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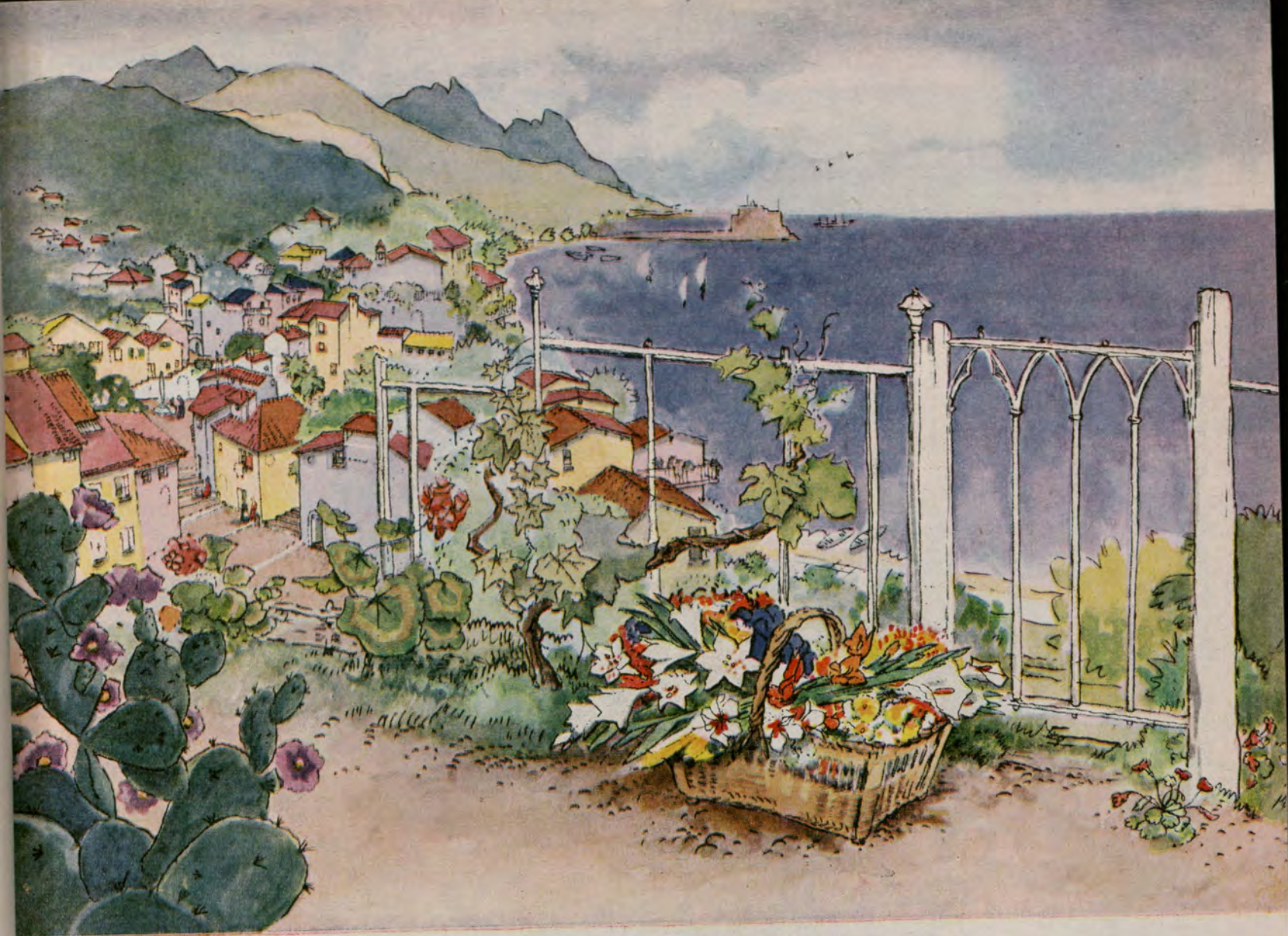
Hot skies, white walls and cooling shadows—Egreja de Santa Clara



A country of deep ravines and rugged splendour where tiny harbours crowd sparkling seas

Madeira — where spring, summer and autumn most

WHEN you arrive off the bay of Funchal on a brilliant February morning under a sky in which the only clouds are like fuzzy night-caps on the mountains, there is no sign of any extraordinary splendour about the waterfront except a few purple splashes of bougainvillea on black volcanic rocks, and the vivid blue and orange scimitars of Van Gogh-like fishing boats pulled up on a narrow shore of black sand. Here, you begin to say to yourself, gazing up at infinite tiers of pink and cream houses built like clean cubes into steep rock, is another Monte Carlo, another Palma de Majorca, or just another southern sea-port town.



