

the braid around this beginning, sewing as you go, braiding a few yards and continuing sewing until the mat is as large as you want it. If well braided and sewed, this makes a most desirable mat for the outer door. When badly soiled, or filled from the scrapings of the feet, it may be well shaken to dislodge as much of the dirt as possible, and it may then be shaken about in a tub of warm water, rinsed well and turned bottom-side up to dry. If something fancy is wanted, part of the husks may be dyed with any of the ten-cent dyes, and very attractive mats may thus be made. Very nice mats for the veranda steps, or to stand on in the kitchen, may be made by using the soft, inner husks, braiding tightly, concealing the coarse ends in the braiding, and sew very neatly and closely.

Growing Palms

In spite of the popular belief to the contrary, palms are really easy to grow in the house. Half the failures to raise them, and their poor reputation among ordinary plant-growers is due to the fact that cheap plants are bought; no one can prophesy how long they will live; a palm can be tested only by trying, and it is the well established plant that should be bought. The plants sent out by the florists in packages are not difficult to get to grow if proper care is taken.

The Kentias are, perhaps, the best of all house-palms, graceful and ornamental, and they stand many changes of temperature. *Kentia Foesteriana* and *Kentia Balmoreana* are most serviceable. Not too warm a room and plenty of light is the rule; the soil should never be allowed to get dry, as, if this happens, the *Kentia* will not recover itself; but it should not be kept too wet, as it will rot at the roots. The best way to water the palm is to set the pot or tub in a larger vessel of water, the water reaching to within an inch of the rim. The appearance of water on the surface of the soil will show that the roots have been well soaked; ordinary surface watering rarely reaches all the roots, and the inner ball of roots and soil is left dry. The leaves should be sprayed frequently, all dust washed off, and no insect pest allowed on the plant. A beautiful palm may be raised from the seed of a date. This can be buried out in the open; many plants spring from seeds just thrown out in the yard. During the summer, the tiny two-leaved plant, like a spear of stiff, coarse grass, will appear, and in the autumn the plant can be carefully lifted, put into a rather deep pot, and cared for until it gets established, and the next spring other leaves will come. Not until the third year will the plant, under ordinary usage, show its character leaf.

Query Box

Housewife.—Tarragon vinegar is made by adding tarragon leaves (fresh, if they can be had; if not, the powdered can be had of your grocer or druggist) to white wine vinegar and allowing it to stand until the desired flavor is obtained.

A. D. T.—The salve you mention is made by thickening fresh lard or castor oil with oxide of zinc, adding iodine to color it yellow or light brown. It is claimed to heal many sores that all else has failed to cure. Ask your druggist about it.

Mattie.—For whitening the piano keys, it is recommended to make a paste of sawdust, water and the juice of a lemon; apply to the keys and let dry on; when dry, brush off with a

soft, firm brush, letting as little as possible fall between the keys. It is said to be effective.

C. H.—If your physician can not help your muscular rheumatism, I am afraid my advice would fail you. Rheumatism is often the result of malarial conditions of one's surroundings, and in such a case, change of residence, change of diet and hygienic habits of living, either singly or collectively, will prove beneficial.

Invalid.—You know the old adage. "What is one person's meat is another one's poison." Excessive use of any stimulant is disastrous. Beef tea increases the pace of life, and over-indulgence in its use would naturally cause the body to wear out quickly, just as the excessive use of other stimulants would. Even excessive drinking of water will work hardships to some stomachs. Some people can not drink water without disagreeable sensations.

L. M.—The question as to whether vegetable or animal foods are most conducive to longevity is not settled. It is claimed that vegetable foods harden the blood vessels, deposit tartar on the teeth, causing them to loosen; increase the fat of the body and tend to fatty degeneration of the heart, liver and brain. On the other hand, it is claimed that flesh-eating causes gout and rheumatism, blood disorders, produces trichinosis, tapeworm troubles, erysipelas and other skin diseases. It is also said that the blood of meat produces consump-

tion and cancer. As a proof of this latter, it is cited that the Jewish people, who remove all blood from their meat, are exceptionally free from these two diseases.

Jessie J.—The term inlaid is applied to a certain class of linoleums because of the fact that the pattern goes through the entire thickness, instead of, as in cheap grades, being simply stamped on the surface. The pattern of the inlaid will last as long as there is a shred of the carpet. The best linoleums have smooth, hard surfaces, impervious to water, and can be washed off and cleaned without injury. Linoleum is made of cork ground in oil and subjected to tremendous pressure. The domestic product is now as good as the imported and costs much less. A good inlaid linoleum can be had for about \$1.25 per square yard, and comes in widths to suit your needs or the size of your room. Its first cost may seem expensive, but there is practically no wear-out to a good grade.

