

TEA TIME TALK

(BY WILMA J. MARCH)

Spring is in the air, the sky, the trees and the flowers. Bountiful rains have made the world a bower of green. I have never seen more refreshing greenness than abounds everywhere at present. Many tourists have gone northward and struck snow and sleet in the mountain districts of Carolina and Virginia and of course farther north too. The noontide rays are warm and direct but oh, the evenings in the South are the loveliest of all. Starlit skies and moonlight so bright that it chases every speck of gloom, sweeping the cobwebs from the sky and hanging misty, sparkling dewdrops everywhere. Night birds calling, night flowering blossoms making the air heavy with their fragrance, the soft music of a radio breaking the stillness, these things are some of the bewitching attractions of the southland which ever call so fervently to those who have known its entrancing beauty.

To attend one of the moonlight concerts at the Singing Tower at Lake Wales, and hear these sweet, silvery notes ring out across the mountain, through the trees and over the water, is to feel and commune with eternal things of life. It is a never to be forgotten experience, leaving its imprint on the soul. Too, the sunrise services which will be held at many places throughout the State fill the same vacancy in our lives. They cannot be duplicated except by something which speaks of life beyond ourselves. At Miami Beach, Tampa, Singing Tower and many coast cities there will be services of this nature. This year Easter is late and many folks cannot wait for it here. We expect to be on the northward trip and shall make it a day of rest somewhere in those glorious mountains. It will be moonlight too and I shall walk among the shadows and hear the birds chant their merry songs at twilight. The birds so seldom are sad; they should be a lesson to us mortals to be happy and not causing and making trouble when life at its best is so short.

The Orange Blossom Special has just passed by. Going southward now it is not crowded but on the return trip its sections will be filled. A huge truck and trailer went by a while ago and I stepped to the railing of my porch to view the golden and yellow balls gleaming in the sunshine by the thousands atop the vehicle. Ninety-six crates on each truck held oranges and grapefruit heading northward to bring vitamins to little girls and boys who need the health giving calories.

Sonny came home at noon with an exciting tale of a little Mexican boy. He is a real live Mexican too, and wears a huge hat like the men in the country from which he comes. Johnny is not afraid of anything, especially not snakes. It seems he saw a big snake curled up asleep on the limb of a tree. So desiring adventure, he got his rifle and shot at it, ripping the limb from the trunk. The snake fell to the ground and Johnny, not wishing to lose his prize, got a stick and with the pronged end held it close to the ground. He then picked it up behind the head and, if you please, put him in his school-bag, sewing the top across. Then he put the bag over his shoulder and proceeded to school. Reaching the playground, he aroused much attention by his daring feat of taking the bag, ripping the thread and allowing the snake to crawl from his hiding place. And that isn't all. He actually played with that there Mr. Snake, lifting him up to the horror of the teacher and the pupils. The snake coiled several times and Johnny just placidly pushed him over with a stick. Then the teacher could stand no more of his daring but she didn't want to be too bossy with a boy who was in his own way "Bringing 'em home alive" so she demanded his safety and that of the others and Mr. Snake must die and have a burial right there on the playground. No getting around so rigid an order and besides she was the nicest little teacher ever and Johnny adored her. So orders were orders and must be carried out. The stick was applied about the neck and pressure added and the rest you can imagine. Then Sonny tells me that the snake was proclaimed to be a cocassin, a deadly type. Well

I never did like snakes and now I just know I don't. But the worst of all to me is I was told that Sonny helped to kill it. Johnny is from the southernmost part of Mexico, down near the border of Central America. He is living with his grandmother here because his mother is a widow and she travels all over South America buying coffee for various firms.

But just wait till you see my alligators. If I can get 'em home alive. Then you will see sumpin' to squeal at. Bite? Oh no, not yet for a while. Folks ask me what I'll do with 'em when they get big. Well that won't be for a while, so why worry about it now. But they are really quite harmless little creatures and get fairly tame. One lady told me of taking one north and it escaped into the garden and lived there all summer. In the Autumn they discovered and recaptured it.

The playground across the way is gradually being cleared of the crowds of the winter. Let me tell you a secret. There has been a romance going on before our very eyes. A very alert and sociable lady of eighty is attracting the attention of a man of sixty-five. We wouldn't be a bit surprised if she would up and marry him when the most of the tourists go home. She knows most folks are opposed to the marriage, so maybe she will just please herself.