Old walled streets climbing up from the sea to hills steeped in colour and drowsy with peace

Island of Flowers

By H. E. BATES

joyfully meet, in a sun-blessed dream of summer delight

Nothing could be more wrong than that first hurried and slightly disappointing impression. Madeira, let it be firmly stated at once, is not Monte Carlo; even its Casino, so restrained and beautiful that it is like a piece of Georgian colonial in a park, is a thousand miles away from the monstrosity of Monaco. It is not Majorca, delicious and lovely though that island is; it is not Mediterranean; and, though it lies only three hundred miles from the western coast of Africa, it is not African. And, perhaps oddest of all, it is, though a Portuguese possession, not absolutely Portuguese. It is in fact a remarkable example of English merchant

colonization in a territory governed by another and most benevolent flag: a colonization powerful and yet in a way unobtrusive, fabulous and yet quiet, built up of course with constant Portuguese assistance, that makes this island, only twenty-five miles long and twelve broad, one of the pleasantest phenomena in our modern world.

I want to presume you are going in February not simply because February is the only month when I have been there myself but because February, though not more beautiful than January or March or May, gives the greatest

Please turn to page 122



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WHERE-TO-BUY . . . Details of the readymades shown on pages 50 and 51

THE CLOTHES

Crayson three-piece suit 2550/2115, in novelty suiting, grey and white checks; 36 to 40 inch hips; suit about £6 6s.; loose coat about £9. From Derry & Toms, London, W.8; Bainbridges, Newcastle.

Wolsey dress KU 368 in honeycomb wool, many soft colours; 36 to 44 inch hips; about £6. From Derry & Toms, London, W.8; Joseph Johnson, Leicester.

Bijou dress 810 in tie silk, black, grey or navy, navy/red, navy/green; 36 to 44 inch hips; about £9. Write to Bijou Ltd., 51, Mortimer Street, London, W.1, for names of your nearest stockist.

Berkertex dress 16037 in wool, many colours; 36 to 52 inch hips—also in "tall woman" range: 39 to 46 inch hips; about £4 19s. 6d. to £6 2s. according to size. From Peter Robinson London, W.1; Werff Bros., New Street, Birmingham.

UNDERNEATH

Warner's Le Gant zipped girdle Y 695 in peach Lastex lace and satin; 24 to 28 inch waist; £4 4s. Brassière 2186 in peach or white nylon satin and net; 32 to 38 inch bust, A, B and C cup fittings; about 27s. 6d. Both from Marshall & Snelgrove, London, W.1; girdle from Whitney's, Glasgow; brassière from Alexander Henderson, Glasgow.

Lily of France "Enhance" 7 oz. girdle; tea rose nylon; 25 to 32 inch waist; about £6 18s. Nylon brassière, No. 268, in tea rose or white; 32 to 42 inch bust, with A, B and C cup fittings; about 22s. 7d. Both from Selfridges, London, W.1; Pettigrew & Stephens, Glasgow.

Twilfit "Waistnipper" suspender belt in nylon georgette and French lace, black, white or tea rose; 23 to 28 inch waist; about £2 5s. 7d. Nylon and lace brassière, white or tea rose; 32 to 36 inch bust; about 14s. Both from D. H. Evans, London, W.1; Rockheys, Torquay.

Berlei Controlette 3393 in pink double voile and Lastex net; 38 to 50 inch bust; about £8 8s. From Marshall & Snelgrove, London; Bon Marché, Liverpool.

UNDERFOOT

Clark's "Longleat" in tan, black or blue calf, stitched white; 2 to 8 (English) Duplex fittings; about £3 7s. 6d. From Clark's agents.

Brevitt Cellini "Narcisse" in tan calf; 4½ to 8½ (American); about £4. From Russell & Bromley, Bond Street, London.

