

THE
WOMAN'S LEADER

IN POLITICS
IN THE HOME
IN INDUSTRY

IN LITERATURE AND ART
IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
IN THE PROFESSIONS

AND
THE COMMON CAUSE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Woman's Suffrage in U.S.A.

The hopes of American Suffragists were very high when the State Senate of Delaware ratified the Federal Suffrage amendment on March 30th, but the Lower House refused to ratify, and the amendment is therefore lost so far as Delaware is concerned. Vermont and Connecticut are to vote on the amendment very shortly, and the first of them to ratify will have the honour of bringing the number of Suffrage States to the majority necessary to enfranchise women throughout the whole Union. It is very few years ago that the passing of the Federal amendment was looked upon as a wild dream. We can sympathise with American women in this temporary set-back, for their final victory, though it can hardly be delayed many weeks, is anxiously awaited at a time when affairs, both foreign and domestic, are ripe for weighty decisions in which women's voice should be heard.

Edinburgh By-Elections.

The meeting of two hundred women electors called by the Parliamentary Elections Committee for women candidates, and addressed by the three candidates for North Edinburgh, is a landmark in the political history of that city. Representatives of the Committee had called on the candidates for both divisions and put to them a list of fourteen questions agreed upon by the Women Citizens' Association, the Society for Equal Citizenship, the Women's Freedom League, and the Voters' Council. The unanimity of the replies was surprising. Mr. Holmes (Ind. Lib.) and Major Pole (Lab.) agreed on every point and said yes to every question. They support the League of Nations, desire Proportional Representation, and are in favour of cheapening the acquisition of land for building. They support the reform of the Scottish Poor Law, and are in favour of the status quo with regard to the Scottish Temperance Act. They are in favour of equal suffrage, an equal moral standard, equal pay for equal work, desire the abolition of the Scottish husband's rights over his wife's property, are in favour of separate taxation for married women, of a woman's equal guardianship of her children, and of her right to determine her own nationality and domicile. They advocate State Pensions for widows with dependent children, and believe in the justice of a woman's claim to maintenance by her husband. Those pessimists who foretold increased divisions and bitterness as a result of Woman's Suffrage, will note that even the remaining candidates raised few objections to this comprehensive programme. Mr. Ford and Mr. Runciman said no to Proportional Representation, and Mr. Runciman limited his assent to equal pay by insisting that continuity of service must be taken into account in assessing the value of work. Mr. Murray (Coalition Unionist) ventured on three negatives. He thinks that a woman can secure her retention of her nationality and domicile without legislation by means of pre-nuptial contract, and he considers that the present law with regard to a wife's right to maintenance and the rights of guardianship of children is equitable. Again the prophets are found wanting. They said often enough that women would all belong to one party, and outvote the other electors; they did not foresee the time when all the party candidates would belong to the woman's party, keeping their differences for those matters in which we are less particularly interested.

Two Votes for Married Women.

Can a woman, who is debarred from voting in more than one constituency in a General Election, vote in two neighbouring constituencies which may have simultaneous by-elections? Obviously she can, as is pointed out by a correspondent of the *Scotsman* , and probably she will do so in Edinburgh. Those who doubt her right to do so are under the delusion that the occurrence within a few weeks of a large number of by-elections turns them into a General Election by some kind of automatic process. But it takes more than a flight of swallows to make a summer.

A Woman M.P. in Hungary.

Hungary has its first woman M.P. in Marguerite Schlacta, who has been elected by a Budapest constituency to the National Assembly. It is fitting that a country which has for its most urgent problem the domestic task of feeding and clothing its people, should call for women's help in its difficulties. To be a legislator is no doubt an honour, but at the present time this is not an aspect that is very conspicuous. Madame Schlacta will not be suspected of coveting masculine privilege; she is to be commended for her willingness to share a heavy burden.

The Woman's Movement in Palestine.

