



Women and the Home

Radio is the slender wire that brings the world and its affairs into the tiny kitchens and living rooms which hitherto had isolated so many housekeepers in the performance of their duties
—Margaret Bondfield

A MOTHER'S DIARY

These Should Interest You:

Talks prepared by the A.C.E., Home Science Tutorial Section, University of Otago:

"Wardrobe Review," Tuesday, March 26, 1YA 3.30 p.m.; 2YA 3 p.m.; 3YA 2.30 p.m.

"Centennial Celebration Fare," Wednesday, March 27, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

"Use of Fowls and Feathers," Thursday, March 28, 1YA 3.30 p.m.; 3YA 2.30 p.m.; 2YA Friday, March 29, 3 p.m.

"Wintry Weather Wear," Friday, March 29, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

"Ships and Shoes and Sealing Wax," Miss Nelle Scanlan; Tuesday, March 26 and Friday, March 29, 1YA 11 a.m.; 2YA 10.45 a.m.

"Popular Fallacies in Home Nursing," representative of the St. John Ambulance; Tuesday, March 26, 2YA 11.30 a.m.

"Flower Arrangement," President, Society of N.Z. Professional Florist Artists. Tuesday, March 26, 3YA 11 a.m.

"Still Outside the Pale: Women at Cambridge," Miss Ida Lawson; Thursday, March 28, 3YA 11 a.m.; 4YA 10.50 a.m.

"Music and Flowers: Bon Voyage Flowers," M. Henri Villar; Saturday, March 30, 1YA 11 a.m.

"Music and Flowers: Flower Manners," Irene Hayes; Saturday, March 30, 2YA 10.45 a.m.

"Music and Flowers: Flowers Across the Footlights," Leonard Liebling; Saturday, March 30, 4YA 10.50 a.m.

"The Home Service Session," by Jill. 3ZB Christchurch, 2.30 p.m. Mondays to Fridays inclusive.

"The Shopping Reporter's Session," by Jessie. 4ZB Dunedin, 11.30 a.m. Mondays to Fridays inclusive.

"The Happiness Club" (Aunt Daisy). 2ZB Wellington, 1.30 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

"Leaves from Life," by Marina. 1ZB Auckland, 12.45 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays.

"Suzette's Session." 2ZA Palmerston North, 6.15 p.m. Saturday.

SUNDAY:

I have chosen to-day to begin my diary. Sunday is such a clean, shining day—and simply pasted with good resolutions. For one thing, I intend to keep this diary up to the minute. The one I started last year had more blanks than written pages. . . Everything went well till Bill-Jim got whooping cough and pneumonia, and Jim and I took it in turns to sit up with him. I missed a whole fortnight then, and when eventually I took my diary up again—all I could write in it was—Bill-Jim was sick! Which were four such silly little words to describe all he suffered—but how could you put that in a diary—or anywhere?

However, this year I am really turning over a new leaf. Jim gave me a lovely new diary for Christmas. He said I talked one night in my sleep—and that is how he knew I wanted to start a diary again. . . I have already warned him that anything he may say will be used in evidence against him. . .

From where I am sitting I can see him and Bill-Jim romping together on the lawn. You would think Jim was six years of age! I wanted him to put up that long-promised shelf in the pantry for me this afternoon, but he said he simply had to get those tomatoes tied up and sprayed—and that is how he is doing it!

Ellen has just come in with a sniffle, and said the almond biscuits are all burnt. . . Too bad, as Mother is coming to tea and they are her favourite sweets. . . Patted Ellen and told her that no little biscuit is worth the smallest tear—and she has returned to the kitchen, comforted. . .

There is the car now—must fly. Will try and finish to-day—to-night. . .

MONDAY:

I often wonder who invented the name Blue Monday. It is a sort of mass hypnotism. I don't like it—it's messy and it's washing day. Hundreds of little office ants don't like it—it means beginning a new week of work—with the memory of a nice lingering week-end still in their minds. . . Everyone looks tired and a little disgruntled. . . But I'm running ahead of myself. . .

Yesterday Mother arrived with a big box of cakes for Bill-Jim and a gorgeous armful of gladioli for the living room. . . Mother—she is not my mother, but Jim's—is a darling, and all that stuff

about mothers-in-law is bunk. We discussed it after tea. . . Jim said—"Oh, I don't know, I've seen a few old tigers in my time."