Dolcis Young Moderns "Flat-ery" ballet slipper in black or green velveteen, black, wine, brown or grey corduroy, with bag to match; each £1 17s. 6d. From Dolcis stores.

Lotus saddle welted court "Ormond" in black, brown, red, green or tan calf; 4 to 9 (American), A and B fittings; about £4 15s. From Lotus, Bond Street, London; Lotus and Delta branches.

Island of Flowers *Continued from page 31*

possible joy of contrast to the English visitor who leaves the few sparse snowdrops of his native land to make the thirteen hundred mile journey southward. For the splashes of purple bougainvillea on black rocks are not an accident; and they are in no way singular. They are simply one part of a fantasy, almost a frenzy, of flowers that cover Madeira for practically the whole year and that cover it most luxuriantly in what is most charmingly called the Madeira winter.

Now if you are, like me, an ardent and reasonably experienced traveller, you will have learned, by this time, to be mistrustful of the guide book of convention. "Travellers should take light summer or sub-tropical clothing, with a light wrap for evenings," you read, and at once, with memories of mistrais that strike like cold steel, decide to pack furs and tweeds and a bottle of cough-cure. On this basis it is more than probable that you are about to distrust me. I do not resent this; I am myself stubbornly mistrustful of, for example, any suggestion that bathing may be enjoyed from December to June anywhere less than about one hundred miles or so on either side of the equator; and I am equally mistrustful of books which assure me that I can find pure and perfect summer, in February, barely ten hours' flying time from London. Or at least I used to be mistrustful in the years before I knew Madeira; and I am mistrustful no longer.

When you arrive in Madeira in February you go back, or forward, into summer: not a fickle cheating moment of summer, the false breath that brings a chance bee or yellow brimstone out across the lawn at home before the fallow-bud has yellowed, but whole and perfect summer, the summer of July. In case this sounds too simple to be true I will add that it is also spring and, if it is not too incredible, early autumn too. As you step from the boat and drive up into the town of enchanting old-walled streets that first splash of magenta bougainvillea on black rocks is suddenly engulfed by torrents of colour.

There are now, you are able to see, whole acres of bougainvillea, ravines and gorges of purple and crimson and burnt-rose. Cascades of orange-trumpeted bignonia, and another of finer, more spark-like scarlet, fall everywhere from high stone walls. Enormous crimson-green stars of poinsettia flash in gardens, on potato patches, on the edges of banana plantations. The lantana, a verbena-like shrub with chameleon heads of flowers that range from orange to magenta and pink to yellow, is in flower; the bombax seems to be crowded with scarlet macaws of stiff-winged blossom.

Geraniums and wild arum lilies clog the roadside under mimosas and avenues of rose and peach-coloured hibiscus. The jacarandas—

there are probably two or three miles of them about the streets of Funchal—are just beginning to open, at the high tips, their first wistaria-mauve finger-stalls of flower, so fragile and beautiful, and on house-walls and garden fences the wistarias themselves are knotted, silky grey, in bud.

And in gardens everywhere—those legendary and wonderful gardens that the English have done so much to establish and perfect on Madeira—it is July: with, as I say, incongruous moments of autumn and spring.

Beds of petunia and verbena and snapdragon and marigold and everlasting flower and gerbera daisy and sweet peas; a splendour of roses in beds and on pergolas; and then suddenly, unexpectedly, the touch of spring—a crowd of violets, dark and fat, heavy with fragrance—and then back to summer, to exoticism, with masses of too rich, too dazzling cinerarias and whole hedges of cherry-and-black pelargonium; and then back to spring again with a run of daffodils and whole streams of creamy freesias, sweet as honey, and then on to autumn with rosy gladioli—they grow slender and purple and wild in the potato patches farther up the hills—a few dahlias and even a chrysanthemum or two; and then back to spring again with white Easter lilies, yellow and crimson ranunculus and even, in the baskets of the flower girls, a bunch of pink primroses among the shell-like glories of rose camellias.

These flower girls, with their fawn high boots, yellow and crimson skirts and crimson capes, carrying enormous baskets of blossom on their heads, are as much a part of the island as bananas, sunshine, wine and—a reference I shall explain in a moment or two—bread-and-butter pudding. There are not many of them but they greet you everywhere. It would be cruel, in such a public paradise of flowers, if there were no flowers to buy; and crueler still if they were expensive.

