

ACROSS THE Editor's DESK

The Picture on the Cover: "Pansies for thoughts" . . . Bridal Wreath in snowy cascades . . . lilted May sunshine . . . and a charming little lady in a transplanting mood! If you can resist her you're a better man than I am, Mr. Din. And just to save you a stamp, that's not a bed of popcorn or even of babybreath on which she kneels—lightly, I hope—but a crushed-rock garden path, soon to be completely bordered by the wise little faces of velvet-petaled pansies.

JUNIOR doesn't turn up his nose at spinach anymore. It's his favorite vegetable! This is the tradition-shaking fact disclosed recently in New York City when the results of a questionnaire filled out by 22,416 boys and girls between 6 and 16 were tabulated. Spinach was a close second with the girls, too. . . . What a tribute to our great canned-foods industry, including, especially, America's strained-vegetables-for-babies industry, and to Popeye!

►►► My friend Tom Wallace, editor of the Louisville Times, has discovered, in the mountain town of Pikeville, Kentucky, near the Trail of the Lonesome Pine, a bank that maintains extensive gardens from which come flowers for the bank and bouquets for depositors.

The bank also holds flower shows to encourage beautification of Pikeville (population 4,000), and gives away hollyhock seed. Last year it gave away 5,000 packages of it.

Increasing numbers of businessmen are recognizing that flowers pay them dividends in dollars and cents.

►►► Physicians of St. Louis for several months have asked the Missouri Botanical Garden of that city for fresh leaves from its tropical collection of aloe, the common houseplant.

The large leaves, which contain a copious supply of viscous fluid, are being used to treat severe X-ray and radium burns. The fresh leaves are split and their gelatinous inner surface applied directly to the burn, relieving the pain immediately.

Healing properties of aloe leaves came to the attention of the medical profession thru their use in Florida as a home remedy for severe sunburn. But I'm told the aloe is an old, old remedy used by the Mexicans.

►►► Double-feature movie programs are described by Samuel Goldwyn, film producer, as harmful to the health of children, as inducing gambling—thru the so-called "bank night," I suppose—and forcing production of deliberately mediocre pictures.

Dr. Herman N. Bundesen, well-known health writer and president of the Chicago board of health, says that our prolonged dose of the double feature is a detriment to the health of everyone.

Parents can eliminate the double feature promptly in their communities if thru their clubs, especially thru their Parent-Teacher Association, they have already been felt, and exhibitors have responded with a return to single features. As buyers we get just about what we demand.

►►► Under "Magazine Features That Wouldn't Be Missed," Walter Winchell says, "About the time you're beginning to rely on a mag to tell camera angles on Martha Raye."

You looked at the wrong magazine, Walter. Why don't you read your *Better Homes & Gardens*?

►►► Seven trees planted a century ago by Thomas Jefferson himself on his estate at Monticello, Virginia, are being saved by a number of "emergency operations" which correspond quite closely to "human" surgery as practiced today in our modern hospitals.

Infected areas in the trees are found by probing the bark. Sides of incisions then made aren't held back with clamps, as in human surgery, but the same objective is reached by painting the sides of the incisions with shellac; this also acts as an antiseptic in preventing harmful fungus cells in the air from lodging in the openings. Finally rubber blocks serving the same purpose as sutures employed by surgeons are used to close incisions.

Many other old trees on the grounds of the Jefferson estate are also being "operated upon," for they, like the house itself, are a national shrine. It's to be hoped that the success of the unusual methods employed at Monticello will bring their more widespread use to save the lives of other historically significant trees thruout America.

Editor

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