The postponed elections to the National Assembly of Palestine may possibly take place next month. It will be remembered that one of the difficulties leading to postponement was the expected refusal of the old orthodox party to take part in elections in which women had the right to vote. The Zionists have always been feminists, and do not desire to exclude women from voting for the National Assembly. These differences do not at the moment appear capable of adjustment without bitterness, but the woman's movement is gaining ground, and they are taking a leading part in the educational effort, which has gained much in strength and importance since the Balfour pronouncement. Schools of all kinds are springing up; there are a dozen kindergartens in Jerusalem alone, and high schools and technical schools for boys and girls are flourishing. There is a great extension of women's work on the land, on the experimental farms near Haifa and all over the country, and agricultural training for women is making rapid progress.

Women as Presidents of Conferences.

Two important conferences which sat this week were presided over by women. The National Union of Teachers, with a membership of 13,000, and the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants. The Teachers elected their Vice-President of last year, Miss J. F. Ward, of Manchester, who has the important duty of controlling the training of teachers for the new Continuation Schools. Miss Ward's advocacy of equal pay for equal work was not entirely supported by those who heard her Presidential address. The opposition to that principle gains some adherents from those who believe that the very urgent matter of raised salaries for both men and women may be delayed still further if the question of equality is insisted upon. The cruel straits of many underpaid teachers have been brought home to the public by recent demonstrations in London, but it is less widely known that a Joint Committee of Teachers and Local Authorities is in process of preparing a revised schedule of salaries. The Teachers' Conference, though it dislikes the new Fisher proposals for the control of denominational teaching by local authorities, and distrusts the idea of "right of entry," may possibly refrain from an open condemnation of the plan outlined by a Minister who is very popular with the teaching profession.

Women in Engine Shops.

The attempt to exclude four women from a factory in Tayport, where they were making parts for rubber milling machines, has failed. The Dundee Munitions Tribunal found that insufficient evidence had been advanced to prove that there was in existence before the war any rule or custom either in marine or general engineering to prevent women being employed "on lathes, planing machines, and shaping machines." This decision will be welcomed by those who see in engineering a suitable and lucrative occupation for women of a mechanical turn and who recognise the importance to the nation and the world at large of having an adequate supply of skilled labour, especially for the purpose of making machinery on which other industries so largely depend. We congratulate the Scottish women who have had their right to work justified, and hope that the facts may be noted in other parts of the Kingdom.

Dockers' Wages.

The interim Report on Dockers' Wages, made by the Industrial Court presided over by Lord Shaw of Dunfermline, is for many reasons of great importance. It sets, as the first award by an Industrial Court, a precedent for the decision of Labour disputes which will influence all future courts, and also those disagreements which never get as far as the Courts. We are glad, therefore, to see that the minimum wage granted as a standard minimum for all the large ports of Great Britain was fixed not at a bare subsistence level (which the Dockers' counsel scornfully called a "fodder level"), but at a sum which will give the worker a share of the decencies and pleasures of life. The sixteen shilling wage for an eight-hour day admittedly does more than compensate the dock labourer for the heightened cost of living; it definitely improves on his pre-war condition. But more important than this is the Court's pronouncement that the casual nature of dock labour is a blot upon civilisation, and a blot which society will not much longer tolerate. When man has to wait upon time and tide work cannot be continuous; the employer must have a pool of labour from which to draw in case of need. The Court made it very plain that he must help to pay for this privilege. The casualness of dock labour is not solely due to the operations of nature or the choice of the employer; some of the dockers, corrupted by an evil habit, which in its beginning was forced upon them, look on the casual nature of their work as a badge of freedom. They insist upon being paid by the day or the half-day, disliking to pledge themselves to a full week's work. The habit may not be easy to break, but it must be broken. With commendable frankness the Court declares that the rise in wages which it recommends can be supported by the industry if, and only if, output is increased. There is no possibility of the advance being paid for out of the employers' profits, even if these are drawn upon to extinction. And if the consumer has to pay without getting a *quid pro quo* in rapid clearance of ships, our commerce is doomed. The Court cannot order, it can only recommend, the employers and employed may agree as to wages and decasualisation. But the increase of output, though it may be encouraged cannot be enforced by the men's leaders. It will follow only upon a determination of the dockers to increase their effort; the most obvious way of ensuring this is by some system of payment by results, in addition to an agreed minimum. If the men dislike payment by results, they have it in their power to propose a workable alternative.