The flower girls, greeting every fresh boat with mountains of freesias and ixias and narcissus and camellias and occasional sprays of loveliest wine-brown orchids, are the answer to that. For five escudos, about fourpence, you can buy a bunch of thirty or forty camellias, a small armful, or a bouquet of freesias and narcissus and occasionally a bunch of two species of gazania that we never seem to see in England, one beetroot crimson, the other orange-brown, both silver-leaved. For ninepence you can give your girl-friend an orchid; for fifteen shillings you can buy her such a garland of them as in London or New York only millionaires could afford.

It may well be that all this luxuriance of flowers would, in time, tire or bore you. It never tires me and since it is always in a process of fairly rapid change it never bores me. But Madeira, so constructed that it rises in its twelve mile width to heights of six thousand feet, can adequately take care of such feelings. In half an hour, in a taxi, you can climb out of the region of the sub-tropical. From areas of congested luxuriance where custard apples and guavas and lemons and sugar-cane and papaias and yams grow among the bananas, you can rise to a world where plums are in blossom and apple trees are as bare as in an English December.

It is cooler, but not cold. Geraniums flourish wild in the rocks; arum lilies are being cut with a little sparse grass for cattle food; the hill-slopes are lovely with slender eucalyptus and mimosa. Every garden, however tiny, has its camellia tree, high as the house, all rosy or white with flower; and all along the roadsides, for miles and miles, endlessly, ribbons of blue agapanthus lily, planted wherever a new strip of road is made, are coming into flower. In April and May these agapanthus, mostly blue, but occasionally white, will be in full glory—while you and I in England will be tenderly lifting ours out in pots for the summer, hoping that August will give us the pleasure of a precious spray or two of flower.

And then farther beyond this, beyond the daffodils and the Chinese primulas in the gardens and the last agapanthus and the last camellias, there is an extraordinary stark wild magnificence. The central valleys, with primitive villages scattered about fishless and shallow streams, have all the splendour of parts of Switzerland and the Dolomites. Dark, volcanic, savage rocks are covered with tree heathers, wild bay-trees, low pines that peasants cut for litter, and flat saucer-like cactus wherever the rock gives water.

And soon there is nothing up here except a few sheep scratching the upper ledges of pasture, a goat or two and a hovering hawk. The air whips down windy and sharp; it is a world of lonely and lofty magnificence where, if you slip and break your leg on wet rocks, there is no way to hospital except by hammock. From a point here you can see the sea on both north and south coasts—and hardly believe that only a mile or two beyond the cold sheep tracks yams are growing by the river bed and blackbirds singing with splendid May-time richness by the sea.

There is a little Swiss-like chalet up there, superbly clean and charming, where the proprietor is sometimes in and sometimes not, but where the door is unlocked so that tourists can go in and, with the help of the taxi driver, eat packed lunches and buy a little wine and coffee.

That trustfulness is typical of all Madeira. For what, you might well ask, is a paradise of climate and flowers if, by some chance, the people are louts and thieves? I am happy to say that that possible misfortune has been mostly pleasantly avoided. Madeirans are not simply charming. Courtesy—a quality of such diminishing occurrence in Britain that it may well be that we have already bred a generation that never knew it even at its most primitive—is as actual to them as breathing.

I do not mean by this that there is simply a great deal of hat-raising. There is. But there is a sort of courtesy, like charm or



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BY DAY

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personality or breeding, for which the formula is not readily definable. And that is the sort of courtesy that Madeirans have: trustful, touching, natural, unobtrusive, wholly enchanting. Nothing is too much trouble: and if you haven't the money today tomorrow will do. Madeira is, in fact, the only place I have ever been able to leave without, through a series of miscalculations, being able to pay my hotel bill. This worried me a great deal more than the proprietor, a Portuguese of much intelligence and charm who looked at life with much of the philosophy of the dance-tune that someone was always playing in his bar—"mañana is good enough for me."

There is, in fact, a good deal of *mañana*, tomorrow, about this island, isolated enough to have only a ship or two every ten days from England and a flying boat, in good weather, twice or three times a week from Lisbon and Southampton. Continual sun, as anyone who has lived in the tropics knows, is the greatest eater-away of time in the world. And it is not long before the English visitor begins to get the *mañana is good enough for me* attitude; he slightly loses his grip on the edges of time. Sunlight, flowers, blue sea, a glass of wine, a shoe-shine in the shade, no newspapers—the world, that only lately was too much with him, gradually stops pressing on his nerves.

