

MAYFAIR and Belgravia, Kensington and South Kensington, are all giving "Drawing Room" teas, and we go from one to the other to see the other women, and to give them a chance to look at us. Somebody tells me that my name will appear and my dress be described in to-morrow's "Presentation" list, and I intend to get as many copies as I can, mark them with blue pencil, and send them home. Because, republican though I am, a direct descendant from the Declaration of Independence, I shall always be more than proud to remember that sunny May day when the world looked bright and beautiful, and when I, with all love and respect, was presented to the Queen of England and kissed her hand within the walls of Buckingham Palace—she an English queen with her life all but done, I, an American girl, with all my life before me.

## IDEAS FOR PRETTY LUNCHEONS

BY MRS. BURTON KINGSLAND



If there is one form of entertainment dearer to the feminine soul than another it is the "lunch party" in its modern development. The French invite their friends to share their "dîner à la fourchette," upon which meal our modern "luncheon" is slightly modeled, and the English ladies have their five-o'clock teas, which have the same charm of informality; but it remains with the women of America to have evolved the daintiest, most tasteful form of repast that modern society knows anything about.

At the present day nothing prettier seems to have occurred to any one's mind to supersede the "color" luncheons, perhaps because nothing more effective can be imagined. For the sake of novelty, some one special flower has been made to predominate.

For instance, a young girl of my acquaintance gave a "daisy" luncheon the other day. The centerpiece was composed entirely of "marguerites" and maiden-hair fern. The square of bolting-cloth, under the flowers, was bordered by a single row of artificial daisies of fine quality, a drop of mucilage holding each flower in place. It would be still prettier were the flowers embroidered in silks. The shades for the candles were of the same dainty blossoms, and each guest's name was written in the heart of a daisy, about three inches in diameter, painted on bristol-board, and cut out in shape by the young lady herself.

The doilies, of white satin, embroidered in outline with white filosele, were also in the shape of the same flower. All the favors, bonbons, etc., were white, only relieved with a bit of yellow-green, and the effect was chaste and dainty in the extreme.

At the house of one lady friend, famous for always having some novelty at her entertainments, each lady guest at luncheon found a little poem written on the back of the card bearing her name, partly descriptive of, and, of course, complimentary to herself. Her next neighbor read it aloud for the benefit of the rest, thus sparing the subject of the verse any unpleasant self-consciousness. The difficulty of writing such verses is of the slightest, and, provided that they be complimentary, they will not be too narrowly criticized. The more ridiculous and ill-made, the more productive of amusement, perhaps.

About Easter time the same lady procured "bonbonnières" in the shape of hens, about eight inches high, feathered, and natural as life. Around their necks were tied cards, upon which were written barnyard names, supposed to be descriptive of the ladies present. One was "merry cackle," another "pride of the West," a third, intended for a lady with gray hair, "Silver Crest," while the hostess reserved for herself the euphonious name of "old scratch-gravel!"

Another friend aspired to give a "Shakespeare luncheon," at which not only was an appropriate quotation chosen from that writer for each guest, but the menu was entirely expressed in Shakespearean language. Thus, the terrapin was written on the menu "fillet of a fenny snake," from Macbeth, more appropriate than appetizing. The "mushrooms on toast," "What comes so fast in silence of the night," from the "Merchant of Venice." The squabs were described as "a dish of doves," the words used by Jessica in the same play; the ice cream, "Thou art all ice, thy kindness freezes," from "Richard III," and the bonbons were appropriately indicated by the words, "The daintiest last to make the end most sweet," from "King Richard II."

These things cost nothing but a little thought, and add a certain zest and give individuality to a luncheon that the viands themselves fail to do unless more than usually delicious.

For the decoration of the table, too, a great deal of effect may be produced with but little outlay of money. A young housekeeper, lacking an epergne, improvised a centerpiece by filling a deep pan belonging to an old jardinière with pink roses, and tying around it a wide pink satin ribbon, thus concealing the pan, and making really a charming effect. In the spring she repeated the same idea, filling her pan with yellow daffodils, and tying around it a satin ribbon of exactly the shade of the flowers, painting the outside of the pan the same color, lest a bit should inadvertently show.

While on this subject let me suggest the use of an ox-muzzle to ladies who arrange their own flowers. It is easily procurable at any hardware store, and placed over the dish its wire meshes hold the flowers in place, and besides greatly simplifying the matter of arranging the flowers, it also economizes them, for each blossom does its full duty.

The round tables, now so much in favor,

are easily imitated by having a round top made, and merely placed upon an ordinary table, of whatever shape. Any carpenter should know how to make it to prevent it warping, and should not charge more than ten dollars.