Mother looked across at me solemnly. "I hope you don't read anything personal into that, Betty. . ." And then she laughed. She was a concert singer when she was young. When she married, she gave up her career, and her husband and Jim became her audience from then on. . .

She sang for us after dinner in her lovely deep contralto, that cracks a little sometimes now because, as she says, the white ants are getting in! I think it's still beautiful. . .

Gave the house a grand spring-cleaning to-day—and, incidentally, worked off my Monday Blues. . . Am finishing this off in bed—and feeling virtuous as the result of all my good work.

TUESDAY:

Woke up with a sniff this morning—must be these wretched winds—and February is supposed to be the best month in our year!

Decided to do Jim a good turn and water the garden. The hydrangeas are beginning to turn the loveliest autumn tints—and our vegetable garden is coming along beautifully.

Grace rang me to-day. She is all in a dither. The new baby is to be christened next Sunday and they haven't yet decided on a name. Jack wants Margaret, and she wants Anne. . . I told her that she would pick the most popular name in the world. . . Just recently I read that in Latin and Slavic countries alone there are about 94 million Annes—with Marie a good runner-up near the 91 million mark. . . Grace said so many millions made her feel affluent, so she thought she could combine the two and call her baby Anne-Marie. . . Rather sweet, I think. . .

WEDNESDAY:

A bad start. . . Ellen cracked the lid of our best Doulton coffee pot. Left unsaid all the things I felt. Remembered a tip for mending cracked china, and unearthed an old tin of carriage-varnish. Stole one of Bill-Jim's paint brushes and painted the varnish along the crack. It is practically invisible now—and I am hoping that it will resist heat and hot water.

Jim brought me home a new book yesterday, "Disgrace Abounding," by Douglas Reed. Have been stealing odd minutes at it all day. A fascinating book which throws a searchlight on the international situation to-day. Even if the author is disgruntled at times, he is passionately sincere—and some of his predictions on present-time events in Europe are astonishing. . . I like his

style, too—one feels that if he was not a "foreign correspondent" he would be a poet writing his life out in some quiet retreat of a garden. . . To-night, after dinner, I read the latest war news with a new insight. I even inveigled Jim into an argument. . . We were both getting well into our stride, when he suddenly stopped and looked at me with a grin—

"I might have known. You've been at that book!"

Masculine tact, if you like.

* * *

THURSDAY:

Went to the Bridge Club and played ladies to-day. Wore my new brown costume and a little perky brown velvet cap I picked up at a sale. . . Grace said I looked chic. . . Must have gone to my head, for we cleaned up our opponents by 800 points. Won 2/3. Arrived home, still feeling a glow. . . Decided, as it is warm to-day, to give Jim a surprise. Got reckless with the best tall glasses. Dropped in a lump of ice-cream—poured over fresh hot black coffee—topped with a blob of cream—and left to chill in the refrigerator till suppertime. . .

Jim wants to know why I can't get out to Bridge more often?

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FRIDAY:

Busy. Ellen's day out. Managed to run into town and do a bit of shopping before Bill-Jim got home from the Kindergarten. . . At dinner, Bill-Jim played with his meat and couldn't eat his favourite pudding. . .

I looked at him accusingly.

"Bill-Jim, what have you been eating to-day?"

Bill-Jim looked at me innocently—too innocently.

"Nothing, muvver."

"Now, darling. . ."

Bill-Jim swallowed hard. "Only an apple an' a pear an' some grapes—truly—mummy. . ."

Put him to bed with a nice little dose of castor oil tucked between two oranges. . .

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SATURDAY:

Nice day—but too sleepy at the end of it to write much. Can't be talkative every night. . . Had a long lazy afternoon with Bill-Jim in the garden while Jim worked—or pretended to.

Ellen cooked nice dinner—with a plum pudding and Jim's favourite brandy hard sauce. . . Went off to the pictures after and saw "Intermezzo" with Leslie Howard—my favourite actor. Even he couldn't save the picture—one of those old worn-out themes we looked at ten years back. . . New Swedish star—Ingrid—something or other. Nice—but not yet mature. She should do something worthwhile one day. . . Had to wake Jim up at the end of the show. He said he likes comedies best, anyway.