

After 25 BEWARE of Dry Skin

From about 25 on the natural oil that keeps skin soft gradually decreases. Even before 40—a woman may lose as much as 20% of this oil skin needs.



Under your Lower Lip—those little "dry skin" puckers commence. To Relax—Always at bedtime smooth Pond's Dry Skin Cream from centre of lip out and up to each corner.

Replacement help is at your fingertips with new Pond's Dry Skin Cream! Three features make this new cream extra softening: 1. It is rich in lanolin, most like skin's own oil. 2. It is homogenised to soak in better. 3. It has a special emulsifier.

By Night—Work plenty of Pond's new Dry Skin Cream over face, throat. Leave 5 to 15 minutes, or all night for extra softening.

By Day—Use lightly before make-up—protects skin against dryness all day.

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Call Me Curly, Mother Dear

by "AUGUSTUS"

AFTER ten years in this country Steerforth Langley was still on the outside with his nose flattened against the glass. With a skin as sensitive to local light as a blonde on the beach he had merged against the native growth, discarding his umbrella, distinguishing between "tea" and "afternoon tea," carrying his dirty dishes around in restaurants.

OUT
The barber's clippers were allowed to claim their kinship with the shearer's and plunged up his medulla oblongata, gnawing under the rolling skin of his scalp in the ever-frustrated effort to snatch off the hair the other side of the roots.

When rolling cigarettes for other people he was careful to pass across the offering unlicked. As an enthusiastic convert to the classless society he said good morning to dustmen, unknown milkmen, postmen and street-cleaners, but not to unknown lawyers. He wore night attire to breakfast, sports wear to the office, office wear to the pictures and had another haircut.

Yet there he was on the outside still. All because of his name. Back home (as he had learned within two days never to say) "Langley" has been a good serviceable handle which nobody had found any difficulty in using. As an accountant he had always had at least one boss over him, often more. He had called the boss Mr. So-and-so and the boss had called him Langley. Business associates called him Langley. Those working under him called him Mr. Langley, and his chosen friends had called him Steerforth.

It had been simple, cut and dried. Taking a new job he had known just where he stood. But Dear Lord, the troubles that beset him when he gets a job here!

To begin with, the only names used anywhere in the business are Christian names. Yet of course no one can ever take the plunge and call the boss by his Christian name. The staff has a rude word for that sort of thing. So mostly the boss is not addressed as anything. The boss on the other hand calls everybody else by the Christian name. To prefix "Mr." down the years is unthinkable, and the surname by itself is shocking, abrupt, uncouth, feudal—the staff has a rude word for that sort of thing.

So far the rules are straightforward. Of course difficulties arise, as when one calls up a "nameless" personage on the telephone for example. You have to be sure you have the right man, but have no name to address him by. You adopt a stratagem like this:

"Is Mr. So-and-so in the office, please?"

"Speaking."

"Oh," agreeably surprised, "hallo. It's Langley here."

"Who?" The name is unknown of course. You are still the new man awaiting the attachment of a Christian name.

"Langley," you rush on, "about that bunch of invoices for the dry-cleaning people . . ."

"Oh! Oh, yes, oh, hallo, yes. Well now . . ." The contact is made. You have not addressed him, he has not addressed you.

But the big problems arise over intercourse at one's own level. There is a man named Johnson. You meet him every day, several times a day. He is not

your idea of a soul-mate, but he's got the job and makes a good job of it. You can't call him Johnson — one doesn't. After a week or so you can't call him Mr. Johnson, because there you are, heads together going through lists of figures, exchanging cigarettes.

You have to blunder in now, before it's too late, before the bark grows over the relationship, sealing it in this innumerate condition which time will only harden. The words are hammering in your skull, they cluster behind your vocal organs, edging and nudging each other, too embarrassed to come forth. You drive them into the open:

"Er, what's your first name?" After all your practice it sounds coy.

"Tom, what's yours?"

He sounds intruded on.

"Steerforth."

Silence. You can't call anyone Steerforth in the office. Overlooking Lake Te Anau as the moon rises, yes. Or at a repertory rehearsal. One might even concede it as possible while eating water-biscuits aboard the Rangitira. Steerforth is not, however, possible as office currency.