There is in fact a peculiar species of British visitor who arrives on Madeira, tired, slightly harassed and eager, whose first question is, "What is there to do?"

The answer I always gave to this kind of person—and I give it now in case this article should be read, here and there, by a pleasure-eater—was "Nothing." When the first look of flattening shock had passed I would go on to explain:

"Nothing, that is, except walking, eating, drinking, sitting in the sun, swimming, shopping, looking at flowers, taking an occasional trip round the island, sampling the wine—"

Here and there a traveller, bred on the gaiety of Cannes or Biarritz or the crowded sophistications of night-clubs, has been known to take one look at Madeira and prepare at once, in disgust, to pack his bags for home. I warn such travellers again that, as I said at the beginning, Madeira is not Monte Carlo. It is not Cannes or even St. Tropez. It lacks the something that has made Capri international or Portofino a brief and enchanting paradise. It is as far removed from Deauville as it is from Blackpool.

It is a place, to me, of astonishing colour and revealing, touching beauty and of marvellously soothing and regenerating atmosphere; but I do not deny that it is quite simple, quite conventional and never smart. It is almost naïve. And also it is, partly because of its visitors, partly because English companies own and control so much of the island and its produce, very English. You cannot escape your own countrymen.

This means, too, I am afraid, that the food is designed for English tastes. Not for you, here, the opportunity of gastronomical discoveries in back streets; the little restaurant with its *bouillabaisse*s and *fruits de mer*; the lush piquancy of food in Italy and Switzerland. You may well unearth, instead, a conspiracy to serve you with bread-and-butter pudding in twenty different ways and under the faint disguise of *pudim* on the menu. The fish is, as it always is in southern waters, rather flat and flabby. But don't let these things worry you. The survival of two dying British institutions in all their pre-war glory—the overwhelming bacon-and-eggs-and-marmalade breakfast and the ritual sandwiches-and-cakes-and-bread-and-butter afternoon tea—will comfort you greatly if you feel that five-course dinners and lunches are not enough.

Between times you can always refresh yourself at one of the wine-lodges, cool and dark behind old paved courtyards hung with great wistarias and brilliant with pots of scarlet amaryllis, where Madeira is stored and made. The chief Madeira wine companies have lately formed themselves into an association with its headquarters behind exactly that sort of courtyard, where you can sit on a warm afternoon and drink the three great types of Madeira wine, *Sercial*, *Boal* and *Malmsey*, in a butt of which the Duke of Clarence was, you may remember, drowned; and discuss the charms of dryness and sweetness over wines that go back to the days of the French revolution.

The great grape harvest is in September. Black and white grapes are brought together, indiscriminately mixed, to *lagars*, square wooden troughs, where they are trodden by bare-foot men to the scrawny tunes of guitars until nothing is left but a cake of skins and pips and stalks. The wine is run off into oak casks and goat skins and then transferred as soon as possible by bullock sledge, or by sea from the northern coast of the island, to the shippers' lodges, where the wine is finally made and blended.

The Madeiran, always immensely cheerful and smiling—in contrast to Spain even the children laugh their heads off when begging—seems to like a little music with his work. The street scissor grinder plays one thin repeated plaintive little tune on pipes as he pushes his barrow up and down steep streets of cobbles; the mother rocking her child to sleep has a tender little folk song, drowsy and haunting, in the back garden, behind the hibiscus hedge; the early morning fisherman wakes you with a long, high horn-like call that small boys echo, in another street, with maddening perfection.

The Eastern and Balkan custom of giving the customer a glass of wine in shops is part of the constant Madeiran charm. Never refuse it. Disregard the idea that the customer, under the warm influence of two or three glasses of *Boal*, will buy more than he intends and pay more for it into the bargain. He possibly—just possibly—will. But he will find baskets and blouses and shirts and most other things, like flowers, cheap enough, and the courtesy, the soothing feeling of unhurried leisure, that go with that glass

of wine, will more than make up for the *escudo* or two he may lose. Moreover the Madeiran is easily hurt; he dislikes the word "No." Don't, therefore, say "No" to his wine or his goods. Say "Tomorrow," or "Some other day": that will leave him happy. But buy, if you can, a little of the exquisite Madeira handicraft.

