

Simplicity Is Decorative

Here is the chair with the ideal combination of straight and curve—the chair made for comfort and that corner of your bedroom that's presented a blank long enough. The framework is light, and white. The cushions are dark brown. Floor rug is white with wide brown stripes. Walls are oysterish grey and curtain is white with horizontal lines of brown, grey and honey.

In this room, curtains were honey silk, giving life and a softly radiant light.

—V.W.

PROUD MOTHER

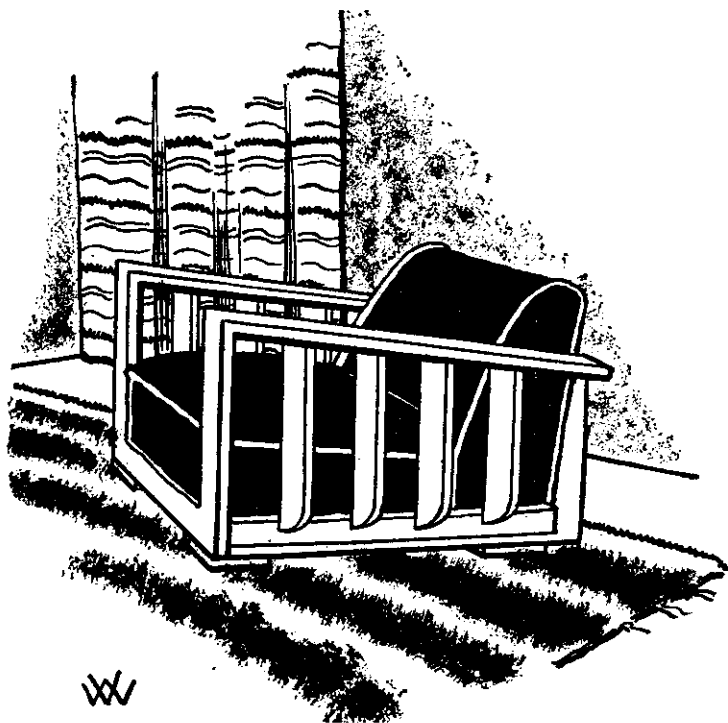
The mother of a ten-year-old said to me the other day with obvious pride: "My little daughter sets her hair at night."

Does that strike you—as it struck me—as all wrong? Surely a ten-year-old should be a jolly little creature, as unaware or unheeding of our adult vanities as a young animal. Strength and agility, rather than deportment. Clear-thinking and directness rather than pretty phrases. Health and wholesomeness rather than charm and effectiveness.

I feel fairly certain that the mother is only capable of the shallowest reactions toward her child—the reactions of a vain woman to a pretty plaything, the flattery of a reflected admiration. But the child? The child is warped and crippled in its struggle to achieve the adult attitude, assume the adult values that should by rights be seven or eight carefree and exhilarating years removed. Basic, fundamental things are straightening out in this adolescent period. It is enough without the addition of the trivial and comparatively unimportant.

It is horrible to think that whatever appreciative comment her mother's friends may make now, at sixteen they will probably dub the child an "artificial little minx." I can't help thinking that the small head, rumped untidily into the pillow, has by far the greater chance of ultimate happiness.

—KAY



Mid-day "Tuck-in"

We're all realising more and more the difference in our children since we became health-conscious over our food. That little packet neatly wrapped in grease-proof paper thrust into a small boy's hand while he rummages for his cap is going to make all the difference to his school day—according to contents.

The old-fashioned sandwiches are all very well, but they take time to make, and they're not half so satisfying as the odd materials in their cruder form—a hunk of cheese, a crisp heart of lettuce, a handful of raisins, a not too hard egg if you wish—these are worth so much more than the daintiest "sandwich spreads."

Try to get him into the habit of biting into raw vegetables. Slip in a well cleaned carrot or a white turnip or two—whole. A stick or two of celery. He'll eat it if you make it a point for amusement, or work it up in some sort of game.

Raisins are fine for "sweets"—and all good quality dried fruits, apricots, pears, peaches, prunes and figs, are splendid for sound tooth-building—the harder to chew at the better. If sound teeth matter to you, don't discourage the gum-chewing habit. Jaws that are exercised mean endless satisfaction in right development and therefore right mastication.

A quite small slab of good plain chocolate is food, also, that adds necessary energy. And always an apple to finish off with—clean, so that he may eat skin, core and stem if necessary. This last is as good as a tooth brush after that midday "tuck-in."

Summer is almost upon us now, and with it, for most children, lunch at school. Make it a right one. And—another point—with only wholemeal bread.

ON THE TOILET TABLE OF QUEEN MARIE ANTOINETTE

*This was her table, these her trim outspread
Brushes and trays and porcelain cups for red;
Here sate she, while her women tired and curled
The most unhappy head in all the world.*

J. B. B. Nichols

WHILE THE KETTLE BOILS

Dear Friends,

You all remember the old nursery rhyme—"Rings on her fingers, bells on her toes, she shall have music wherever she goes." Well, the lucky possessor of a good speaking voice will "always have music wherever she goes"—and that music, like the Pied Piper's, will woo everyone in her wake.

We are apt to take our voices for granted, till one day someone speaks—and all at once we are conscious of beauty, of music that dwells magically in the spoken word.

Of course, all of us are not blessed with that gift, but we can all do a lot towards improving our own voices if we will only take the time and trouble to go about it.

A lovely speaking voice, you will notice, is never high or shrill. It is always soft and well modulated. Each word is enunciated clearly and with faultless diction, yet not conspicuously so. Start by lowering the pitch of your voice, not just now and then, but often during the day. In quite a short time it will have become a habit. Once you have achieved this, concentrate on your pronunciation and the clearness of your enunciation. This takes more effort, but the result will be well worth while. Before you attempt a sentence, think of your pronunciation, and when you have spoken, examine the sentence in your own mind and see how many good marks you can award yourself.

I once read that the Arabs, before any other race, place the highest value on the beauty of the spoken word. They delight in using the most exquisite form of expression, and are taught from infancy the music of words. A Bedouin mother will punish her children for making a grammatical error in speech.

So deeply rooted is this instinct that each tribe used to employ its own poet. When they went forth to battle, the poet of each opposing tribe would step forth and, in poetical language, sing its praises and bewail the shortcomings of the other.

Before we leave the Bedouins, all good cooks and housewives will be interested in a bit of culinary gossip concerning them.

When a Bedouin lass is married, the wedding feast includes a strange and wonderful dish—chiefly conspicuous for its gigantic size. This piece-de-resistance is nothing more or less than "roasted camel."

When the camel is opened, two roasted sheep are found inside. Within the sheep lie several nicely browned chickens. Inside the chickens is a variety of fried fish, and within the fish—fried eggs! A truly monumental dish!

Well, I have wandered a little from the subject. But a lovely speaking voice is closely allied to the art of conversation, although that is not always achieved by words. The first requisite of a good conversationalist is not ability to talk, but ability to listen. The good listeners of this world, unfortunately, are few and far between.

I came across this ultra-modern description of a chatterer the other day which carries a masculine sting:

"She slipped her brain into neutral and let her tongue idle on. . . ."

'Nuff said!

Yours cordially,

Cynthia