

blinking art galleries, their private pipe organs, their rose gardens, but when it comes down to the practical things that make home an inspiration and to bid comfort to a real family, give me an electric refrigerator."—Extract from "The Man who Knew Coolidge." (Sinclair Lewis.)

FASTING, if carried out judiciously, is a valuable treatment for certain ailments, but if overdone it can be the cause of much illness and suffering. Unless under medical supervision one should never fast longer than a couple of days. When feeling out of sorts, it is a good plan to spend Sunday in bed and do without food entirely, save for a cup or two of weak tea. This gives the heart a rest and the system a chance to discharge the impurities in the blood.

SHORT linen sleeveless cardigans, with pockets at each side, are having a great vogue during the English tennis season. They can be had in all sorts of dainty colourings and are quite inexpensive as well as being smart. Soft shades of primrose yellow or periwinkle blue, worn with a white tennis frock look most attractive.

A "SAFETY FIRST" idea adopted by some anxious mothers in a busy country town, is to send their children to school wearing brilliant scarlet berets or caps, so that motorists can see them from a long way off. It is claimed that many accidents have been averted in this way.

THE following printed notice was found hanging on the bathroom wall of a country hotel:

*Just rub yourself inside the bath till you are nearly dry,
If you, your decent fellow men would not unduly try,
The thing that everybody hates, old, young, tall, thin or fat,
Is putting their bare feet upon a sopping rubber mat.*

What an excellent idea for many hotels and boarding-houses in our own capital city!

SHOULD a man wait for a woman to bow before he takes off his hat is a question that has perplexed many male friends. In his book "Good Manners and Bad," Hugh Scott gives a ruling on the matter. The lady bows first," he says, but he admits that this is not a good arrangement, and adds: "Fortunately, in practice, the rule is not interpreted too strictly, and sensible men do not hesitate in spite of it, when sufficiently sure of their ground, to make the first advance." So now you know.

A CROWDED road, a driver who 'cut in,' turned round and cursed all women drivers, having nearly crammed me into the ditch, and a burst tyre, were the real reasons why I took up flying," said a girl member of an English flying club recently. We all feel like that at times, but if we all acted on impulse, and went up aloft it would not take long before the word "air hog" would be vibrating through the ether.

—ALISON.

Prize Poem Competition

THE prize of half a guinea this week is awarded to "John Storm" for dignified, musically flowing lines on a loss still fresh in our minds. Ships that pass in the night, going backward and forward on the shining waters as we wave our Hail and Farewell, ever prove inspiration to dreamer and poet, and even to the least imaginative among us appear imbued with the spirit of the humanity that has trodden their planks; so we feel sure "Requiescat" will appeal to many of those who felt a pang of regret when they realised that the Tahiti had gone on her last voyage. It is reproduced with a story of the last tours of the "Tahiti" on page 25. Also selected for commendation is "Oh Mack's" love poem, and some arresting work by F.J., who woos the Comic Spirit in unusual, but too lengthy, metrical form.

"Adrienne" knocks the jingle of "Sing a song of sixpence" into the metaphorical cocked hat.

"Bushey": The Peaceful Pastoral is rather sweet, but standard not to our requirements.

A.W.A.: Your poem is by no means "a poor thing," both subject and treatment appealing to us. We hope to see more of your work.

"Olaf": We expect thrill in a Viking Saga, but yours might be a Berham-pore Ballad!

"Dorothy" and "Wild Rose" both send small sweet songlets. Their youthful pluck in going on trying is admirable.

"Philomet" ranges the world from China to Peru in search of the divine fire, but fails to find it.

"Lorenzo" assuredly might echo Browning's del Sarto:

"But all the power, the insight and the stretch,
Out of me, out of me!"

"Orpheus": It would seem as though literary expression were not your metier.

"Tatarepo" is a drowsy musing with a certain grace of diction, in fact a little too drowsy.

"Admirals All": A Cautionary Tale from which we judge the writer to be.

House Planning

Mistakes to Avoid

A LOVER OF BEAUTIFUL HOMES" writes to me as follows:—

Dear Alison,—References in your interesting and chatty column two weeks ago to the delight of planning and replanning one's home prompt me to write something of my experiences in the hope that they may prove of value to others. I suppose I am only one of thousands of women who create their own homes both mentally and on paper. This home, when on paper, appears so good that straightway it becomes a substance. I have built the same house three times in different suburbs and still there are mistakes. A home designer is naturally conceited, but let me give you a word of advice, even if you are sure everything is perfect and that it is now unnecessary expense to have an architect—still have one.

