

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

WHERE THE HORMONES THERE MOAN I

(With Apologies to Aldous Huxley)

Written for "The Listener"
by KATH

These Should Interest You:

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

- "Making Household Equipment Last." Monday, August 19, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 2YA 3 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.
- "New Puddings." Wednesday, August 21, 4YA 3.15 p.m.
- "Hospitality and Thrift." Thursday, August 22, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.; Friday, August 23, 2YA 3 p.m.
- "Uses for Household Waste." Friday, August 23, 4YA 3.15 p.m.
- "The Work of the Plunket Society": Mrs. Algar Williams. Monday, August 19, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

From The ZB Stations

- All ZB Stations: "The Country Church of Hollywood," on Tuesdays to Fridays inclusive, at 8.30 a.m.
- 1ZB: "Leaves from Life," at 12.45 on Tuesday, August 20
 - 2ZB: "Meet the Ladies," at 6.30 p.m. on Sunday, August 18
 - 3ZB: "A Musical Programme" at 6 p.m. on Thursday, August 22
 - 4ZB: "Songs of Yesteryear," at 7.45 p.m. on Tuesday, August 20
 - 2ZA: "Concert Programme" at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday, August 24

- Talk by a representative of the Wellington Red Cross Society. Tuesday, August 20, 2YA 11.30 a.m.
- "Fashions": Ethel Early. Tuesday, August 20, 3YA 11.15 a.m.
 - "Cooking by Electricity": Miss D. McStay. Wednesday, August 21, 4YA 11 a.m.
 - "Speaking Personally (1) These Things Belong to You": Phyllis Anchor. Thursday, August 22, 1YA 11 a.m.
 - Talk under the auspices of the Christchurch Branch of the National Council of Women. Thursday, August 22, 3YA 11.15 a.m.
 - "Outdoors in Australia: Australian Animals": Althea Solomons, B.Sc. Thursday, August 22, 4YA 10.50 a.m.
 - "Cooking by Gas": Miss J. Ainge. Friday, August 23, 4YA, 11 a.m.
 - "The Morning Spell (1) Take Down a Book": Mrs. Mary Scott. Saturday, August 24, 2YA 10.45 a.m.

AMY has been a trial since she went in for reform in diet. At breakfast this morning I brought her in a grilled loin chop—done to a turn, a succulent morsel to set the gastric juices going. "Sorry, Auntie," she said, and kind of shuddered, "I'm dieting. No white bread—certainly no—FLESH."

"I didn't know your appetite had committed suicide," I said, short and sharp. "What are your teeth for, anyway?" But Amy just put her head under the blankets.

Later in the morning I was sitting in the sun-room, enjoying a smoke when Amy handed me a booklet. I perused the cover: "How to Radiate Energy, Love and Light." I turned the pages, and was about to throw the thing aside when my eye caught this:

"One night, in the depths of despair and darkness, a woman whose spiritual strength had been sapped by failure had revealed to her, in the silence of the night, the pulsing vision of a deep red rose. Her whole being thrilled with expectancy, she became inspired as words of comfort issued from the heart of the rose. Rising from bed, she recorded her first message from the Presence Within that it may be given to others who seek illumination. . . . You have sought it, you have seen it as you gazed over the mighty ocean and thought on its unlimited boundlessness—but you have not realised that YOUR POWER IS AS BOUNDLESS. . . . You have seen it in the smile; you have felt it in the kiss of the little child whose heart you hold. . . . Take my Gift, carry It into the silence with you. Gaze on It. . . . Absorb its sweetness, its perfume, fill yourself with its radiant peace. . . ."

Noises Like a Cow

So when we finally sat down at our first meal I was expecting something, and it came. We sat at opposite ends of the table, I with tea and toast and perfectly unregenerate, Amy vaguely reproachful, making scrunchy noises like a cow as she waded through her huge plateful of raw greens (she had first swallowed two raw beaten eggs).

