

From the Woman's Point of View.

By VERITY.

OUR TROPICAL CLIMATE

It rained and rained, and rained and rained—
The average was well maintained,
And when our lawns were simply bogs,
It started raining cats and dogs!

After the drought of half an hour,
There came a most refreshing shower,
And then, most curious thing of all,
A gentle rain began to fall.

Next day was pretty fairly dry,
Save for a deluge from the sky,
That wetted people to the skin,
But after that the rain set in.

Folks wondered what they next would
get,
They got, in fact, a lot of wet.
But soon we'll see a change again,
For we shall have a drop of rain.
—A Dunedin Sufferer.

The Right Hon. L. S. Amery and Mrs. Amery are the guests in Dunedin of Sir James and Lady Allen, who saw much of their distinguished visitors during Sir James Allen's tenure as High Commissioner for New Zealand.

They Say:

That all women and most men are delighted with the selection of Mr. J. F. Platts-Mills as one of the two Rhodes Scholars; his mother, Dr. Platts-Mills, being an untiring and devoted social worker, her charming voice, fluent phraseology, and unselfish effort being at all times available to help along the woman's cause.

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Smith, well known through the Dominion, particularly in the newspaper world, are arriving by the "Makura," after an extensive tour in England and abroad, and purposes going on at once to their home in Dunedin.

Colour in the Kitchen.

The kitchen is a corner into which the home decorator can introduce colour at a very modest outlay. A few yards of gaily checked towelling for runner towels in place of the usual drab patterns; checked gingham to match for curtains, table runners, pot holders with bound or embroidered borders make the most enviable of kitchen ensembles.

Christmas Gifts.

Among Christmas gifts from America that are different, smart little quilted taffeta pillows are finding great popularity. The fascination of them lies in the work itself, and the satisfaction the giver feels in bestowing them upon her friends. Pale colours, such as delicate green or lemon, are favourites, and the quilting is stitched in all kinds of designs, both intricate and simple.

A gift that is sure to please is a new bridge table cover for smart bridge parties. Made of felt or heavy linen with little snappy pet dogs appliqued in each corner caught in the act of balancing a heart or a diamond, a club or a spade, on the tip of his impertinent nose. Such a cover bears the unmistakable hall-mark of up-to-dateness; and with its vivid binding and corner ties is bound to lend new vigour to the spirit of the game.

For the Out-door Man.

Hand knitted golf stockings to match his cardigan make a definite appeal to the golfer. His women-folk like them, too, because they are easier to mend and last three times as long as the ordinary kind. In the case of shrinkage, the discomfort of a too short toe can be easily overcome by undoing the toe stitches and knitting a little extra length. His favourite colour introduced into the patterned top give the right touch of smartness, and the comfort ensured through right fitting gives added pleasure to sport.

An Interesting Art.

The large number of tints and shades of hosiery worn to-day has made hosiery dyeing a complicated, but interesting, art. Colour has become one of the best salesmen. Hence constant endeavour is to furnish the latest and most fashionable colours; these, applied with a beautiful soft finish, complete the stocking into which have been put pure silk and the best skilled workmanship. Let it be borne in mind that stockings are completely made before the dyeing is done (that is, the yarns are not dyed before the knitting, except for some fancy styles). Fancy effects on men's hosiery are now an important part of hosiery dyeing. Considerable study and research are necessary to select a pleasing and harmonious multi-colour effect. In compounding the various shades, about one hundred and forty carefully selected pure dye-stuffs and chemicals are used. These have been picked by rigid tests from among the hundreds of dye-stuffs available to-day. —Mrs. W. Thomas, 2YA.

