



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

TEA PARTY—

by Isobel Andrews

These Should Interest You:

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

"Fitting a Home for Children." Monday, May 27, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 2YA 3 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.

"More About Vitamin B." Wednesday, May 29, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

"Some Cookery Tips." Thursday, May 30, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.; Friday, May 31, 2YA 3 p.m.

"Training for Good Posture Habits." Friday, May 31, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

"First Aid Treatment of Fractures": A Representative of the St. John Ambulance. Tuesday, May 28, 2YA 11.30 a.m.

FROM THE ZB STATIONS

"This England." From all stations on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., and Saturdays at 8 p.m.

"The Home Service Session." From all stations at 2.30 p.m. Mondays to Fridays

"King's Cross Flats." From 1ZB, 2ZB and 3ZB at 7.15 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays

"The Young Marrieds' Circle" (Breta). Mondays to Fridays at 4.30 p.m. from 4ZB

"Fashions": Mrs. E. Early. Tuesday, May 28, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

Talk under the Auspices of the National Council of Women. Wednesday, May 29, 1YA 11.15 a.m.

"Bringing up the Small Child (I) Jealousy in the Family": Mrs. Beatrice Beeby. Thursday, May 30, 1YA 11 a.m.

Four Women's Record

Here is something in the way of an endurance test. In Wisconsin, U.S.A., there are four women who have played bridge together every Thursday afternoon for forty-five years. They had their first game in 1881 on board a trans-Atlantic steamer on which they emigrated from Brussels to the States. The game has been going on ever since.

AND it's such a long time since we met, she said. And I thought, my goodness, I'm not that old, am I? But I counted up the years, and sure enough, I was.

And she said, And now I hear you write!

And I said Yes, at least I try.

Her nose was sharper than it used to be, and her calves had run to pasture somewhere round her ankles and she had grey hairs.

It must be wonderful to be able to write, she said.

I suppose it is, I said, and thanked heaven for my permanent wave.

How do you manage it?

I said I didn't know.

And you have a husband and a dear little boy. And still you write! I don't know how you do! It must be wonderful to write.

Oh yes, I said. It is. It's wonderful.

And how does your hubby like having a scribbler in the family?

I said I didn't know. I had never asked him. It was just one of these things you have to put up with like The Shape of Things to Come, or Birth Control, or the Measles.

Of course some men prefer the home-loving type. Do you do all your own housework?

I do all that gets done, I said.

I think it's wonderful, she said. Isn't it wonderful?

And I said, Yes, it was.

And your dear little boy. Isn't he proud of his mother?

I said I didn't know, but I didn't think so, because just before I went out he had been lying on the floor, kicking the carpet, simply purple in



"My dear, she said, you sound like a Socialist!"

the face. And he told me he would cut me up in little pieces and take the remains to the Zoo if I didn't let him have a trolley with four wheels and a brake that would work.

And she said, Oh, but wait till he grows up. Then you'll see. Though of course some boys prefer their mothers to be inconspicuous, don't they? They like them to be in the background. They like someone who is always there. I suppose you go out quite a lot?

I suppose I do, I said.

It must be wonderful to be free, she said. Don't you think it's wonderful?

And I said Yes, Freedom was a Wonderful Thing.

My dear, she said, you sound like a Socialist! And now do tell me how you feel when the spirit moves you!

And I said, The spirit?

Yes, you know, when you feel you must dash into your den and shut yourself in with your thoughts and write.

I don't feel that way very often, I said, and I haven't a den.

You haven't a den? But where do you go when you're inspired?

I never am, I said.

Oh, but you're too modest. And are all the people you write about from your very own imagination, or are they made up from people you've met?

Both, I said.

Oh, dear me, I had better be careful, or you'll be putting me in a book next! I don't write books, I said.

But you write all the same, don't you?

All the same, I agreed.

I do think it's wonderful! But I don't know how you do it.

Neither do I, I said.

Well, I really must go. Duty calls, you know. I'm not clever like you, so I just do the best I can for my family and always make sure they are properly fed. So nice to have seen you. Such a long time since we've met. It's all been so wonderful.

Yes, hasn't it? I said. So wonderful.

And I thought, my goodness, I'm not that old, am I?

INTERVIEW

Books Are Friends

The Librarian in Charge

THE other day I went along to the Public Library and saw it for the first time with new eyes. I was struck with the air of solemnity the silence gives—like some shrine or temple. Yet it is not an oppressive silence.

Then I noticed the people—not as library subscribers—but as individuals. Children, young girls, men and women of all stamps and ages, all devotees at the same shrine. In the newspaper room a motion-picture producer would have enjoyed the conglomerate types gathered there for his inspection.

Of course a library is a nice snug place wherein to seek refuge on a raw day—with a little pleasant reading thrown in as a side-line, and they come there in their dozens; the poor, the shabby, and the derelict. I felt like a trespasser as I stole a glance over the bowed shoulders at their choice of literature. Shakespeare and Voltaire—down to Gardening Notes and Practical Hints on Carpentry.

I caught the friendly eye of the Librarian in Charge, and decided to pry a little further into the mysteries. She was willing and even pleased to enlighten me.

A Librarian in Charge sounds a formidable person, but this particular one was not. She had a young, merry face and an infectious laugh. Her grey hair was the only sign of surrender to her official title.

She led me into her private sanctum, where we sat and talked.

"You know," she said, "people have misconceptions about a library assistant's job. They imagine it is a leisurely one, whereas it is such a busy life that it restricts one's outside activities to a little social world of our own right here among the books. And it is really a very happy world."

"Tell me," I said, "about the girls. I know it is a pretty popular ambition to join a library."

Some Funny Ideas

"Well, I don't know of a better one," she answered. "But people do have the funniest ideas about it. I often have inquiries from elderly ladies with literary leanings who think their particular destiny is to be enshrined in a library, and if a young girl shows some aptitude at school, a library career is usually the first thing to come into consideration. But that is only one side of it. Certainly, a girl has to be properly equipped for this work; in fact, she has to pass a special examination after matriculating before she is eligible to enter."

"Is that the only examination?"

"No, there are two further examinations before she becomes a fully fledged Library Associate. But there is other work attached to it, a routine for the day, that often surprises new juniors, who start off with the idea that all they have to do is to grace the library with their presence—and improve their minds by reading books."

"But they do read?"

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