

OUR HOME PAGE

Your Home and You

By HELEN KENDALL.

THE HIDDEN MIRROR

The apartment was very tiny, and first glance it seemed to be all mirror, for the bride and groom had bought an old mirrored set as wedding gifts, and meanwhile had bought an old mirrored set, an old clock with a looking glass in the lower half of its door, a mirrored corner cupboard for dining room.

The infinitesimal bedroom was lined with mirrors—on dress-table, chiffonier, and tall shaving set; yet there wasn't in the whole set a single full length mirror in which the bride could see the bottom of her skirt. They were wearing her skirts too, and one simply was able to see how they hung. "You could have a long mirror in the closet door," suggested bridegroom.

"Another view of myself in this mirror," wailed the bride. I couldn't

stand it. I can't turn around now without staring myself in the face. I like a good mirror as well as anybody, but I can't live in a mystic maze."

And that was when the new husband proved himself to be a man of "infinite resource and sagacity," to quote Kipling.

"Well, why not hitch it to the inside of the closet door?" he queried. Then it will be out of sight until you want to admire yourself in it, and all you'll have to do will be to open the door and there you are!"

So a pier glass was hidden away with its face turned to the bride's frocks and slippers. It filled the entire panel of the door, and showed every inch of the bride's slim prettiness in the most flattering and searching of lights from a nearby window. When she had examined every detail to her satisfaction, she slammed the door on her reflection and went on her way rejoicing.

radio, are, furthermore, regularly translated into seventeen foreign languages by the Foreign Language Information Service and supplied the foreign language press both in the United States and Europe. Correspondence in regard to these broadcasts from as far away as Czechoslovakia has reached the Public Health Service.

In the first six months of its existence, directly and indirectly it is estimated that this service reached 27,000,000 people in the United States alone. For the second six months no definite figures are as yet available, but it is estimated that at the present time there are more than 2,000,000 radio receiving sets with range of stations releasing these health bulletins.

One interesting and by no means unimportant feature of this unique service is that it has involved practically no additional expenditure on the part of the Public Health Service.

INFANT MORTALITY IN GARY INDIANA, U.S.A.

In a survey of conditions surrounding infant life, made by the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor, infant mortality in Gary, Ind., was found to have a close relation with economic and civic factors such as low income, poor housing and sanitation, and lack of public welfare activity. This survey forms the ninth and latest in a series of field inquiries covering various types of communities. According to the report just issued, Gary was chosen for the study as representing a city in which the basic industry was steel manufacturing and which had a large and diverse foreign-born population. The study of infant mortality under these conditions was considered to possess additional interest on account of Gary's newness and rapid growth.

Building was little regulated by city ordinance or State law during the early period of growth, the report says. While the development of housing by a subsidiary land company of the steel corporation has resulted for the most part in well-built and attractive residence areas, the demand for accommodations has consistently exceeded the supply of desirable quarters, many temporary makeshift structures have continued in use and the condemnation and abandonment of unfit dwellings have been retarded. The company early adopted the policy of renting its houses only to Americanized workmen, leaving the foreign born laborer to house himself and his family as best he could. The result has been to concentrate the foreign-born population in certain sections of the city, having poorer housing, less development and extension of sewers and water mains and other measures of municipal sanitation, and consequently a much higher infant death rate than the sections developed by the land company. The rate in the former districts was 141.2 per 1,000 births; in the latter, 90.6.

An increase in infant mortality with a fall in the earnings of the fathers or chief bread winners was again demonstrated. For the year of the Gary study, when the chief breadwinners' earnings amounted to at least \$1,850 the infant death rate was 89.4; when the earnings were between \$1,050 and \$1,850 the rate increased to 127.1, and when the earnings fell below \$1,050 the rate rose to 137.8. More than a fourth of the babies of native white mothers

but less than one in twelve of those having foreign born mothers were in families whose chief breadwinner earned \$1,850 or more.

At the time of the study certain districts of the city embodied many of the conditions of pioneer life, the report states. Squatters rights on land might be purchased for a yearly fee of one or two dollars and a shack put up, pieced together with scraps of boards and tin cans. Not only these buildings but many regularly constructed houses were without city water or sewer connection. More than one house on a lot, crowded rooms, and other housing evils existed because neither State nor city regulations applied to one-family dwellings. The city health officer was inadequately salaried and served only on part time. One food and milk inspector and one nurse giving educational service to mothers were employed by the city, but additional inspectors and nurses would have filled a large need, the report indicates. Comparatively little infant welfare work was being done by private agencies.

Since the findings of the study are published with a view to showing the consequences which may be expected from similar conditions in any community where they exist, the report makes no statement as to conditions in Gary during the present year. It declares, however, that "by carrying forward and extending the work already commenced in Gary, through infant welfare stations, prenatal clinics, and public health nurses it should be possible within a few years to reduce the infant mortality rate to a very low figure." In the year of the study the city's infant death rate was high. For all except one of the principal causes of death the rate exceeded the corresponding figure for the United States birth registration area, and much of this mortality was preventable, the report concludes. "The heaviest toll was taken by the gastric and intestinal diseases, and it has been repeatedly demonstrated that the mortality from these causes can be largely reduced by the encouragement of breast feeding, improvement of the milk supply, improvement of community housing and sanitation, and especially by the instruction and education of mothers in the proper methods of infant feeding and care." Most of the other causes are likewise shown to have yielded to preventive measures in other communities.