The Letters of Annabel Lee

My Dear Elisabeth,—

The Christmas month seems to have come in even more hastily than usual, and the shops are filled to overflowing with seductive gewgaws that ravish the hearts of old and young. Particularly am I impressed, now that hordes of them throng the streets, the girls slim and colourful, the boys in white flannels, with the beauty and strength of young New Zealand. And intelligent withal. While wandering across hill and dale in search of a flat—which sounds so like a human entity, doesn't it?—Nona and I lost our bearings several times amid the twists and turns of sequestered spots, where we were tracking down the ideal "two rooms and kitchenette" like a pair of sleuth hounds. And those who restored us to the right track, answered our enquiries briefly and to the point, without a trace of the puzzled distrust apt to appear in the face of the grown-up suddenly accosted, were boys of twelve or so. Full of go and ginger, entirely devoid of curiosity (or was this just natural good manners?), with nice freckled faces and carrotty locks, they almost literally helped us over the stile. Nona's shallow purse and fastidious taste are hard to reconcile, and she is still homeless. In one strange place of doomful aspect, a "foreign body" eyed us distrustfully. "I want no young gals here, with their swearing and their cocktails!" he announced truculently, as he wrathfully eyed the petite and slender figure that deludes so many into classing Nona as one of the Very Young. After a chat, however, in which there was an opportunity to grasp the really remarkable astuteness of the fairy he had condemned, his opinion changed. "Not so young as you look. You ain't no chicken, I can see that!" he stated, with conviction, as we departed, leaving his flat on his hands. Quite a lot of desirable nests there are, with views, fascinating modern stoves, penny-in-the-slot caliphonts, and musical instruments taboed, all very desirable to the lover of peace and the soft ways of life; but invariably going, going, or already gone to some nabob. Alas, when the perfect home, the perfect partner, is at last discovered, he, she, or it is so frequently just out of reach.

Which reminds me of that play by Somerset Maugham, in which he elaborates the theory that when the darling of our eyes, the desire of our heart, is at the long last within our reach, we don't want it any more. Wherein I don't agree with him; that is to say, if we knew what we wanted, which few women do.

Talking of youth, how diverting, to be sure, is that modern young man, Mr. Beverley Nicholls, clever compiler of "Crazy Pavements," who is so ingeniously interested in his own ego, writing his autobiography at the early age of twenty-five. A year or so later, he now gives a smiling world the explanation of Why He Remains a Bachelor, tactfully telling that it is because of the essentially transitory nature of human emotions, forbidding him to tie himself irrevocably to Only One; and further mentioning that, being eminently adapted to paddling his own canoe in luxurious loneliness, he will not trust himself to that sex which he shrewdly suspects are hopelessly bad housekeepers. Well, well!

From Dunedin comes a tale of rain and rain and rain, drenching, hopeless, unabated, reducing the gayest hearts to pessimism, and entirely ruining that great occasion, the People's Day at the Show. One regrets this the more, as the Southern City is so ready in response to any and every good cause, be it civic, social, or philanthropic. Perhaps more particularly does it rise to anything connected with arts, the recent reception to Joseph Hislop being a particularly successful function; for is he not one of the elect, a great artist, an Edinburgh man, no less, and One of Us! The clannish Scot asks no more of the chosen, and on this occasion gave a right royal party in the Somerset Hall, the decorative scheme carried out in tall glimmering poppies and purple patches of beautiful blooms. Many interesting and notable people turned up to honour this musician of charm and achievement. Mrs. Hudson was a vivacious and delightful hostess, and Mrs. Wilkie, so long a notable figure in the world of music, was greeted gladly by many old friends, also receiving, as always, the affectionate homage of the younger generation, many of whom she has trained in the pleasant path of music and art generally.

Susan Ertz has put plenty of "punch" into her latest book, "Now East, Now West," a sparkling presentment of a pair of married Americans who go forth to England in a snobbish quest of social splashing on the part of the wife, and of the people that ambitious young woman met there and the giddy pinnacles she climbed. A brilliant portrayal of a not uncommon type that thoroughly believes in its own attractions and readily credits mere man, when he flatters and philanders, with the desire to do and dare all, and throw his bonnet over the windmill, if need be, for her sweet sake. Her fascinating Englishman was not in the least desirous of anything of the sort, and Althea had a rude awakening, going thankfully back to her nice, stodgy, American husband, who meantime had been effectively consoled by an extremely clever and companionable lady of fifty summers, to whom Mrs. Ertz gives pride of place in her gallery of attractive women; so it would seem as though the pendulum veers from the young, lovely and sophisticated to the middle-aged and still more sophisticated.