The French custom of beginning a "dîner" with fruit is popular at luncheons as a change from the oysters.

One lady had the skins of Mandarin oranges refilled with the clear juice, into which a little kirche and curaçoa were added to enhance the flavor. She had procured some artificial orange blossoms, and some natural orange leaves, which any florist will sell for a few cents. Through the little round top piece of the orange skin, acting as a lid, she inserted the wire stems of a flower, two buds and a leaf, twisting them in a knot to hold more firmly.

An orange, with its crown of blossoms at each place, was further supplemented by three straws tied together by a narrow ribbon. The elegance of taking anything through a straw may be questioned, but Louis Sherry endorses it, and has furnished them at luncheons given by ladies whose names are synonymous for good taste and good breeding.

If one has a dining-room with a sunny exposure, and can therefore dispense with gas and candle light, nothing is in better taste than violets for the beautifying of a lunch table. Each lady is pleased to wear the bunch assigned to her, the air is sweet with their delicate perfume, and there is no color whose many shades are so harmonious as lilac. A large natural violet leaf, whose veins are traced with a line of gilt, and its stem tied with a tiny lilac ribbon to recall the prevailing shade, makes a very pretty "card" for the ladies' names, which may be written across it in gilt. An ivy leaf may be used instead, as it retains its freshness for a long time. It is impossible to make an effective centerpiece with violets, the stems are so short, but the ordinary "fernery" does very well, with four large bunches of the violets placed near it. Underneath the "ferns" a square of bolting cloth or linen with violets scattered over it, embroidered or painted, supplements the flowers, and suggests the idea of greater profusion.

If it be true that "the man who invents a new dish confers a greater benefit on humanity than he who discovers a new star," then that woman who in the spirit of kindly good fellowship succeeds in giving pleasure to her friends, and especially she who puts a little sunshine into shadowed lives, if only by giving a pleasant luncheon, may also be ranked among the benefactors of the race.

## THE CARE OF SEAL SKINS



It seems a little odd that the frisky seal who when alive spends most of his time dancing around in the water, when dead finds water is specially injurious to his skin. Nothing will do so much toward making a new seal coat look like an old one as its being rained upon. However, if yours should happen to suffer this misfortune do not attempt to smooth it with your hand, dry it with soft towels or anything of that sort, but take it in a cold room, spread it out and let it stay there until it is dry. Seal skin dried in a heated room will flatten. If it should be trimmed with a fluffy fur, that portion of it may, after it is thoroughly dry, be combed out with a very coarse comb.

It is said with truth that the moth which exterminates does not enter seal skin; this is quite true, but in his place comes an insidious little worm which eats his way through and is a hundred times more objectionable. He is the result of dirt. You look indignant, and yet many of you put your seal coats away while they are absolutely dirty. Now, the proper way to do is to get out your coat, shake it thoroughly, hang it on the clothes-line and beat it until not a particle of fluff will come from it, then let it sun for half the day, after this fold it carefully, not doubling it over, but allowing it to lay out its full length; then sew over it very closely, coarse muslin; over this pin heavy sheets of newspaper; then having lined your box with newspapers lay in the queer-shaped package, cover it with newspapers, put the lid on, and to be sure that it is air tight, tie it with a good strong cord, mark what is in the box and put it in a dark closet. Use newspapers in preference to any other kind. By putting your coat away so that it is air tight, in utter darkness and thoroughly clean, it will come out when you need it as good as new.

For the trimmed coats a somewhat more elaborate arrangement is necessary. Of course, the trimming must have a special cleaning and you must be sure to literally bang out all the moth eggs in it, if any are there. For if you put a coat away in which these tiny eggs are, you might just as well count it as eaten up, for they will hatch, and your fur trimming will be greedily absorbed by them. Every woman has her own idea as to what she prefers to put furs away in. I have not found camphor as efficacious as the preparations that have tar in them; then, too, it is more troublesome to prepare, as it should always be put in coarse muslin bags which are then pinned to the furs. Where the other preparation is used it should be literally snowed over the fur, and then the process of covering with cotton cloth and with newspapers, as described for the plain seal jacket, should be followed. But no matter whether the coat is trimmed or plain it is absolutely necessary that it be clean. All sorts of things may be put on it to keep out invaders, but they will be absolutely of no use unless the garment has had every particle of dust literally chastised out of it. Experience is the only teacher of worth, and in telling you how to take care of your seal skin, I am only telling you how the perfect care of them was at last achieved by me.