The Yacht Basin in St. Petersburg is most attractive now with many boats of every shape and form lying in the Bay. They are a pretty sight and make one wish for any of them for one's really own.

The Sunshine City has been very fortunate this season with tourists from every State and the District of Columbia, besides twenty-five other countries. Some of those represented are as far away as Asia, China, Japan, Germany and Switzerland. The U.S.S. Trenton, flagship of Rear Admiral C. S. Freeman, in command of the special squadron which wintered in this port. The ships have been an added interest to the tourists, and the sailors and marines have given the city a seaport aspect this season.

Mrs. Charles K. Pierce, Shelburne Falls, Mass., signed her name to the registration books at the Chamber of Commerce during March to become the 45,564 person to register and break all previous records. She was presented with a bouquet of roses as a mark of appreciation. During the entire season the registration topped all-time records to the sum of 53,313, passing last year's mark by 7,852. New York led the procession in numbers with Pennsylvania second, Ohio third, Massachusetts fourth and New Jersey fifth.

The greatest number of foreign cars entered the State this year than for three years. During the month of December 17,505 foreign cars were counted.

All Gandy Bridge records have been smashed also. The new Davis Causeway has become a popular route from northern points. Most of the tourists come to the State by motor but rail is the next in line.

Late in the year 1916 Mr. Arthur L. Johnson completed an organization that put on the first Festival of States. Since then there have been many others, always with the same dual purpose that motivated that first big venture. Arthur Johnson had set it down in black and white on those programs "First, to become better acquainted with our visitors; second, to show our visitors we appreciate their being with us."

Among those who are regular visitors to Sunshine City are some who will remember the spectacular Washington's Birthday celebration that was the highlight of the Winter Tourist Season. The very first of these celebrations dates back to the time when St. Petersburg was little more than a village. A practical minded school board ruled against these popular celebrations for the reason that a great deal of time and money that the city, school children and teachers could not afford, was wasted. Farsighted citizens realized that those Washington Birthday celebrations had been a great attraction and that their discontinuance would mean a tremendous loss to the city.

The first to express his interest in the matter of taking definite action was Arthur L. Johnson. He began to form plans and consider ways and means of starting something that might eventually take the place of the lost celebration and adequately fill the needs of the city for an annual tourist celebration. He then brought together other public-spirited citizens and the St. Petersburg Fair and Tourist Week was the result. The handbill description of the "Big Doings" was crude enough to seem very funny to-day, but it did the trick in 1913. Crowds came to see the sights and share in the fun.

During the next two years, 1915 and 1916, there were no special Tourist Week celebrations at all, and again the enterprising Mr. Johnson put his keen wits to work and his shoulder to the wheel with other farsighted men and the Festival of States was born.

Since the birth of the Festival of States in St. Petersburg in 1916 Canada has played an important part in this annual affair. In 1932 Miss Merle Bull of Canada was chosen Queen. This year Miss Ruth Snider, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. S. Snider of Toronto, was runner-up for this honor. Gowned in a gorgeous frock of ivory lace with a long train, Miss Canada, when presented, disclosed in the lining of her train the Union Jack. She was given every co-operation by the Canadian Club of the Sunshine City.

Miss Martha Vitalis of Pittsburgh was crowned as Queen of the Festival at the Coronation Ball which followed the choosing of Her Majesty.

The next day the annual parade took place and it is estimated that at least a hundred thousand witnessed one of the finest parades ever staged in that city. Many States contributed floats of rare beauty and originality. The first prize went to New Jersey, Pennsylvania second, Massachusetts third and Ohio honorable mention. Last year New Jersey was first and in 1932 also.

Canada did not have a float. In the years 1924 and 1922 Canada held third place, being the only times when she exhibited a display.

A very colorful pageant was given at the ball diamond at the water's edge with 60,000 people in attendance. One feature of the program was a parade of the entrants from every State. The chosen lady, representative of her home State, was accompanied by two ladies-in-waiting, the color scheme of their gowns being similar. The Marines from the Trenton and dispatch ships in harbor acted as escorts for the entire assemblage. As they entered the court yard the groups divided, going right and left and meeting in front of the grandstand where the State-lady in both groups stepped forward with her two uniformed escorts and was greeted by His Honor Mayor Blanc.