The contact is not made. You linger on in the place for months. You call him Tom. So does his mother. You don't feel like a mother to him, but there you are, all Toms together. Except that you are a barren little island of anonymity in a sea of easy terms.

If you can't even be called, how can you ever be chosen? So Langley would miss promotion in the firm, like those haggard castaways in the strip advertisements. He would always be leaving for another job. He would watch the perilous opening moves more closely. Observing others at it, he managed to pick up a hint or two. For example this gambit:

"The wife says to me as I'm leaving this morning, Now Jack, don't forget the lettuce for tea . . ." Crafty you see. The Christian name announced without the strangling ceremony of formal interchange. He would try it.

"So I thought to myself, Steerforth old boy, it's now or never . . ." It didn't work. If they caught the name they thought it was a flippancy, like Throgmorton. If they didn't catch it they could hardly inquire, "What was it you thought to yourself?"

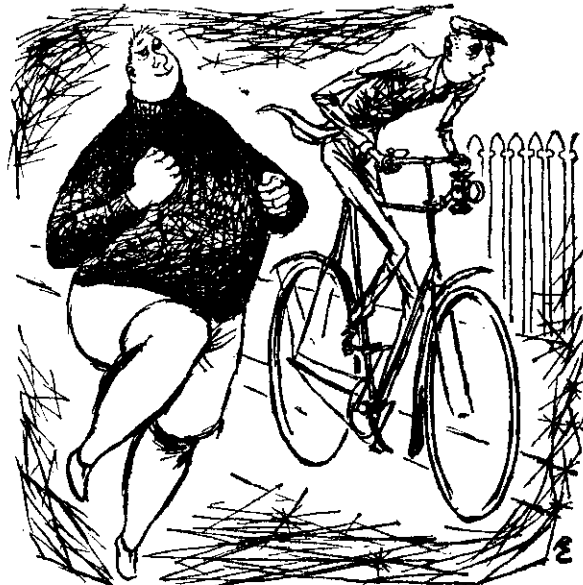
Ten years on the outside.

One day he happened to be looking through the summaries of various minor rugby games in the newspaper. In one country team there were five brothers playing. The report read: T. Smyth three tries, Stanley Smyth one try, Steerforth Smyth four tries . . . His heart bounded at the appearance of his own uncommon name. Then slowly his face took on the look of ineffable hope, like the second-to-last picture in the advertisements which is labelled And So That Night . . .

Rushing down to the station he bought a ticket for Mangawaiwai, the home territory of the Smyth boys. On arrival

he had no difficulty in finding the farmstead since the stationmaster, a roadmender and a hedge trimmer were all Smyths who waved enormous arms in the direction of home. He met Steerforth Smyth in the cowshed. The lad had just left school but was already large; smaller however than a plough horse. He had had a sickness as a child.

Langley brought his namesake back to the city, fed him, clothed him, housed him. Every morning at six Langley on a bicycle and Smyth in sandshoes might be seen covering many miles of suburban streets. The windows rattled,



"Every morning at six Langley on a bicycle and Smyth in sandshoes might be seen covering many miles of suburban streets"

milk horses stood aside, Smyth's knees went up and down, but his weight went only up.

Every Saturday afternoon Steerforth Smyth steamed about the footy field while the crowd roared. The ball would be kicked off, Smyth would pick it up in one hand, jog down the field and lay it to rest between the posts like an obedient spaniel. After he had done this twenty or thirty times a whistle would blow and Smyth would come home to Langley.

Pretty soon the exporters decided that Smyth was ready to be shipped overseas as an All Black. South African photographers had a glass-covered pit dug between the goal-posts, and it was a common thing on the newsreels to see Smyth trundling down on you and right over you like a Churchill tank in one of those tricky documentaries.

You couldn't call him a heady player like most of the others; he just happened to be constructed like a dredge and to be tenacious with a footy.

Langley's troubles were over.

"What did you say your name was?" people would cry.

"Steerforth."

"You mean like Steerforth Smyth?"

"That's right."

"Have another drink, Steerforth. Call me Ted."

IN

N.Z. LISTENER, MARCH 27, 1953,