Thoroughly exhausted with house-hunting, we turned into a tea-room in Manners Street, where we were deafened with jazz, and then went forth and bought some attractive trifles in the way of mats and things for the dressing-table, fashioned of golden lace adorned with tiny flowerets ravishing enough to have come from the garden of Titania. Hats are good this season: with scanty trimming, and of supple and pliable straws. One of the cloche variety, with a yellow rose and a brown one, at a perilous angle, would make a lovely setting for the eyes of youth and its complexion; while the tawny-yellow chapeaux, that are so modish, when worn by the flaxen nymphs, who abound, will certainly persuade gentlemen to prefer blondes. The artificial flowers are beautiful enough to have come from Mars, where 'tis said the flowers of happiness grow; and somehow remind me of a poem I liked in my romantic youth:—

A lilybud, a pink, a rose,
I'll give to you;
But you must bring me oceans more,
Be true, be true!
Your
ANNABEL LEE.

THE DIFFERENCE

Some sad scribbles will echo the following groan from a contemporary:—
A fellow may write with the best of intent,

And may put his whole heart in his rhyme,
But to pen a love lyric and have what you meant

Printed wrong, is disastrous at times.
A plague on the man who did set up my lay

On the DIMPLES of Annabel Lee;
Plague take the proof-reader, the feather-brained Jay,

Who can't tell a "D" from a "P."
Though I've written Annabel note after note,

She's never at home when I call,
She surely must know it was DIMPLES I wrote.

I never wrote PIMPLES at all.

Feminine Ferocity.

A feminine speed fiend was driving a racing sports model on a country road, accompanied by her unsporting and somewhat timid fiancé. The latter was cowering in abject terror as the telegraph poles flew by until they resembled a tooth comb. A village approached, and the fair one yelled through the roar of her engine, "That's a pretty village—wasn't it?"

Umbrellas.

We hear dismal stories all around us of slumps in this trade and that, but surely umbrella makers have been making hay while the sun forgot to shine! And yet there was a time (almost impossible to imagine) when such things as umbrellas were unknown to Western civilisation. The first time an umbrella was used in England was in 1750. Mr. John Hanway, a great traveller, brought it from China, and there was tremendous excitement when he was seen walking the streets of London holding it over his head to keep the rain off. The umbrella has altered very little in shape since 1750, but a German once tried to improve it by making little glass windows in the folds, so that one could keep it well down over the head and at the same time keep an eye upon the on-coming traffic. This umbrella was not popular and did not stay, the average Britisher preferred blindly to forge his way ahead.

Reasonable!

There was once a colonel of a certain cavalry regiment who was a martinet in all except his own habits. On one occasion the regiment was about to start on a long march, and orders were issued that baggage should be reduced to a minimum. A lieutenant of the squadron had just received from his father a small box of books, and asked the colonel if he might take it along. "Certainly not, sir," roared the chief. "I'm very sorry, colonel," answered the lieutenant, "it will be very dull out there without any reading. My father sent me a case of whisky, but of course I couldn't take that?" "Not take it?" again roared the colonel. "Certainly you can. Anything in reason."

An Opportunist.

A man went into a jeweller's shop one day. "I wish you would fix this watch for me," he said, "something's the matter with it." The jeweller examined it carefully. "I don't see anything wrong with it," he said. "Well," said the man, "it's lost a minute in the last three months." "That's nothing to worry about," answered the jeweller with a smile. "Aren't some of the works broke, or some of the jewels lost or something?" asked the other. The jeweller looked at it again. "No," he said, "everything is O.K." Still the man didn't seem satisfied. "Well," he said, "I've suspected lately that the case is plate. What do you say?" "Solid gold," replied the jeweller. "None better," "Well, I'm glad to hear you say that," said the man cheerfully; "then perhaps you wouldn't mind letting me have fifty on it."

Christmas Cake.

Take 1lb. butter, beat to a cream with 1lb. brown sugar, add half a teaspoonful almond essence, six drops of vanilla, and six drops of lemon essence. Add eight eggs, one by one, beating in one spoonful of flour after each egg. Sift in 1½lb. of flour, then add 4lb. of mixed fruit, carefully cleaned and dried. This includes lemon and cherry peel, sultanas, and currants, and lastly, half a teaspoonful of brandy or whisky. Put the mixture into a tin lined with several thicknesses of paper, when the oven temperature reaches 400 degrees put it in; turn the element to medium for about one hour, then to low for another two hours; then right off, and leave the cake in for at least a couple of hours after this. If an old scone tray or sponge tin is turned upside down on the shelf directly below the cake it will keep it quite moist at the bottom.—Mrs. Sinclair, 2YA.

Latest statistics show that married women live longer than their single sisters. Mr. Henpeck, who draws our attention to the fact, adds that on occasion statistics can be very cruel.

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