

BACK where we come from the Good Neighbour policy is in full swing. Teapots remain night and day at action stations on the stove on the inside chance that somebody will drop in. On weekdays there's usually a spare pram with somebody's baby in it being minded on the lawn, and on weekend mornings gardens remain undug and hens unfed while the homebrew circulates with centrifugal force. And you're always asked to parties given by your immediate neighbours, if only (as cynics assert) so that you won't be in a position later on to complain about the noise.

ONCE I accepted this I was conscious of a delicious sense of freedom. I enjoyed being able to walk to the telephone box and back without having to stop to pass the time of day (as if it

Not that I have any actual objection to knowing them. The Joneses are, I

YES, the Joneses live a much more civilised life than we do, and we often feel a bit wistful about the fact



LIKE us, the Joneses have a fair number of weekend visitors, especially in the summer. There are also one or two round-the-year standbys whom I have difficulty in passing unsaluted in the street because their faces are so familiar. There's Mrs. Jones's aunt (or it might be *his* aunt, they both call her Auntie), who drives a very dashing A40 very dashing and reads *Vogue* and the *New Yorker*. And several nice young people with that sporting unmarried look, whose voices are so impeccably low-pitched that their conversation (till my lip reading improves) must be classed as unrewarding. But I must say the Joneses treat their guests rather better than we do. Out rolls the tea-wagon over the smooth sward (Tom mows that lawn at least once a week and sometimes oftener) and the hand-painted shower is whisked aside to reveal the silver tea service and the Spode cups and saucers. I always try to keep our guests on the other side of the living-room. Otherwise they're likely to have their noses glued to the window-pane and be exclaiming "Three kinds of cake!" admiringly while I prod them in the back with my tin tray and offer them a choice between

"THE LISTENER" CROSSWORD

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D		P		G		G		B		S		A	
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A		A		T		P		A		M		T	
R	E	G	I	O	N		S	T	R	I	P	E	
F		U		C				E		T		R	
S	T	E	A	K	S			U	N	S	E	E	N

1. Confused desire to live.
4. Perception and sharpness of wit.
8. Parent sheep has nothing for a South American plain.
9. Parent helps to catch.
11. Tremendous Eva (anag.).
12. Appetite to brook.
17. Mate with large sea-going vessel being constantly together.

21. Oblige to live within prescribed limits.

1. Tear discerned in this cutter.
2. Five in shore heard at confession.
3. Conclusive, or unreserved, using inverted atoms.
5. Second in cones rearranged for patronising manner.
6. No, Roma! It's a brownish red.