"Even after the third time of building the same house (I sound unoriginal, but it's only because the design has always got the better of me.) I still discover these mistakes, which somehow with the more striking faults before did not make themselves so noticeable.

"For instance, as regards a safe. Unless we are wealthy and can afford our refrigerator (which really is a necessity for my next house) we must build a suitable safe. There is no reason why it shouldn't reach from ceiling to floor—with a door to every two shelves; entirely shutting off the other part. By this means our milk,

butter, meat, stewed fruit, custards, and ham can all be kept absolutely separate.

"Fireplaces are an important item. I have sacrificed heat for design, but this could have been overcome in these big old-fashioned brick fireplaces, by having the back slanting forward so the heat is thrown into the room instead of what I have let it do—go up the chimney. Yes, your bricklayer should know, but he follows your designs to perfection!

"If you are building in brick, which I have done, be careful to profit by this mistake of mine. Specify 'sharp, fresh-water sand,' and have this analysed from time to time to see that no percentage of salt is showing. If salt is in the sand your walls at the first sign of fog or rain will show dampness. The action is the same as the moisture that shows on a salt cellar when wet weather comes.

To save double the expense later, I advise you to have hot points in every room. You'll find that they are absolutely indispensable. However, be sure to specify 'flush switches,' because if you don't, your electrician will have to put an unsightly plug twelve inches above the floor, and to have this on your wallpaper quite spoils the effect in your room. The reason for this is in the following regulation:—Heating Points: No socket or switch shall be mounted on skirting board or within 12 inches above a floor, unless it is of the flush type.

"There are not enough people yet improving their homes by using this flush switch. It is so artistic, and is well worth the little extra original expense.

"There is one more point and that is the position of wardrobes. Mentally furnish your rooms before building in the wardrobe, for nine times out of ten you'll find you've built it in the

A Waterless Cooker

AN appreciative reader describes a new type of waterless cooker. She says: I have just returned from the country, where there is no electricity and everything has to be done in a primitive fashion. However, these friends of mine, during my stay received from Sydney a waterless cooker which they had ordered. This enables them now to cook for a large family on one primus stove. This wonderful utensil comprises three compartments. The largest one is placed at the bottom, in which your joints, poultry, and stews may be placed in the ordinary way, using the usual amount of dripping, and with it any vegetable to be roasted. In this bottom compartment is also an aluminium plate with ridges which acts as an automatic stirrer, and prevents the meat from sticking or burning. The great advantage of cooking meat this way is there is no nourishment or weight lost. It tastes just like meat cooked in a Maori oven—and you'll never forget how delicious that is if you have ever tasted it.

In the middle compartment vegetables for boiling are placed dry, and without salt. At the bottom are perforated holes, through which the steam rises. In this compartment is also a stand which covers the vegetables. Three moulds can be placed on this stand, and steam puddings, stewed fruit, custards, and milk puddings are placed. Then there is a lid which covers everything.

Everything is fool proof, and even a child could make cakes in it. The great advantage is that nothing ever burns, and even if the dinner was put on early in the morning on a low gas jet, or electric hot plate nothing would be overdone. Think also of the saving of heating cost.

most valuable corner for the placing of your other furniture.

"By the way, I didn't mention position of lights. Side or bracket lights are invaluable, but do not leave your lighting to these alone—be sure to have a central light, too, for even distribution over the whole room.

"Before moving into your home I would advise you to have the electric floor polisher and stainer sent up first. To have all the marks, rough parts taken off, and a most beautiful smooth finish put on your picked wood floors, thus turning your home into a mansion.

"Trusting these few points may be of use to you. They would have saved me pounds if I had only thought before. With best wishes to all home-builders."

This is a useful letter. Perhaps other readers could record points they have learned from that most delightful experience, planning a home.—ALISON.

ARE YOU A SMOKER?

Thousands of smokers are to-day only half alive and don't know it! They find it hard to concentrate and easily fall a prey to disease that robs them of their vital powers—all as a result of the deadly effects of Nicotine Poisoning. Why continue to neglect your nerves and wreck your health, your greatest asset? Write to-day for wonderful FREE Book on the dangers of Tobacco. It will astonish you.

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