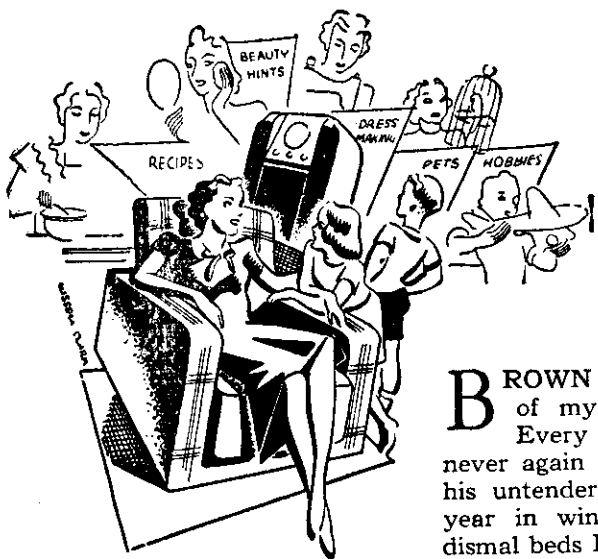


# Women and the Home

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

## BROWN, THE GARDENER

(Written for "The Listener" by "Jay")



### These Should Interest You:

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

"The Guest Room." Monday, December 2, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 2YA 3 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.

"Your Food Preserving Budget." Thursday, December 5, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.; Friday, December 6, 2YA 3 p.m.

"Christmas Preparations." Wednesday, December 4, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

"Treatments for Spilt Ink and Other Mishaps." Friday, December 6, 4YA 3.15 p.m.

### From The ZB Stations

"Christmas on the Moon": All ZB Stations, 22A

"Christmas Shopping Session": 12B Monday to Friday, 4.0 p.m.

"Musical Comedy Memories": 22B, 10.15 a.m., Sunday, December 1

"A Song for Mother": 3ZB 11.0 a.m. Tuesday, December 3

"A Quarter-Hour with Barend": 4ZB 4.0 p.m. Wednesday, December 4

"Something New": 22A 7.0 p.m., Saturday, December 7

"Just on Being a Guest": Major F. H. Lampen. Thursday, December 5, 1YA 11 a.m.

"More Bits and Pieces": "Isobel" Thursday, December 5, 2YA 10.45 a.m.

"Speaking Personally: Beauty from the Sea": Phyllis Anchor. Thursday, December 5, 4YA 10.50 a.m.

"Help for the Home Cook": Mrs. D. E. Johnson. Friday, December 6, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"Some Remarkable Women I Have Met": Mrs. Vivienne Newson. Saturday, December 7, 1YA 11 a.m.

"A Few Minutes With Women Novelists: George Eliot": Margaret Johnston. Saturday, December 7, 2YA 10.45 a.m.

"The Morning Spell: Take Down a Book": Mrs. Mary Scott. Saturday, December 7, 3YA 11 a.m.

BROWN had taken possession of my garden once more. Every year I swore that never again would I expose it to his untender mercies. And every year in winter when I saw its dismal beds I had visions of spring and summer and the masses of exotic blooms it has never yet produced. Only one person could dig so thoroughly so many beds in one morning, and this time I really would manage to be firm with him. I wrote my post-card. "One day's work would be sufficient at the moment," I wrote. At least I had started right.

Impossibly early one morning I awoke to hear the trundling of wheels on concrete. Wide awake in an instant, and beyond all further sleep as is my unfortunate habit, I puzzled out the possible causes. Only one presented itself—Brown and a wheel-barrow. There was only one objection to this theory: we have no wheel-barrow.

I dressed quickly and went into the garden. Sure enough there was Brown innocently wheeling a large wooden wheel-barrow along the front path.

"Good mornin', Mrs. Smith," he said before I could open my mouth. "I just borrowed this wheel-barrow from the house over the way. You've got some good leaf-mould among those bushes. I've bin puttin' it on the beds. Didn't want ter disturb yer like, by goin' past yer bedroom winder."

"Thank you, Brown," I said rather anxiously. "Which house?"

"That white one over there. I borrowed it once before."

"I see," I said, still rather anxious. The people in the white house were not noticeably enthusiastic about their neighbours. There was once an occasion of a puppy we had for the children.

"Well, you'd better finish what you are doing now and then take it back," I said. "I'll tell you then which beds I shall want you to dig. And I shall want some poplars topped," I added rashly.