The pageant proved to be a grand finale for two days of celebrations which climaxed the close of another successful tourist season.

There are 2500 hundred Canadians registered at the Chamber of Commerce this season in St. Petersburg. Of that number 656 are from

the city of Toronto. There is a thriving Canadian Club which has weekly meetings and entertainments.

The population of the Sunshine City was doubled by more than 10,000 this season. It is estimated that all-winter tourist residents numbered approximately 53,000.

Florida has had a record breaking crop of tourists this season. Last year the estimate was placed at 1,500,000, but this year's number tops that by a quarter of a million, bringing the total to 1,750,000. Governor Dave Sholtz has issued a statement of the approximate money left in the State by these people at \$500,000,000. Half a billion dollars is something to think about. For a season of five months that is a colossal sum to be left in one State.

Florida was the first State to feel the depression following the aftermath of the boom, but she has been fortunate since then, except for the freeze this winter. However she has survived splendidly and this tourist crop will be yielding throughout the entire State for some time to come.

Our tourist season in Canada is short but we have marvellous opportunities and we could reap a much greater harvest from it with broader advertising of our wares. The people who come down South are equally able to come to Canada in the good old summer time.

The Clothes Line

By Wilma J. March

There are a few high notes in the Spring Fashion Parade. To be up to the minute one must have a printed silk frock and if possible a neutral shade coat to match of plain material. Suits with a mannish flare to them are top-notch in popularity.

Sleeves and necklines are novel with much opportunity for individuality. Necklines are changed by the additions of large colored and printed kerchiefs tied in various ways. Small kerchiefs too are used a great deal for bows, knots and tab effects. In linens one can purchase such attractive kerchiefs to tuck in one's purse, pocket or to use as indicated above. There is no end to the patterns, and again one sees the nautical trend in these large squares. With white linen made in a smart style there is nothing more chic than a neck kerchief in attractive colorings, with anchors, steering-wheels, ropes, etc., gracing its borders.

Shoes in the South are colorful too. One sees sandals or evening shoes of yellow and brown. Pink, pale blue and much brown and white, white and blue, and even pale green are much in vogue.

Stockings are still in the suntan shades which harmonize so beautifully with all the light shades of shoes and frocks. The crepe hose is not sold extensively here but to my mind there is nothing like it for wear.

Peach clothes are gay, colorful and so attractive. Huge hats, sandals, slacks and sweaters galore are seen everywhere. As we said before it's going to be a gad-about summer. People have stayed home, had no holidays, had to economize etc. for so long that now with brighter prospects of the depression receding, trips and plans for going places and seeing things are running riot. Then clothes come into the picture, as they always do sooner or later. The right costume is a huge factor in having that holiday a success.

Easter is here and that means a new outfit for Easter Sunday. What shall it be is the question uppermost in many minds. There are so many delightful clothes shown in the shops that one is almost bewildered with the array of styles and colorings. The wisest thing to do is to decide what your wardrobe needs and then start out to look for it, never allowing either yourself or a saleslady to thwart you from your decisions. But you have much leeway in choosing what will fit your needs. The Redingote is still very smart though it is far from new. Some of the smartest of these have a scarf dress and a coat with a yoke or the new pleated back. The scarf is worn on the outside.

Then there is the tailored or semi-tailored sport suit of flannel. It has a short coat of the regulation length, patch pockets and the new yoke or pleated back to the waist. They are worn with various skirts making a group of costumes. Unlike attract—and what they attract—well that's up to the wearer—at least they attract attention. There are plain and checked suits and they may be worn with the skirt to match the coat or exchange the coat and skirt making another outfit. Then, too, one can wear a cream flannel skirt with either coat. In this manner one has a supply of ultra-smart street clothes, golf togs and luncheon apparel. Change the sweater for a tailored blouse and you are ready for a meeting of your Club, or a sail on the lake in the afternoon or evening. A multitude of uses can be found for such a costume. One of the most chic of this type shown this season was a plain coat, checked skirt with a scarf and a purse to match. The tam o' shanter hat was modelled of the plain material. There is a costume for you which will be the envy of the town. Brown or navy with white is your smartest combination. Brown and white oxfords with zipper fronts can't be beaten for comfort and something new. A white crepe sport blouse with brown or navy plain crepe tie is worn with the costume above. With that outfit you can start out for new worlds to conquer. You can truly say later—"I came, they saw, and I conquered".

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