University Women as Secretaries.

Until a few months ago University women preparing for a secretarial career used to be told that a knowledge of shorthand and typewriting was not only unnecessary, but even a hindrance to their obtaining good positions. We are glad to learn that this is no longer the case, and that girls who are of University standing and can attain good speeds in typewriting and shorthand are much in demand for confidential and responsible positions. The older Universities as well as the more modern ones have been quick to recognise the changed circumstances, and Oxford and Cambridge women are now advised to take a technical training as well as a degree. No one will welcome the change more than the skilled shorthand typist, who has in the past suffered from the absurd idea that technical excellence was attained only by the sacrifice of general intelligence or wide knowledge. Ridiculous as this illusion appears when set out in black and white, it still lingers in Civil Service circles, and has played its part in keeping the status of women in Government and commercial offices undeservedly low.

Co-Education in Java.

Co-education has been the rule in the Dutch schools of Java. It has not satisfied everyone, and the Government has now consented to set up a Commission of Enquiry into its merits or demerits. We hope that the results of the enquiry will be accessible in English with as little delay as possible. Co-education is a question about which we hear much argument, but unfortunately the opponents so entirely despise each others'

point of view that they disdain to listen to anyone but their own adherents and refrain from meeting each others' arguments. A Commission will at least bring them face to face.

National Birth-Rate Commission.

The National Birth-rate Commission will present its second Report to the Prime Minister this month, and will then continue its enquiry. The first Report, published in 1916, attempted to determine the extent of the decline in the birth-rate, and to decide upon its cause or causes—physical, economic, social, and ethical. The evidence given by a carefully selected body of witnesses was published, not as in the case of Royal Commissions, *in extenso*, but very ably condensed; the statistical evidence was reviewed with unusual lucidity, and the volume has for the last few years been of great value to the social reformer. The Commission has now considered the sex education of young persons, the influence of occupation on the birth-rate, the advisability of the endowment of motherhood and other subjects influencing the training of young citizens for worthy parenthood. The Report about to be issued will be of the greatest interest to women; perhaps more so even than to men. We shall expect from it the same frank treatment of a delicate and intricate subject as was shown in the earlier Report, and shall hope to see its findings reflected without delay in our educational system.

The Shop Assistants.

The National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants has for its first woman President Miss Talbot, of Plymouth. It has given its assent to a new minimum wage scale, which is 125 per cent. in advance of pre-war earnings, and has rejected the proposal for a flat rate differing for men and women and beginning at age twenty-one. The Union has not so far adopted the principle of equal pay for equal work, though its membership of eighty-seven thousand shows a majority of women. The Union came into public notice on the occasion of the recent strike at the Army and Navy Stores, when an agreement was reached in conference between the Directors and the Union, allotting advances in wages amounting to 35 per cent. general advance. Satisfactory progress has been made with regard to reduction of hours, six o'clock closing having been instituted for three days a week in many businesses, and hours reduced to forty-four, forty-seven or forty-eight in other cases. The Union has also succeeded in obtaining payment for holidays for its members, and board and lodging allowance in lieu of notice for shop assistants living in.

Land Settlement.

Apparently less than five thousand ex-Service men are at present settled on the land and under the Small Holdings scheme, and some counties have not settled a single soldier. As might be expected, the difficulties are greatest where small holdings are most numerous, for it is possible to acquire part of a large estate compulsorily, while it would be intolerable to eject one smallholder to instate another. What can be done in some districts is shown in Huntingdonshire's record. This small county has received nearly seven hundred applications and has settled five hundred and twenty-two of them. It is agreed that the smallholder's success or failure largely depends upon his wife's ability to help him. The recipients of land are almost all married men, and their chances are infinitely better than they would have been before the war, because women have acquired a definite status as land-workers and have, many of them, received a valuable training.

Policy of "The Woman's Leader."