HOUSE PLANT MANAGEMENT

Windows opening to the south are usually preferable to those with western outlook. During the winter days the latter will receive but little sun, and that too horizontal. Windows looking to the east may be occupied by a few plants, and are, in fact, for palms, ferns and similar shade-loving sorts, desirable.

Where it is difficult to obtain a suitable compost an admixture of street sweepings with fresh garden loam will answer; but if only a small amount of soil is needed it will be wiser to buy some prepared compost from a florist.

Pots used, unless new, should be soaked and scrubbed. Never use pots too large; a small plant growing in a great quantity of soil will not remove much water by transpiration.

For seedlings or rooted cuttings the pot is loosely filled with sifted soil, and the plant placed in a finger-hole made in the center. The soil is then pressed into place and well watered.

Before repotting, remove a quarter inch or so of surface soil, thus disposing of any weeds or slime. Next, place half an inch or an inch of compost in the bottom of a pot, put in a plant, and add enough soil to fill the space. Then furnish a slight covering of fresh surface. The soil level should be from half an inch to an inch below the edge of the pot. The hole at the bottom must not be clogged; it is necessary to provide drainage. Pots up to four inch need not have the hole shielded. Above this size, an inch or two of broken pot might be placed in the bottom and covered with sphagnum or rough soil, to keep the soil from washing down and filling the spaces.

Through lack of food a plant sometimes does it make good growth. So long as the roots have not become bound it need not be re-potted; indeed, this would offer a needless check. Scrape away the surface soil down to the roots and replace by a rich soil, containing twenty-five per cent of ground bone.

Provided the plants have proper drainage water should be applied until it runs through the bottom. Too frequent watering is often a cause of non-success; it wets the surface soil so much as to keep the air out. The soil becomes sour and the water does not penetrate to the roots of the plant—the only place where it will do good.

Dwelling air is usually dry—a condition inviting to the red spider. Dryness may be decreased by evaporating water in the room and by syringing foliage on bright days. Thick-leaved plants may be sponged off with water containing whale-oil soap. Also, give a little ventilation on pleasant days.

At night plants do best in a temperature 10 or 15 degrees lower than they need during the day. Most species used in the house require no more than 50 or 55 degrees Fahrenheit at night, and they will not suffer if the thermometer falls to 40 degrees—though such a temperature maintained for a good while would check growth.

Frozen plants should be thawed out slowly. Remove from direct sun-rays, and keep at a temperature of 35 to 40 degrees until thawed. If cold water is used the temperature must not rise above this. Water at 50 or 60 degrees will probably harm plants more than if they are allowed to thaw themselves out.

Fitness of plants for house purposes may be largely determined from structure and general appearance. Those with thick leaves and a small glossy surface are but little affected by a dry temperature; while plants with small thin leaves quickly dry up.

Deciduous plants that show bare stems in winter are the least decorative. All plants need rest, but those which rest during the summer should be chosen: begonias, abutilons, callas, cyclamens, geraniums, heliotropes and Chinese primroses; also the flowering bulbs—hyacinths, tulips, narcissi, etc.

Good Night Stories

DOTTY SEES A STRANGE SIGHT.

One day as Dotty was out walking she heard a peculiar sound, and stopped to see what it was.

"Oh, dear, if I were only back home now I'd call Squeedee," Dotty mused. "He'd know just what it was. But, my goodness! I cannot expect him to follow me clear to South America. He doesn't know where I am! How could he?" Dotty laughed merrily. "Silly me."

"Who said so?" asked a happy voice, and Squeedee himself, slid down the limb of the tree above Dotty's head and touched her on the shoulder. "Who said I didn't know where to find you, he laughed."

Again the queer noise sounded from across the hills. Dotty held her finger on her lips.

"Hush, Squeedee!" she whispered. "There it is again! What is that queer noise? Doesn't it sound like a lot of harps?"

Squeedee craned his little neck, then started to chuckle.

"Well, if it isn't a crowd of my friends!" And before Dotty could ask who they were, Squeedee caught her by the hand and away they went toward the queer humming noise.

When they turned the bend in the road a strange sight met Dotty's eyes. There on the ground lay a crowd of beautiful white and brown animals.

"Hello, there," Squeedee cried, shaking his hand to the one that seemed to be the leader. "What's up? Having a concert?"

"Concert, nothing!" replied the leader, getting up and coming to Squeedee's side. "We're just resting and humming. Who's your friend?"

"Excuse me," said Squeedee. "Mr. Llama, this is Dotty Dimple. She heard your humming and wondered what it was."

"Of course I do," he replied. "We all like to do the things that make our master happy, for he is very kind to us in return. He used to have camels to carry his loads across the country, but he sold them and we do it all now. It's funny to see one of 'You wouldn't think it to look at me, would you?"

"And you like to do it?" asked Dotty. She couldn't help but admire the way he held his head.

"It sounded like a hundred harps," Dotty laughed. "Once I thought it might be the fairies playing."

This amused Mr. Llama. He and his friends laughed heartily. "Imagine me playing a harp," he cried merrily, stretching himself to the fullest.

He was rather a pretty animal with his long, fine white fur. He was about four and a half feet tall. His small head with its large black eyes seemed almost out of place on so tall an animal. His feet were very small in comparison with the rest of his body. Dotty could hardly believe him when he told her what heavy weights he could carry on his back.

"Why just yesterday I carried a pack that weighed one hundred and twenty-five pounds!" he exclaimed.

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