

It is refreshing to learn that Hollywood is increasingly interested in the question of "English as she is spoke," that hub of histrionics having for too long shown entire disregard of the pitfalls and potentialities of our language. The view, it appears, is gaining ground that the ideal voice lies in a happy mean between Yankee and so-called Oxford accents. A perplexing conclusion to approach when such completely divergent vocal attributes are concerned. Are we to understand that devastating drawl of lovely blondes, so familiar to us all, are to be approximated to, say, the melodious accents of Miss Ruth Chatterton; and delightful enunciation of Mr. Herbert Marshall and Mr. Clive Brook be partially merged, so to speak, in that of brawny athletes who rush headlong into affection of unfastidious flappers who flock to matinee, regardless of accent one longs to chop with an axe?

DO YOU KNOW that evening jackets tailored like a man's lounge suit jacket, of flat silver broche and scarlet peau d'ange, with lapels and pockets, braided all round with black piping, are the latest fashion fad? That stockings are less likely to ladder if they are passed through a lather of warm soapy water after washing, instead of rinsing finally in clear water? That the simplest blouse can be given a note of colour with a string of wooden or amber beads; deep mahogany beads being lovely with brown tweeds, likewise chokers of dark brown wood plaques interspersed with gold bead sections? That Light, Air and Space should be the three fairy godmothers at the christening of our perfect kitchen? That in the technical film triumph, "Monte Carlo," that delightful actor, Mr. Jack Buchanan, carries a cane that also serves as a cigarette-lighter? Upon pressure of a tiny catch the top flies open and ignites a petrol-soaked wick.

INTERESTING to hear that the Empire Marketing Board, renowned for daring design and colour scheme in its advertisements exemplifying world-wide activities, is showing a further strikingly original set of posters, adding to its already high reputation for courage of conception and ability of workmanship. "Milestones in Empire Trade" illustrate the dates at which goods from the outer Empire first began to be on sale in England; the pictures being of most intriguing quality owing to close study and portrayal of dress and types of a past period. Old-



time fashions live again, and paterfamilias lounges in old-fashioned negligé, capped by smoking cap beloved of the Victorian male. A small section of dwellers in this Dominion has found pleasant pastime in collecting representative specimens of this form of art, and at a recent memorable party in the Capital City an exhibition of the Empire Marketing Board's posters, gathered in many wanderings in England and abroad, was the subject of enthusiastic admiration.

*If there were dreams to sell
What would you buy?
Some cost a passing bell,
Some a light sigh,
That shakes from Life's full
Crown
Only a rose-leaf down.*

*If there were dreams to sell,
Merry and sad to tell,
And the crier rang the bell,
What would you buy?*
—Beddoes.

ROOMS, like people, may have plenty of character or they may be almost entirely without it. Like people, too, a characterless room is distinctly boring. Any room with a theme immediately attains character. It may be that the cretonnes at the windows and from which the loose covers of the furniture are also made, depicts a Chinese subject. Possibly the designer of the room first of all owned a couple of big Chinese jars and began to work out her theme from them. Sooner or later a lacquered cabinet was discovered at an antique shop and brought home to grace a corner of the room, and a tiny china mandarin began to nod at one end of the mantelpiece. As opportunity occurs, the owner will probably add a carved table, a piece of Chinese embroidery, the wooden model of a Chinese temple. So long as she develops her theme, the room will be full of character.

BACKLESS gowns make possession of some kind of decorative wrap a sheer necessity, and with imminent insistence of cabaret dances it behoves Eve to gird up her shoulders with this essential accessory. Deep décolletage is a matter of course, and it follows that extra wrapping thereof must be in as attractive a form as taste and finance dictate. The comforting and ubiquitous coats of velvet and brocade silver and gold have been long with us; but what of bewildering varieties fashioned of lace and chiffon and net combined, which can be so lovely? Ornate with beads on coloured transparency the bolero is once more de rigueur—beads, be it said, forming important auxiliary in fashioning of

capelet and coatlet when winter comes. Let us rejoice likewise in second coming of the fichu in all its forms, its charm enhanced by edging of bead or embroidery; for its demure appeal provides subtle enhancement of the type of miniature beauty which so strangely persists regardless of slick silhouette and once-acclaimed boyish outline.