### Them Poplars!

The business of breakfast kept me wholly engaged for some time, and I had scarcely the flicker of an eye to spare for Brown. I thought, after all, with some satisfaction about the wheel-barrow. It might serve to keep him out of mischief till I was ready for him.

Directly after breakfast I had an urgent telephone call. A little private matter I was concerned with seemed to be coming to a head, and I had plenty to occupy my mind as I made the beds.

And I forgot Brown.

When I remembered him again it was with considerable apprehension that I went into the garden. Now I came to think of it I had not heard the wheel-barrow for some time. But Brown was digging a bed near the fence. I heaved a sigh of relief. All was well then. "Oh, that's good, Brown," I said. "That's just what I wanted you to do."

"I cut back them poplars."

My heart gave a sudden jump of dismay. I turned round—and gazed with horror at the row of indelicate naked

limbs. "Mr. Smith has learnt a lot about pruning, and he expressly told me he wanted to do his own this year."

Ah! Magic authority of the male. The miracle happened. Brown stopped cutting. Together we surveyed the scattered branches on the ground. My precious lovely almond! There were fat sticky buds on the twigs, and already a hint of pink. Vandal! Sadly and regretfully I picked out a few of the larger pieces.

"You'd better try and plant these," I suggested, none too hopefully.

"Orrright," said Brown. "What is it? A pussy-willow?"

### The "Borrowed" Wheel-Barrow

Never again, I said to myself firmly as I went inside after settling him safely to some digging. What had induced me to weaken again this year? My blood boiled with indignation, against myself—against Brown. The telephone bell rang. I picked up the receiver.

"Is that Mrs. Smith?" said a tart voice in my ear.

"Yes."

"Your gardener has taken my wheel-barrow."

"Oh," I said, rather dazed. "Didn't you lend it to him?"

"I did not. He took it without so much as a by-your-leave."

I felt the hair on my head begin to prick. I bristled all over at the tone of that voice. Just so must a cat feel at certain tones in a dog's bark.

"I beg your pardon," I said icily. "I'll send it back immediately." Quite suddenly I felt protective towards Brown. How dare anyone speak to me like that.

"Brown," I said gently, as I went into the garden, "you had better take that barrow back at once. Someone is asking for it. You should not have taken it without asking."

"Bless yer 'art," said Brown, "I didn't meant no 'arm. She's not angry, is she?"

"Well," I said, thinking "angry" a very mild epithet to apply to that furious voice, "she's not exactly pleased."

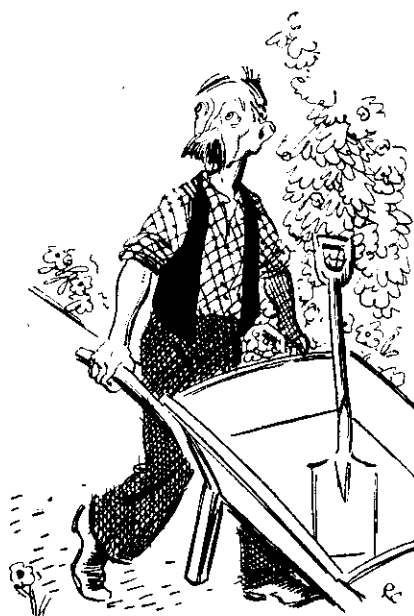
### She's No Lady!

Brown trundled off with the wheel-barrow, and I watched his retreating back, thankful that it was not mine.

Presently he came back.

"I took it back," he said triumphantly, "but she'd no call ter carry on that way." He wiped his perpetually dripping nose on his coat-sleeve and leant forward confidentially, tapping me on the arm. "She's no lady, Mrs. Smith," he said earnestly. "Some people don't know 'ow ter be 'ave. 'It's no good you carryin' on like that, I sez, 'I work for a lady,' I sez, 'a real lady.'"

(Continued on next page)



sticks that a short while ago had been young poplars bristling with promising branches.

"Oh, Brown," I said, "do you think you should have cut them back quite so far?"

"Yes, Lord bless yer soul. You'll see," he said cheerfully. "Them branches will grow out thick as hairs on a cat's back. Thick as hairs on a cat's back," he repeated with satisfaction.

### A Bit of Cutting Back

He picked up the secateurs from the path beside him. "This tree here should be pruned back now," he said. "This should come off, and this."

"Oh please," I cried, "you mustn't do that."

But Brown had got away.

"These trees are all the better for a bit of cuttin' back." He clipped on cheerfully.

"But you must stop." Short of holding his arms to his side, I thought desperately as I watched another young shoot fall, I was powerless to stop him. And then inspiration came. "Look," I