The sole policy of *THE WOMAN'S LEADER* is to advocate a real equality of liberties, status, and opportunities between men and women. So far as space permits, however, it aims at offering an impartial platform for topics not directly included in the objects of the women's movement, but of special interest to women. Articles on these subjects will always be signed, at least by initials or a pseudonym, and for the opinions expressed in them the Editor accepts no responsibility.

IDEALISM IN POLITICS.

Easter-time is a time for holidays and for rejoicing. After a long hard pull through the winter months it provides a pause and breathing space before the coming of spring, and it is a welcome rest. All who care for public matters have indeed had a long, hard pull through this past winter, and have indeed before them a long, hard summer of work. For the state of Europe, and indeed the state of the whole world, is not such as to allow long holidays or uninterrupted leisure to any of us. Indeed this very Easter rest, coinciding as it does with new and dreadful happenings all over the world, hardly seems to be right. Merry-go-rounds on Hampstead Heath, starvation in Vienna, war in the Ruhr Valley—these things go ill together. And yet rest we must.

In this paper we are concerned mainly with one aspect of the struggle for good government. It is not primarily our business to chronicle the political or military happenings of the day, except in so far as they affect our own particular aspect of good citizenship; and we have no bias towards any one set of political opinions. Nevertheless we cannot intelligently do our own work without being aware of other movements of thought and other developments of action besides those included within the range of women's special interests. If we preach only the need for women to take their full share in the management of their country, and stress always the special reforms and the special causes that appeal to women as women, it is not because we do not know that women have and ought to have other interests and other preoccupations besides our own. But we know that these other interests and other opinions of women as yet play too small a share in shaping the course of events, and the object of our whole endeavour is to give more weight to women's influence upon these other things, as well as to promote the causes and reforms that are our own.

We refer to these points now because in this very troubled Easter we think our readers may say to themselves that THE WOMAN'S LEADER lacks proportion, that it goes harping on upon one old string while the whole world burns. But indeed it is a string that needs some harping, and we cannot but believe that if it had been sooner touched we might not be where we are to-day.

Looking about us this Easter we do indeed see a most discouraging world. From Japan to Denmark, through all the intervening lands disorder, discontent and misery are abroad. The world's reserves of food have shrunk to almost nothing, while millions of men have been employed in destruction instead of production. The nations who expected plenty after the war are still shivering and starving, for fuel and clothing have vanished like food in these waste years. Europe watches the growing crops and her shrinking stores with sick dread. The ships that were to bring us the surplus wealth of lands untouched by famine are too few for their task. Transport has broken down over great portions of the earth, and with transport all the machinery of modern life. Even no further from us than the Scottish islands food supplies fell short for lack of shipping, and people suffer hunger because of the muddle of the world. In Germany revolution succeeds revolution, and the rumour of more warfare is at hand. In Russia disease and death have swept to and fro, leaving behind a chaos of which incredible and contradictory reports come forth. In France and Italy momentary stability seems based on economic ruin. In Turkey and Armenia and through all the Middle East confusion seems to be a smouldering volcano, and America still stands apart, leaving it all alone. Our own British Empire remains firm, yet only by comparison with the ruin elsewhere. In Ireland

murder and rebellion are abroad, and no one can tell what is to follow, and if our finances still exist it is only on a very narrow margin. And everywhere and in every land men and women labour under discouragement and exhaustion.

All this calls for hard and vigorous work. We cannot let civilisation go down under the great aftermath of war. Neither can we let the opportunity pass for making the world safer and more reasonable than it was. All those who care for anything beyond their own private comfort to-day—and even those who care for that alone—must set to work with honesty and goodwill. Unwelcome as the prospect may be, we must admit, if we are honest, that the new world that has been given us is no Utopia where leisure will be the reward of the warrior. The world, which is poor enough, can after all still afford almost anything but idleness. The nation whose people now sit down to rest is a nation that must die. That is the tragedy of Austria. The nation that refuses to let its women work, whether out of jealousy, or kindness, or a senseless custom, is now more than ever crippled. None of us can afford to hamper workers either with hand or brain. We are back again, now that the hoards of a long peace have vanished, in the primitive state, when every citizen owes it to his citizenship to produce enough for his own needs as well as a surplus for those who are too young or too old to fend for themselves. We have all known this since the end of the war, but it is as true this Easter as it was last year.

