

SUN-BATHING



(Written for "The Listener" by DR. H. B. TURBOTT, Director of the Division of School Hygiene, Health Department)

ANCIENT Rome appreciated the value of sunlight and fresh air. This is shown by the remains of sunbaths and open-air schools which have been discovered. Modern England operates artificial sunlight clinics for young children in crowded, smoky, industrial areas, and has established sunbathing centres in different parts. New Zealand has plenty of sunshine, but does not make enough use of it for health.

The sun emits many kinds of radiations—X-rays, gamma rays, ultra-violet rays, visible light rays, infra-red rays. About half of the sun's energy is obtained at sea level; a quarter in a big city. The whole, at once, would be destructive to living things. But a certain amount is needed for living. The ultra-violet rays, in suitable doses, activate the ergosterol present in the skin and produce vitamin D.

(continued from previous page)

adults. The language could not be described as simple, and a good many long words are used. And apart from the mention of Wellington and an earthquake, Baggie and Tam could just as easily be the products of England as of New Zealand.

THERE are six plays in Joye Taylor's new collection, three of them designed for the seven-nine age group, three for children from nine-12. Together they comprise Parts Two and Three of the series of plays which Mrs. Taylor has written with such enthusiasm for the benefit of young New Zealanders. As such they should fill a need if teachers are looking for suitable easy material with a local flavour (some of them have already been produced in schools), but the casts are in most cases too big to permit of easy presentation in the home. Probably they are not intended for that, however. Mrs. Taylor has composed songs and choruses to accompany the action, has given detailed suggestions about costumes, and even includes "thought colours" to go with the music. The idea is that the players should concentrate on certain colours while singing the songs; this, it is stated, will help them to understand the meaning better. It might be just as likely, however, to make them forget their lines.

BY comparison, *The Little White Gate* is what is generally known as a "slim volume." It is in the same format, and by the same author and illustrator, as *When I Grow Up*, *The Bad-Mannered Pigs*, and *Ten Little Chickens*, and you can buy the whole quartet for 2/-. Apart

Morning light is more valuable for this purpose than afternoon light. In a temperate climate like ours, sunbathing becomes a duty for health. This is especially so, now that butter is rationed and we have reduced that small source of vitamin D. In our foodstuffs we cannot get enough vitamin D to satisfy the body needs. Any small loss makes the position worse. Small amounts are present in eggs, liver, milk and butter, but not sufficient for growth and health of bones and teeth. We have to make up the lack either by taking fish liver oil or by sunbathing. In the hot months, why not sunbathe—and leave the taking of cod-liver oil for the winter time?

Bones and teeth are made of calcium and phosphorus. Vitamin D is the agent helping the cells build and repair with these minerals. Let us go to the natural source—sunlight—the originator of all Vitamin D.

Bothe, But Do Not Burn

One wants to see New Zealanders become regular sunbathers—not just on holidays, but as they garden or play in leisure hours. Do not join up with the sunburning club! Begin your sunbathing gradually, working up from a few minutes exposure. Never choose the mid-day sunlight to begin. Remember, the morning sun is preferable, and the best sunbathing hours are before 11 a.m. and after 3 p.m. Let children play around in sun-suits and get their sunbathing as they play—but see that their introduction is gradual, too! Adults, if lying down, should change the posture every 10 minutes or so. Both grown-ups and children should protect their heads with some light covering.

from the price and the fact that children seem to like them, a possible advantage to parents is that each story is so short that the whole book can be read aloud before bedtime without much risk of the dinner getting cold.

CRIMES RE-TOLD

TWENTY-FOUR NOTABLE TRIALS. By Richard Singer. Oswald Sealy (N.Z.) Ltd., Auckland.

MOST of us have a morbid interest in the crimes and misfortunes of others. Psychologists can probably explain it, but the fact is beyond doubt. Every newspaper knows it, and so, apparently, does Mr. Singer. His book of broadcast trials covers "several countries, many centuries and a great diversity of incidents." For that reason some of the cases seem strange and remote to-day. Others like the Reichstag Fire Trial still have meaning. Edward Gibbon Wakefield gets only four pages, though Mr. Singer finds space to call him "the most intelligent, the most progressive and the most powerful of the colonisers of the British Empire... New Zealand's greatest benefactor." But New Zealand readers will probably find the *Mareo Case* the most interesting, and Mr. Singer believes that it is the first time it has been presented to the public in detail. All the others—bigamists, perjurers, conspirators, forgers and pirates—are packed into 130 pages (too packed for comfortable reading).

On the air Mr. Singer's literary style may not seem unusual, it certainly sounds novelettish in print. However, the facts are there—at twopenny farthing a case.

The practice of alternating sunbaths and seabaths is not good. There is no harm in oiling the skin with vegetable oil before a sun bath—the oil reflects the light rays from the skin. The chief thing is to avoid sunburn, for this is a waste of time as well as being painful. Browning without burning is the objective. The tanned skin resists sunburn and deleterious rays. If you sunburn, you will get harmful effects—lassitude,

fatigue, irritability, fever, headache and even nausea—in minor or major degree. But if you carefully and gradually get tanned, the beneficial effects appear a feeling of well-being and vigour both during and after the sunbath.

So sunbathe—intelligently—on your holidays; at week-ends, as you garden. In sun-suits or shorts, at the seaside or at home, every chance you get—sunbathe!

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