WAS it Charles Lamb who devoutly desired that he could chain to his shelves his beloved books, and so restrain the conscienceless borrower of treasured tomes? An idea which appeals is a sensible small booklet recently offered to the English public, consisting of a useful device for recording novels or other types of book lent to forgetful friends. This necessary adjunct to one's literary equipment is about the size of an ordinary cheque book, and designed on a similar principle, the actual "cheque" being made to tear off. Upon the front of the latter is an appropriately-phrased message asking, tactfully but firmly, for the return of the book, this being placed inside the cover before it goes out. Upon the counterfoil facing the "cheque" a note is made of the name and address of the person to whom the book is lent, and the whole encased in an attractively-coloured wrapper with the words "Books Lent" upon the outside. Those who mourn many grievous and irretrievable losses will applaud this idea. Not a moment too soon has the book been put upon the market!

THOSE who have the privilege of talking to the Queen on matters of bygone arts and crafts are always amazed at her Majesty's wide and expert knowledge of so many different branches. Besides her collections of Tunbridge Wells ware, jade, Oriental objets d'art, and lacquer, the Queen has a great fondness for Wedgwood vases, plaques, chatelaines, and cups and saucers in the characteristic Wedgwood blue, as well as in black, pink, and yellow.

IN the delightful small volume entitled "The White Wallet," for which she is responsible, Viscountess Grey says:

*Chief of the devil's toys
Is noise!*

Many will endorse her dictum, as their sensibilities writhe under persistent penetration of sound that rends the welkin in our streets and suburbs. Following on our heels, it invades peace of flat that for time being passes for home, be it ever so humble or secured at plutocratic price from urgent agent. Impossible to dodge loud cachinnations and stridency of jazz that go to make mirth for occupants of adjoining apartments. Is it one's fancy that shriek of newsboys grows more raucous

in this year of grace, that sudden blast of motor-cycle is punctuated with gloating glee, and jolting jazz exploited in malice against poor white trash who ask only for a book and a nook, or even a desert island and peace? Did we once abide in another planet where golden virtue of silence was extolled? Alas! for pitiable mentality of those to whom loud hilarity is the one concomitant of mirth, and who encourage to flourish in our midst a race of young barbarians, unchecked, untrammelled, and unhung!

A PROPO, let us hear what that suave and cynical observer, Mr. E. V. Lucas, has to say on the matter of sound and fury: "The throb of a motor on every side. Vessels no longer glide, they pant. The country, which God made, is being ruined by man, who makes new roads along which the senseless automobile rambles, rales, and whirs. One's sense of order and decency is outraged. . . . One would not go so far in cynicism as to say that it was worth while to have had the Great War in order to get two minutes' silence once a year; but it is impossible to take part in that silence without a sudden loss of strain, leading to a feeling of spiritual well-being and intense relief. To be silent oneself—that is a great thing. For all the world to be silent—that is even greater! . . . Would it not be a gracious thing during 1931 if we all tried to make a little less row?"

"THE Barretts of Wimpole Street," the Victorian play dealing with the life of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, has been acted at the Queen's Theatre, London. The play makes excellent reading. A remarkable canine actress, "Miss Tuppenny of Ware," a member of an ancient family of spaniels and a worthy descendant of "Lucky Star of Ware," winner of many championships, takes the part of "Flush," the dog known to all friends of the poetess and her writings.

A CHALLENGE by a reader in a contemporary to suggest the most perfect declaration of love in a single sentence, brought a number of replies from both men and women, ranging from quotations from Shakespeare's Sonnets to the proposal of the shy hero of "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," with his gentle question, on one of those long walks with the school-mistress, "Will you take the Long Path with me?" A city man sent unexpectedly romantically brief and eloquent "Oh, my soul's joy" (Othello to Desdemona), and also, as was to be expected, came the lovely lines of Burns:

*And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry,
Till all the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt with the sun. . .
Perhaps loveliest of all was by Emily Dickinson, known to the elect as writer of lovely verse:
Doubt not, my dim companion!
Why, God should be content
With but a fraction of the love
Poured thee without a stint!*

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