The present evils are not the desire of the people of any country; neither are they the desire of the Government of any country. But they are, in a direct sense, the outcome of the old Governments that led to the great war. We say, without fear of contradiction, that the thing that was wrong with those old Governments, and the thing that has caused all the miseries of the world to-day, was the absence from our working politics of faith and idealism. These things have been obviously lacking from international politics and all too dim and slender in the domestic affairs of all countries; and if we are looking to the new element in politics to help to bring them forward now we trust we are not ourselves too idealistic.

For we believe that all this is not a vague series of phrases, but a solid truth; and that it is only by harnessing these forces to public affairs that the world can now be saved. Fortunately the concrete method is in our hands in the League of Nations. If we will it can be made a living power through which the faith and the idealism of all nations can be expressed in action. But if we do not will it the League of Nations cannot work, and then it is hard to see anything but ruin and more trouble ahead.

This week there appears a call signed by Lord Grey, Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Robert Cecil and others to support the League of Nations Union. It is true, as their letter says, that unless Great Britain puts behind the machinery of the League the whole force of its determination, the League may fail to be of real effect, and in that case, as they point out, it may positively do harm to the cause of international understanding and future peace. It is therefore all-important that the people of this country should make known their real support, and should do so in such a way as to give driving force and moral authority to the League from the very beginning of its activities. By moral authority, and by this alone, can the new method of international understanding be upheld. It is of such supreme importance to us all that it should be upheld that at this moment moral force and the idealism that have been too long absent from our politics are perhaps the most important things in the world.

TRAGEDY AND COMEDY.

The bitter farce of it! Regard it from the standpoint of the average party man, the diligent reader of the "correct" party newspaper, it is simply another of "those troublesome Irish crises always recurring, needs to be firmly dealt with, sir." Looked at from the standpoint of the detached Gallo-like observer of men and things it is excruciatingly funny. This is to be the long-expected "settlement," self-government for the section of the country which has proclaimed on housetop, at street corner, on its very china imprinted with the mystic legend "We will not have Home Rule" that the last thing it desires is self-government. For the rest of the country the *status quo*, until it shall decide to accept a measure which it has declared with equal emphasis it will never accept, until it has abandoned a dream for the sake of which it is risking its own soul. The Northern section, safe in its commercial prosperity, proclaims its willingness to accept the hated Partition Parliament, in the hope that it "may give an example to the rest of Ireland which may provoke to imitation and possibly emulation." A delightful vision of a docile Ireland sitting at the feet of Ulster, which could only be conjured up by a true born native of the Northern province. And yet they say politics are depressing. So much for the farce. For the tragedy of it, ask any of those who are striving to do something to remove those fundamental causes of Irish unrest of which so little heed is taken, and who find their difficult work rendered well nigh impossible by the general ferment, the recklessness, the cynicism, born of what was described last week as a state of war, without any of the heroisms or nobilities which do something to relieve its horrors. Last week a small deputation from a Mothers' Pensions Committee went to ask for some mitigation of the sufferings which inadequate relief imposes on the woman whom the Treasury cannot afford to assist. The deputation could do nothing, as the Board had just adjourned, "as a sign of disapproval" of never mind which of the daily happenings that have made life intolerable of late. The widow must starve for a little longer, if indeed she will persist in living, a most unreasonable course on her part, when, if she were dead, her children would be cared for in very costly institutions, maintained for the purpose by a truly economically minded State. Another day another deputation met to ask for some definite steps to be taken with regard to the neglected or uncontrolled children who roam the streets, selling the endless Stop Press editions for which there is such a splendid market, or begging from the ever-charitable public, one small specimen having raised 3s. 6d. by midday on one occasion, which shows how industry and perseverance in your trade are rewarded even south of the Boyne. The deputation could do nothing, as no quorum was present at the particular Committee, two-thirds of whose members were—well, let us call it absent for change of air.

