



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

INTERVIEW

RANGI THE GUIDE

These Should Interest You

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

"Good Lighting: A Winter Necessity":
Monday, July 8, 1YA 3.30 p.m.;
2YA, 3 p.m.; 3YA, 2.30 p.m.

"Marmalade": Thursday, July 11, 1YA
3.30 p.m.; 3YA 2.30 p.m. Friday,
July 12, 2YA 3 p.m.

"Meals to Keep the Family Fit":
Wednesday, July 10, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

"Planning Spending to Fit Needs":
Friday, July 12, 4YA, 3.15 p.m.

From The ZB Stations

1ZB: Monday, July 8, 12.45 p.m.
Nutrition Talk (Dr. Guy
Chapman and Marina)

2ZB: Sunday, July 7, 5.0 p.m.
Storytime with Bryan
O'Brien

3ZB: Monday, July 8, 2.30 p.m.
Home Service Session
(Jill)

4ZB: Tuesday, July 9, 7.45 p.m.
Songs of Yesteryear

2ZA: Thursday, July 11, 6.45 p.m..
The story of a great artist

"Fashions": Ethel Early. Tuesday, July
9, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"Outdoors in Australia: Plant Life in
Australia" (1): Althea Solomons,
B.Sc., Thursday, July 11, 1YA 11.0
a.m.

Book Review by Miss G. M. Glanville.
Thursday, July 11, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"Help for the Home Cook": Sara McKee.
Friday, July 12, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"More About Women's Institutes": Miss
M. A. Mulvey, Friday, July 12, 4YZ,
8.0 p.m.

"Mary Makes a Career (3), Planning a
Home": Saturday, July 13, 2YA 10.45
a.m.

THERE was consternation at Whakarewarewa. I had left my visit till late afternoon—and now a guide could not be found.

Several figures darted from houses on the edge of the Reserve. A group of old Maoris, squatting against the Meeting House, looked interestedly on. A young Maori girl with dark, flying hair, ran off in search of a guide. It was rather late, yes, but a guide most surely would be found.

She came presently, tall, loose-limbed, smiling—Rangi.

Of course I must take a look round—if I did not mind hurrying—the light was failing—and there was quite a lot to see.

Patterns in the Mud

So we started off on our tour of exploration. Rangi's tall, red-clad figure ahead of me—calling back quick, laughing words of explanation. Sulphur steam rose in airy shapes and wound about us; its pungent odour assailing our nostrils. Rangi's dark amused eyes met my own.

"Yes," she said, "rotten eggs!"

She caught my arm.

"Take care, that is not too safe."

I took a cautious step and peered over into a boiling mud pool that moved and sucked like some living thing.

"Watch," said Rangi, "look at those shapes that form. See, there's a lily—and over there a periwinkle. Now you have a gramophone disc—and see, that perfect cream puff—oh, and there's—It was like a gramophone record. She had said every word of it, I feel sure, ten thousand times.

An idea glimmered in my mind.

"Rangi—I'd like to write about you in my paper, not about these things that so many thousands have seen."

Her keen eyes quickened with interest. "Oh, yes, I know. Two Australian papers have already written about me."

"Then let's talk as we go along," I said.

Not Such a Saving

A cloud of steam rose from a boiling spring on our right. Over it was set a grate on which kitchen pots were simmering.

"What a perfect solution," I remarked, "and what a saving of expense—no gas—no hot water bills. . ."

"Not such a saving as you think," said Rangi, "come over here and look at this." She pointed to a house whose paint was cracked and peeling and the water pipes rusted and corroded.

"That is what the sulphur fumes do to the houses—we can't escape it."

She considered the bare little dwelling with its dry mud path leading right up to the front door.

"You know, that is one thing the Maoris have never learnt to do—to

make their houses attractive with gardens and flowers as you Pakehas do."

This Civilisation

"Do you live here yourself?" I asked.

"No," she said, "I'm afraid I like a little more comfort. You know, once Maoris have tasted comfort they are rather uncomfortable people to live with—they like to keep their door-steps spotless."

"Tell me something, Rangi, do you think your people are happier living in our civilised ways?"

"Well, my generation has known no other kind. In the early days they lived in primitive fashion with a few rushes thrown down for a bed. To-day we have

YOUR OWN DIARY

A Chance For Critics

Readers who wish to improve on Betty's Diary have their opportunity. All they have to do is to send us their own story for a week, told in diary form, and in not more than one thousand words. Those that we think of sufficient interest will be printed and paid for at ordinary rates. MSS must reach the Editor, Box 1070, Wellington, before July 20.

housemaid's knees—and we buy electric cleaners. It's merely an exchange."

A small naked infant ran out of a house nearby. He stared at us for a startled minute, then scampered off, his small brown heels thudding the ground.

We both laughed.

"About this civilisation. . ." I said.

"Don't you think," said Rangi, "that we have done well to adapt ourselves to your civilisation in a brief half century? Yet, if we come to analyse the word, what does it mean to-day—with the whole world at each other's throats? Our own philosophy of life works out better—it is simple. Like all Polynesian races we are contented; we are not greedy for each other's possessions—we don't ask for impossible things. Our rule of life is to help each other in any way we can. If all the world acted on this principle, I think there would be better and more peaceful living."

Two Points of View

Her fine eyes, with little lines etched about them, looked back at me frankly.

"You know so little about us really—

what we think—what is going on inside us, whereas we know a good deal about you. I was educated at two schools, the Maori and the pakeha. I have both the Maori and the white man's point of view—I know where we both fail."

We came to a halt on a slight rise, looking down over the darkening Reserve, with the steam rising and mingling with the purple evening shadows. Beyond lay the hills.

We were silent a minute.

"It's very lovely," said Rangi. "It makes one feel small."

"You know, Rangi," I said, "you are rather a rare person—a Guide Philosopher. You must be happy in your work here."

"I am," her smile answered. "I suppose it all depends on one's vocation. I like meeting new and interesting people. There are thirty-six registered Guides in this Reserve, but not all of them are actively engaged. Many of them are mothers with families, and they have their household duties to attend to."

The Mothers' Burden

"Have you any children, Rangi?"

"No," she said quietly, "and maybe it is as well."

She turned to me suddenly. "It's the mothers I always feel so much for—their is the hardest part to bear. These young men who marry before they go off to fight. The young women don't suffer in the same way—they get all the consideration—but it's the mothers who bear the greater burden."

I commented on some very fine carving on a Meeting House across the way.

Rangi picked up a handful of red mud. "The priests did all our carvings in the early days, and this is what they used for colour. Before the written word was brought to us, we used to chant our beliefs and carve them in wood and stone. The white man calls these images gods—but that is quite a wrong term. We, ourselves, never call them gods—that word is merely a commercialised term. The Maoris have an intense reverence for ancestry, and when they carved these images, they deliberately distorted them, as it would have been considered sacrilegious to reproduce their actual likeness. You'll remember that when you write—we do not call our images gods."

I smiled a little at her emphasis—even while I understood. The superstitious, fanciful dreams and aspirations of these happy, laughing people.

Darkness had fallen as I left Whakarewarewa. Lights had sprung up inside the houses. From without and within came voices—children's laughter—contented groups gathered about family boards.

Their civilisation or ours—I wonder?