

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

THE CHILDREN'S NOEL

These Should Interest You:

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

"Plans for 1941." Monday, December 30, 1YA 3.30 p.m., 3YA 2.30 p.m.

"Margaret's" Final Talk to Women. Monday, December 30, 2YA 10.45 a.m.

"Fashions": Ethel Early. Tuesday, December 31, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"On Tour in Southern Ireland": Miss Diana Craig. Wednesday, January 1, 2YA 10.45 a.m.

From The 2B Stations

"Musical Matinee": 12B, 2.15 p.m., Sunday, December 29.

"Songs of Happiness": 22B, 4.0 p.m., Tuesday, December 31.

"In Holiday Mood": 32B, 11.0 a.m., Wednesday, January 1.

"Songs of the Homeland": 42B, Wednesday, January 1, at 7.15 p.m.

"More Bits and Pieces" by "Isobel." Thursday, January 2, 1YA 11 a.m.

Three talks by Major F. H. Lampen on Thursday, January 2:

"Just Listening In." 2YA 10.45 a.m.

"Just Good-byes." 3YA 11 a.m.

"Just Snags." 4YA 10.50 a.m.

"Help for the Home Cook": Miss J. M. Shaw. Friday, January 3, 3YA 11.15 a.m.

"A Few Minutes with Women Novelists," by Margaret Johnston. Saturday, January 4, featuring "George Eliot" from 1YA 11 a.m., and "Somerville and Ross" from 2YA 10.45 a.m.

"Some Remarkable Women I Have Met": Mrs. Vivienne Newson. Saturday, January 4, 4YA 10.50 a.m.

THE other day I entered a large city department store. Crowds of women and children were pushing excitedly ahead of me, and I soon saw why. Above their heads I saw a familiar red-coated figure crowned by a snowy beard and a jaunty red cap. Small arms reached out to touch him. Mothers clustered, laughed and pressed around. A child's loud weeping drew my attention. A woman was carrying a little girl of about five years from the shop. They passed quite close to me. The little girl's eyes were streaming with tears—her mouth opened in an agonised wailing.

Her mother was trying to hush her—"There now! We haven't got time to wait. You can shake hands with Father Christmas next year."

I thought, what small comfort to that broken-hearted child. Next year? An eternity. It did not exist. At the same time I felt a kind of wonder—almost an envy that one could weep and break one's heart for this. We have progressed so far from that tender age—and have wept and broken our hearts over so many deep and bitter things. She could not shake hands with Father Christmas. Her wailing faded down the street.

Christmas Belongs to Children

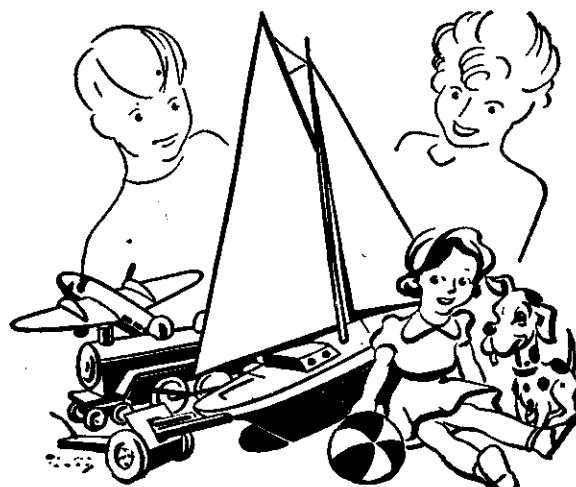
The store was filled with the excited clamour of children. As I stood there, hemmed in by the eager crowd, I felt the years slip from my shoulders. I was a child again—gazing on Father Christmas with that delighted awe that only the young in heart can know and feel.

I realised then a truth. Christmas belongs to children. What a sorry business we grown-up people would make of it without a child's wonder to give it spirit and meaning. We are the takers—they are the givers. Through our children we perceive the vision of the first Noel—and through them we recapture the child-like wonder that touched with ecstasy those removed, lovely days of our youth.

Father Christmas and his reindeer sweeping through the spangled night. Chimneys, that are no longer chimneys, but enchanted stairways down which Santa will creep, bringing us the treasures from his workshop in the northern skies. Christmas morning... Discovery, rapture, delight... Bugles blowing—go-carts whizzing down the street—dolls cradled close to small maternal breasts... So long ago, you think... yet each year it lives again through a child's wondering eyes—as it dawned once on the Child of Bethlehem—the first Noel.

In the Window

The children's chatter becomes an uproar. As Father Christmas moves up the stairs, there is a frantic scamper to be at his heels. You find yourself thrust back against a window—a toy window. You remember you should be shopping; handkerchiefs, ties, stockings, stationery. Mundane things that have no place in that enchanted country beyond the plate-glass window.



In the centre round a simmering cauldron ride three awesome witches. Astride their brooms, evil eye set, with hair streaming, bony hands clutching their broomsticks—black capes awl. Almost one can hear their incantations muttered above that glowing cauldron. Nearby a group of dolls make a pretty picture. Not the old-fashioned baby-doll of fifty years back, but a radiantly lovely flapper child, cap set jauntily on golden curls, throwing a "come hither" glance to a smart tin soldier, epaulettes and bright with new paint.

In a gilt cage a cordon of bright-eyed monkeys swing gaily from a miniature bough. A grey, red-sashed elephant waves a sleepy trunk. A submarine lies rammed against a modern liner. White-winged yachts skim over a glassy lake. Close by a pair of futuristic clowns shriek down the spirit of the old Harlequinade. A railway track, and engine cries to shame our modern railroads. The rails gleam like silver—the engine is a snorting mammoth in scarlet and silver. High above floats an airship with its complement of fair passengers. A little blue-eyed sailor boy looks as though he has stumbled accidentally into the wrong world. The gleam of a bugle, the round, alluring curve of a ball. Riot and dazzle—sparkle and gleam—all the breath-taking confusion of a toy window.

Someone pushes a way through. A childish voice exclaims excitedly—"Here he am, Mummie! Here he am!"

You fall back. Maybe there is tenderness in your smile. You feel it in your heart. This belongs to him. It is his world. This is his Christmas.

As you walk down the street, you can still hear a child's heart-broken sobbing:

"You can shake hands with Father Christmas next year."

"Gran's" Home On The Range

Some of the personalities who are heard regularly from 12B live at a distance from the studio, but the record is probably held by "Gran," whose home is in the Waitakeres. It had always been her ambition to find a quiet place to live, and eventually she bought a section high up in Auckland's Blue Mountains, and there she set about building her home.

Naturally she had to have the help of a carpenter in building the main framework, but the rest, including outer framework and painting, was her own work. Then came the garden, and this is now



"GRAN" of 12B

a lovely spot, a profusion of flower and vegetable beds and fruit trees.