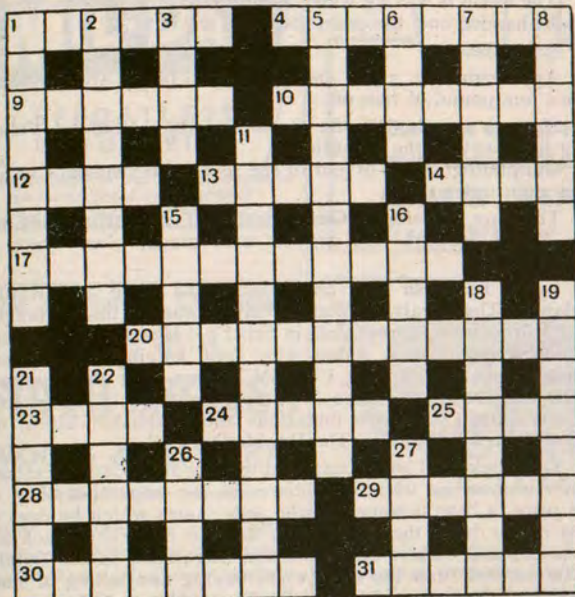
You can get yourself a beautifully hand-worked blouse, made to measure, for two pounds; a pure silk shirt for your husband for three. A suit for him, also made to measure, costs about twelve. Basket chairs for the garden are as little as a pound; baskets of all kinds for only two or three shillings. Big and elaborate tablecloths are high in price—not of course expensive in view of the work that goes into them—but, what is more important, heavily dutiable in this country. And don't forget the shoe-shine boys. For sixpence they will put a face on your shoes like the gleam of a chestnut fresh from its shell; for ninepence they will bless you for ever.

One final and extravagant word. Don't dash to Madeira and, before the skin has stopped peeling off your nose, dash back again. Let yourself slip down into this small, scallop-quiet world where time is not a commodity you are always scheming to save. Persuade yourself that this is, in fact, the time you *have* saved: the deposit in the bank balance skin-flinted from the office, the household or the business. Lose yourself among the bougainvilleas, behind the hibiscus hedges, in the old steep streets shut in by falling roses, wistarias, flaming bignonias, among the waving mauve forests of sugar-cane. Presently, in this most beautiful place, time will stop pressing you. You will begin to like doing nothing. And you may even make the sensible and salutary discovery that tomorrow is, after all, good enough for you.

Next month—rediscover with H.E. Bates the swift enchantment of our countryside by Night Light

WOMAN'S JOURNAL CROSSWORD

Solution on page 130



ACROSS

1. This form of lighting may be fine for undergrads dining (6)
4. Teaches us to cut a seed? (8)
9. "To scatter . . . o'er a smiling land," Gray (6)
10. Deposits from the banks may take this settled position (2, 1, 5)
12. A kick from a horse? (4)
13. There was a red and a white one through the looking glass (5)
14. A place to notice; can be whipped if reversed (4)
17. The shade of the optimist's lenses (12)
20. Has Diana got a vote? Then take it away from her! (12)
23. An outlet for water from a lake (4)
24. Big piece of timber, but not on the billiard table (5)
25. Another word for 24, but it might however be light (4)
28. The time of the great strike (8). 29. Old gallows site (6)
30. But this is not the one used with pyjamas (8)
31. Whatever one does to this it is more than one should (6)

DOWN

1. But few girls are given this biblical name (8)
2. Describes an ominous sky, not a long throw (8)
3. Animals disturbed in 2 down (4)
5. Pub is altered—has it lost its character? (12)
6. He was nicknamed Buffalo Bill (4). 7. You can tiptoe through these! (6)
8. Humble home for a song of the sea (6)
11. The reason why a penknife is so named (5, 7)
15. A certificate of some value, but not to a pilgrim (5)
16. Tree that sounds as if it is always found by the sea (5)
18. The disadvantage of this job is that a slight reorganisation makes it insecure (8)
19. The very last bus stop (8). 21. Scottish castle (6)
22. It is part of France; and is surrounded by the French (6)
26. It forms part of the waltz in concerts (4)
27. Feline with a sound attraction for golfers (4)

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