Hardly any garden product can be made to serve so many uses as the green tomato, and now, at the suggestion of frost-time, these can be found in abundance in the market or garden. They can be put to an almost endless variety of uses, and as yet, I believe, science has not put its prohibitive finger on this vegetable, or hygienic cookery found fault with it.

THE PASSION PLAY

Mrs. Bryan Writes of Inspiring Scenes at Oberammergau—Five Hundred Performers—None But the Pure May Participate.

We all recall how much was written of Oberammergau in 1900. Every magazine and many newspapers gave detailed accounts of the wonderful Passion Play enacted there and of the thousands who flocked to witness it. Each writer emphasized the fact that only once in ten years is the Passion Play presented. You may imagine my delight to learn that this year an exception had been made and that something worth while was doing in Oberammergau.

The village lies quite encircled by mountains and no railroads have yet ventured there. The outer world was quite unaware of the existence of this little place until twenty or thirty years ago. Then the newspaper men raised a mighty shout. "Come quick," said they, "we have found something so old that it is very new indeed. Nearly a thousand years ago England saw our Christ live and die and live again in these strange plays. Long after, Germany's peasants wondered and wept at the same sights. But they all forgot. Only little Oberammergau remembered. Come and see a living fragment of the long dead past." And come they did. The rich, the poor, the ignorant, the learned, the priest, the scoffer poured through the mountain passes and broke the quiet of the valley. Oberammergau awoke and learned about the world.

The village shows the trace of foreign fingers. Old Gasthouses are slyly growing into large hotels; the shop windows are full of souvenirs for travellers; the girls are often not in peasant dress; the young men wear their curls with a more jaunty air.

Are you wondering, as I did, why the peasants play this year? High above the town on a mountain side stands the answer; the three figures of the crucifixion done in white marble and of gigantic size. This group was given to Oberammergau by King Ludwig, the Second, thirty years ago this summer. The play which we see was given then in honor of the king

and of his gift and is now repeated for the first time on this the anniversary of that occasion. The play tells the story of King David and between acts, tableaux from the Passion Play are presented, so that when the curtain goes down on the final act one feels that he has seen not only the life of David but the real pith of the Passion Play as well.

I wish I might give you a clear idea of the stage. I had gathered from reading that it was a huge platform with the open sky and twittering birds with the audience also under the canopy of Heaven; but this is not altogether true.

Imagine a huge shedlike building with a curving roof. All Lincoln readers will be interested to know that the general shape of the interior of the building, the girders and the roof are an excellent counterpart of the Lincoln Auditorium. Here are seats for four thousand people. The floor slopes to the front, the orchestra sits in a neat little box next to the stage, all quite comfortable and modern. In this building I scented the fruits of the foreign invasion. In the good old days the peasants surely did not fare so well. The stage is a large platform, built of not too smooth planks and open to the sky. In the center from left to right, but at the back a box-like house has been built, severely Grecian in style. This is the real stage, though acting is done on the platform, the focal point is always inside, and one could see with his mind's eye the players scurrying under this shelter if rain came. To the right and left are porticoes and arches through which one catches glimpses of the flat roofs and low turrets of Jerusalem. The stage disappointed me.

The drama is played by five hundred performers, a chorus of thirty-two voices and an orchestra of forty. These people all live in the little valley. They are all peasants. The moving power is the church (Catholic). To take part in these

plays is a great honor and can only be undertaken by those whose lives are pure. Each performance is preceded by the sacrament and if a man who has once appeared is guilty of something dishonorable he cannot play when the next decade rolls round.

As to the division of proceeds, (no small item in these days) a priest told us that the people who play get one-third of the profits for division among them and the remaining two-thirds goes to the church. In 1900 they cleared a million marks, about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

The tableaux from the Passion Play are eight in number, viz., the nativity, the boy Christ in the temple, the temptation, the baptism, the trial, bearing the cross, the crucifixion and the resurrection. It is difficult to realize the figures as flesh and blood; they seem much more like wax figures or very beautiful pictures. The artistic grouping of bright colors in clothing heightens the effect, while the presence of many children lends naturalness to the scene. Some of these tableaux are modeled after famous pictures which are found in European galleries.

As to the play—the most attractive scene to me was the triumphal entry of David into Jerusalem. The procession came through the arches at the left and disappeared through those at the right; the populace singing and shouting, the priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant and King David in royal robes greeting his people from a gorgeous chair borne by his retainers.

As one looks back upon the play at Oberammergau (beginning at half past one and ending at six) the characteristic which seems to save the performance from a spirit of ridicule and the audience from weariness, is the absolute reverence which actuates the players. One feels the religious fervor which pervades it all and can but be impressed and strengthened.

MARY BAIRD BRYAN.

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