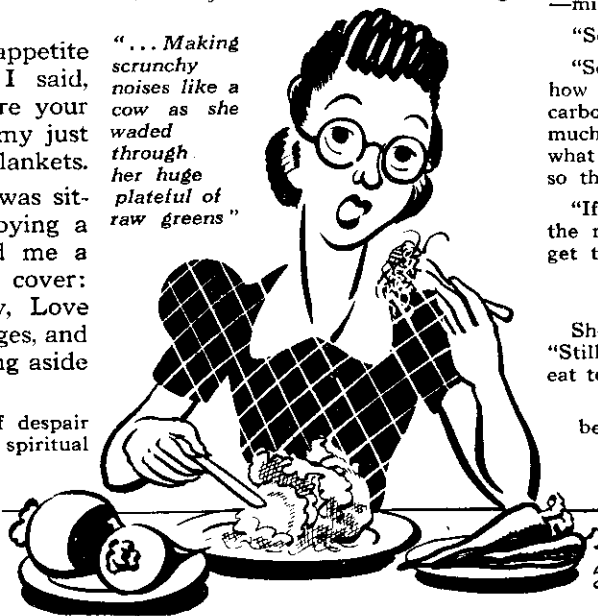
"Do you ever think," said Amy, carefully picking a small piece of grit from a cabbage leaf before she shredded it, "of your diet? It's a new study."

"I give it a thought now and then," I tossed back, "but it doesn't keep me awake at nights."

"What we eat," she went on, "we think, we feel, we become."

"Who's been telling you that rot? If it's true you'll be a cow before long."

"... Making scrunchy noises like a cow as she waded through her huge plateful of raw greens"



"Auntie, I know it's hard for you to change—if you only could. I'm afraid you've got fixations and you can't make any fresh tracks."

It's Hard for Older People

"Green diet's all right," I owned, "but you've got to use your common: you've got to keep your sense of humour. Not that you ever had much—you couldn't go on as if you were on four legs in a paddock."

"Of course, Auntie, it's naturally hard for people—for older people—to accept new ideas."

"With my hardening of the arteries, you mean. I don't mind betting I'll see you out with all your notions. Why get so het up about what goes into your stomach?" I spread more butter on my toast and poured another cup of tea. "Now admit, don't you get a bit envious when you see this hot, steaming cuppa and buttered toast; that seems more natural food to me this time of the year? Give me salads in summer and give me cold baths. But not now."

"Auntie," said Amy, "I had your ideas once, I never cared what poisons choked

my system. But I've got away from all that—I've risen above it. And I'm feeling so gorgeous these days—I don't know what fatigue means. It's so easy to get distorted palates—we have these food fixations and can't get away from them."

"You seem to have them too, don't you?"

"Yes, but mine are the right ones—mine are built on scientific principles."

"Seems to me like a cow's diet."

"So you've said twice before, Auntie, how can you go on eating all those carbo-hydrates? And you eat far too much protein. Have you ever considered what it means to kill the poor animals so that you might eat them?"

"If you start on that, what about the rape of the vegetables? Never forget that a lettuce has a heart."

Study the Vitamins!

She was too far gone to see the joke. "Still, Auntie," she maintained, "you eat too much protein at your age."

"You've mentioned my age twice before."

"Have I? I didn't mean to. But really, Auntie, all I want is to put you right. Study the vitamins, I'll give you a chart. AND the calories. I told you before, what we eat we become, and it's true."

"Well, I've never bothered. Everything's going on fine without these vitamins."

"Vitamins are most important. I'm a different girl!"

"I'm not spending my life chasing vitamins. If they don't chase me they can do the other thing. Take it easy, Amy, or you'll end up in a place where there's BUGS instead of vitamins."

"Auntie, you're very obstinate. Another thing, do you realise the solar energy you get in the sun? And yet I never see you sunbathing. Look at your windows all shuttered up. Let in the sun and air. Eat nature's foods—that's all it is, it's quite simple, and it costs nothing."

"All very well for you. You're dark and meant for the sun. Look at me with my fair skin. I am ALLERGIC to sunshine."

I brought this out with a flourish, it was a fine stroke. Then I added a postscript, a dash of Aldous Huxley. "Where the hormones there moan I," I chuckled, intoxicated with my own aptness. But I chuckled alone—I might have saved it for the cat.