and gently — and to keep the nasal passages clear. Correct your diet, adjust your clothing, be as much in the open air as you can manage, and exercise yourself reasonably.

You can assist the health and happiness of your child, too, enormously if you help him to follow these simple rules. I have a friend who has apparently become immune to colds. He adds the simple precaution of a night and morning gargle.

WHILE THE KETTLE BOILS

Dear Friends,

Here is a little quotation from an Eastern Proverb:

"If a man finds himself with bread in both hands, he should exchange one loaf for some flowers, since a loaf feeds the body, but flowers feed the soul."

This sentiment holds a very deep truth. Flowers are necessary to us—they do feed our souls. How else do flower lovers the world over toil and labour on their gardens? Not for any material return it may bring them—but because their handiwork may produce a beauty that will fill their eyes—and their heart.

Just recently I attended a Spring Flower Show. I am still dreaming of the gorgeous array of blooms that surely had no equal anywhere.

"A host of dancing daffodils," bowing chaste and golden from the top of their straight green stems. Polyanthus—like yellow clusters of freshly-churned butter. Primroses, hyacinths and cinerarias. Anemones—that dream that hovers between a tulip and a rose; gorgeous coloured blossoms in shades varying from puce to deep wine-red. Banks of ranunculi like a living rainbow. Japonica—cherry pink against a patch of blue sky. . . All these to enchant and distract us and send us rummaging through the dictionary for words to match their superlative beauty.

During the afternoon I cornered a well-known horticulturist and nearly go locked out of the Hall—so interested I was in what he told me. He described the progress of horticulture along the lines of curious experimentation. It was all so fascinating, that I made a note of it to pass along to my *Listener* friends.

Have you ever heard of a fruit tree which birds don't like? Well, horticulturists have evolved a certain cherry tree whose fruit is a golden yellow and very sweet. The feathered tribe give it a wide berth.

Another fascinating experiment is the dwarf tree. There is a dwarf peach tree which grows no larger than an average geranium plant, yet bears peaches of the usual size and flavour. Another American horticulturist has a secret process of treating seeds by which he is able to produce a dwarf variety of flower. Can you imagine a tiny full-grown rose bush of but two inches high, bearing fiery red roses the size of a sixpenny piece? His Fir and Spruce trees, fully grown, are only a foot tall—opposed to their normal growth to a height of about a hundred feet. Dwarf orange trees bear fruit of a perfect flavour, and his pine tree with cones tinier than a caraway seed, is small enough for a room decoration. The dwarf oak trees show ancient, gnarled trunks in their diminutive tubs.

I asked my horticulturist acquaintance if he could give me some helpful hint about the garden, and his reply was a practical one. He remarked that with summer approaching it will bring its problem of flies and insect pests. He advised growing Oleander plants outside kitchen and living-room windows. These serve a double purpose. Apart from being decorative, they are the best fly-catchers known—the single bloom, though, not the double.

The Oleander has an ingenious trap within the flower, formed by five pollen-bearing stamens. The flies, attracted by the scent, are caught by the mouth-parts and gripped in slits that lie between the edges of the five horny stamens. Once the winged victim is caught, he is unable to escape. In Australia the Oleander is cultivated on outback stations to combat the menace of sheep flies. One pastoralist stated that two hundred Oleander plants were capable of trapping half a million flies.

More next week.

Yours cordially,

Cynthia