

# Flowers—En Masse

THE Exhibition staged a flower show that lured many a gardener from end to end of New Zealand — a lavish display of blooms both lovely and exotic in the assembly hall.

In the corridor one was struck by a prize-winning lay-out for house and two-acre grounds. The section was undulating, with the house well up on the slope. The long, low side was a semi-circular lawn made cosy by shrubs that bordered it and fitted in the corners. On the higher level were bright flower-beds, a secluded tennis court, a vegetable garden usefully near the kitchen door and a potting shed.

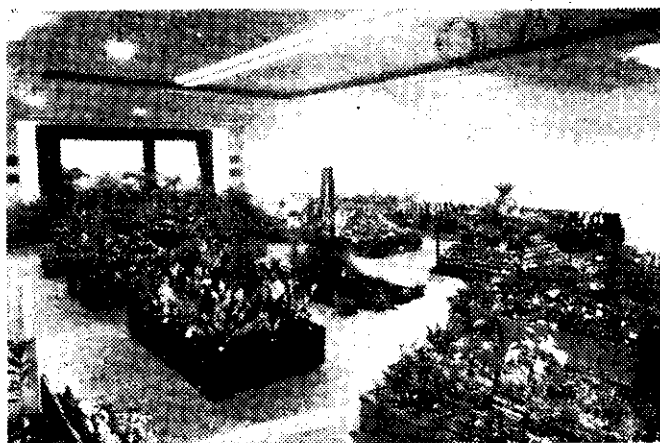
In the main hall, to the left, one was met by a wall of gladioli in magnificent variety. "Miss New Zealand" has it, perhaps, for size, but the variety marked *Jalua* presented subtlest colour blends.

Of the hydrangeas "King George" was a prize-winner — but the copper-greens are always my preference.

Begonias hung from their swinging cradles or stood at attention with waxy heads wire-supported.

## Grotesque and Snails

But a table of novelties soon took all my interest. Here were the grotesque and the unusual exhibits. Seed pots, strange-shaped and furry, cones of amazing size, cacti, huge purple clematis, black pansies, green roses, a minute potted hydrangea, natural size, dated 1840.



Here was a West Indian cactus, sealed from air and water, that had flourished — under the name of the Englishman's Head, whiskers and all — for half a century.

Here was the strange, deep-throated "fly-catcher," magnolia leaves in perfect skeleton, and the beautiful nikau flower and fruit.

But truly beautiful, too, was a collection of New Zealand snails — huge, bronze and polished — that come from our deepest forests, whose felling they do not survive.

—D.R.

## "SYDNEY-SIDERS"

### Australia's Little Europe

"FRED AND MAGGIE" are "Sydney-siders." You've only to meet them to know at once where they belong. King's Cross, on the height above Williams Street, which is neither suburb nor city. And if there's any magic in all Australia that might be called "stagey," it's certainly there — tiny shops, trees in the street, tiny cafes, rare foods, queer dress, informal behaviour, people and languages from most other countries of the world. It is bright, it is gay; it is Sydney's "Little Europe."

Out from the Cross runs a headland covered close with a curious mixture of old and new. Mansions, dilapidated into slum, cowering in what is left of rank, once-lovely gardens. And, hemming them in, crowding them out, trampling them under, the towering arrogance of the new flats. These are Sydney's "sky-scrappers." They stand against the sky like broken battlements.

It used to be Macquarie Street where such things happened — where the stranger, leaning on the rail beside you while the boat is berthing gets the answer, "Oh, those — those are the flats of the Cross." If he is also a foreigner, he is to know them well, for, with the instinct of a homing pigeon he will find himself there. It is so nearly "home" for the one who is from far-away and homeless.

It has no laws of behaviour. It is gay. It is brave. It is harsh. But also it is kindly. And — above all — it could never make one feel self-conscious.

That tall, lean man with the small black beard is an artist. Everybody knows he is pseudo. Everybody knows he can't paint. Everybody, that is, except his "sitters," who are fat and disgustingly wealthy and without knowledge of anything at all.

The Cross laughs and shrugs its shoulders. A man must live. That woman with the tawny head who strides as though she owned the earth. Why not? — it's a diverting illusion.

That young bronze god with his splendid arrogance.

That girl with her secret laughter.

There's room for all.

Round the corner in Williams Street the traffic thunders. Knives are used in the dusk of Woolloomooloo.

But at the Cross tiny Continental tables stand in the dappled

shadow of young plane trees.

Strange tobaccos hang in the air. Strange tongues go chattering past.

Life is there. Life — many-sided, multi-coloured. Art, culture, and all the half-ways that go between to make radio and fashionable journals.

Life — but on a more detailed canvas than anywhere else in Australia.



## WHILE THE KETTLE BOILS

Dear Friends,

The other day I met a country girl who, for the past two years, has been engaged in a typing job in a city office. When I saw her last she was a comely, strapping, sun-browned lass. I was shocked at the difference these two years had made in her. She had lost all her freshness; looked pallid, tired, and nervy.

"I can't understand this tired feeling," she said, "because after all, my job is a comparatively easy one — not like manual labour."

A little bell rang in my mind.

"So you think," I answered. "Well, my dear girl, you may be interested to hear this. In America they have made scientific tests, proving that an average typist does more work per day than a ditch digger. When the effort required to strike a key is multiplied by the thousands of key depressions a day, the total effort actually is greater than that required in eight hours of ditch digging."

"What's more," I went on, "you've given me an idea. There must be numbers of other bachelor girls like yourself who are doing their own house-keeping, so I am going to write my next weekly Letter specially for their benefit."

Let's start with food. For that is the most important foundation.

Most bachelor girls tend to fall into the "delicatessen habit." This is fatal to good health. Our constitutions demand a hot meal once a day — and even a business girl can manage that.

Grills will be your stand-by. These are not only the quickest and easiest to prepare, but are far more nourishing and digestible than fried foods. Don't think a roast is beyond you, either. You can half-cook it the night before and finish it off when you come home the following evening. It doesn't even require an oven. A small round of beef, or a piece of lamb suitable for two, can be roasted in a saucepan if turned over when half done. Casserole dishes, though they take a little longer, are both savoury and nourishing, and they have this saving grace — that everything goes into the one pot. The frying pan should be avoided as much as possible — though liver and fish, of course, must be cooked this way.

Always try and cook two vegetables — one a green. Potatoes (in their jackets), peas, carrots, beans, cabbage and spinach, should all be included in your diet. And don't forget that "something raw" every day — no matter at what meal. Grated carrots, salads, and, whenever possible, fresh fruit.

Breakfast should not be a very heavy meal. Toast with a boiled or poached egg, sardines on toast, or cereals, are all easily prepared. Lunch, too, can be light, and should include, whenever possible, a raw salad and brown bread and butter. By the end of the day you will be ready for that hot meal.

There is one golden rule for every bachelor girl if she wishes perfect fitness. Drink at least a pint of milk a day. It will not only save you doctors' bills, but give you a new beauty. Plenty of water, drunk between meals, will also help to keep the body functioning properly, and clear and improve your complexion.

Next week I have something further to say to the bachelor girl — about clothes, dressing, and other important essentials.

Yours Cordially,

*Cynthia*