

convalescent home quite undecided as to what would follow.

There is a sequel to this tale. One day I was shown some wedding photographs — of Miss D. herself! Her girlhood sweetheart, given up, perhaps, because of her filial duty to those ageing parents, had been a widower. And here she was, with her bridesmaid and her bouquet and her new cottage, yes, in the country; and her smiles showed that this would be no fireside without love.

There is a common denominator to all these stories—and to that of almost every elderly person whom I have known. It is *home*.

It is true, as the Rev. Harry Squires has said, that giving old folks a few pounds does not automatically open the way to heaven for them. It is also true that having insufficient pounds to pay for necessities can doom old folk to misery. That is one side of the story. On the other side, the key point is housing.

If possible, the ageing woman (or man) wishes to retain the old home. Failing that, she wants a new home, not merely a bed in an institution. Many achieve contentment with their sons or daughters and "Nanna" becomes a truly welcome and beloved member of the household. But this cannot be made a universal solution, and nothing is gained by delivering lectures about the dissolution of family life or the weakening of a sense of responsibility where difficulties of housing, economics, temperament, and so forth, make it impossible for a home to take in an ageing relative. (I have met a girl of seventeen who became a nerve case because from her early childhood her own home had been a chaos through a domineering, selfish and physically helpless grandmother.) Nor do we want too many Miss D.'s, whose own lives must be sacrificed in the name of filial duty.

Housing schemes for pensioners are the order of the day. Some, for married couples, are achieved or in progress, and there is the Burnham experiment for the single and able-bodied. Others are being considered. What then shall we advocate? My own ideal is a com-



"Many achieve contentment with their sons and daughters"

bination of flats and hostel. Each flat is a private domain, furnished by its occupant in her own way, and provided with facilities for making a simple meal or entertaining friends. For the combined flats every service is available: laundry, dining-rooms, social rooms; and —this is important—staff is available to clean the pensioner's room and look after her if she happens to be sick. There are gardens, a delight to tend for those who are fit, a delight to look upon for those who are not. Discipline and routine are at a minimum, for these are people who have been through the battles of life. The doors are open for the free entry, not only of old cronies, but of the young.

This I have learnt from long association with the ageing: those who have kept their own flags flying are fascinating companions for young people. I have known as many as fifteen men and women under the age of thirty to visit a patient of seventy-five in a single afternoon. Some were relatives, some comparatively slight acquaintances. Why? Not because these visitors were sentimental or charitable, but because they really enjoyed the unfaltering freshness of conversation and the laughter that rippled round the bed.

The young are often chided for a failure to understand old age. They will never understand what is beyond their experience; but they will be attracted without compulsion if the aged are enabled "to rivet and publish themselves of their own personality." For springtime and autumn are of the same yearly cycle; and autumn is the time of golden leaves.

New Talks Time-table at 2YA

AS from the end of July the 15-minute talks which are broadcast at 7.15 each evening from 2YA will be presented in a reorganised schedule. Mondays will be devoted to travel talks, formerly heard on Fridays—and a new series of these will start on August 8 under the title *Norway To-day*. Subsequent series will cover present-day Germany and China.

Tuesdays will become the night for farm talks, starting early in August with a number of recordings, made at the recent Massey College Farm Week, on such subjects as "Stock Diseases and Lambing," and "Soils and Pastures." Gardening talks by W. G. Stephen will continue to be the feature of Wednesday evenings, while on Thursdays there

will be a new session, *Critically Speaking*, devoted to criticism of current happenings in the arts in Wellington. Discussions of coming Repertory and Theatricals productions (*The Guinea Pig*, *Henry IV*, *Othello*, etc.), will alternate with book reviews and discussions of current Film Society showings which will include a new British documentary *Steps of the Ballet*, a Czech film, *The Earth Sings*, and the German classic, *Waxworks*.

Fridays will be devoted to talks on philosophical, political, and scientific topics. The first series, *What Did the War Do to Us?* begins on August 5, with a talk by Q. H. Brew, a psychologist in the Education Department, whose subject is "Fear."

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