So it goes on. The Central Committee for Women's Employment was dismissed last summer, leaving behind it a balance of over £2,000, the testimony of the official auditor as to the excellence of the business position, and the knowledge that the girls from the workrooms were almost the only ones who did not try to take advantage of the out-of-work donation. Recently a Committee was formed to elaborate schemes of training for women in connection with the Work for Women Fund, and the Irish part of the work is entrusted to two ladies with every capacity except knowledge of Irish industrial conditions, of course neither possessed the disqualification of being Irish. This kind of thing is perfectly normal; no one is even surprised, and is of course conducive to the desired settlement of the Irish question. Again, how much of the Red Cross surplus funds have been allotted to Ireland, in proportion to what was raised in the country? Mere trivialities these, not to be mentioned in comparison with the guilt of open assassination and open cowardly condonation of assassination. True. A bitter harvest is being reaped, and the reapers often were not guilty of the sowing. But do not think that there can ever be settlement without justice, justice to the utmost.

Meanwhile, as foretold, emigration is beginning again in full force, the girls being among the most eager to take advantage of every available boat. The sickness rate is still twice that in Great Britain, the Health Council has neither money nor power. The Executive, intolerably harassed and driven, has no leisure to deal with such problems. A mad world.

D. M.

SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE.

The Goose Girl having been away this week, her place has been taken by a plain Goose. If her thoughts are rather foolish, she begs kind readers to remember that this is the nature of geese—and ganders, too.

* * * *

My first observation is that it is gradually dawning on our dailies, one by one, that the time has now come when Geese would probably like to have a little political news on things of general interest which have some bearing on their own fate. The page on frills and furbelows, with an occasional recipe thrown in, they consider no longer quite provides the sauce that is wanted. Hence the birth of the "Woman's political column." We are hoping great things from the *Globe* in this direction; we must admit that the effort made by the *Sunday Times* has not quite hit the mark—even the Goose could bear a little more substance, but perhaps the process will be gradual.

* * * *

"Blackwood's Magazine" devotes thirteen excited columns to discussing the "Women's Attack on the Universities." The editor, accustomed for years to muse without method, now provides reading for a chilly bank holiday by musing without meaning or manners and in a very loud voice. He asks whether there are still two sexes, and complains that women insist upon masquerading in male attire, which suits ill with "nether skirts." And all this with intent to oust men from Oxford and Cambridge, which were endowed for the benefit of men. We seem to remember that Jesus College was once a nunnery, and in spite of "Blackwood's" we believe that the young Ganders at our Universities are not so easily routed.

* * * *

Another of men's sacred precincts, after much deliberation and the usual amount of opposition, has opened its doors to women. A sympathetic Gander who concerns himself with printing, has since the Armistice fought hard to retain the few women printers who came to his rescue during the war; under such unfavourable circumstances it is encouraging to learn that the women proof-readers have been admitted to membership in the Association of Correctors of the Press.

* * * *

The Ministry of Labour is doing a laudable piece of work which should tend to make the way of life more agreeable for those of us who must needs spend a certain amount of our time in restaurants. Its latest scheme, "Training Courses for Waitresses," has met with great success. Girls who have taken the Course are getting £4 to £5 a week—no slight improvement on the 7s. 6d. still paid by many restaurants. In future, when in difficulties, ask your waitress; if you don't know what "Noisette d'agneau" is, or what is served with plovers' eggs, she will be able to tell you.

* * * *

That valuable New York publication, "The Woman Citizen," very ably disproves a statement that is part of the argumentative stock-in-trade of many a Gander, namely, "That women have no creative genius, no inventive faculty." It is indeed a well-known fallacy that the poor Goose right down the ages has never really created, she has only imitated. As a poor Goose who half accepts this belief by merely hearing it so oftentimes repeated, I cannot do more than proclaim on this side of the Atlantic what "The Woman Citizen" has brought to light on the other side. Records, patent and otherwise, clearly show that a woman invented silk, a woman invented the process of weaving gauze fabrics, a Babylonian woman invented an engine of warfare, women invented gas masks and submarine engines, a woman invented the process of straw weaving, and a woman invented the trolley-switch. Women have been inventing for thousands of years, and are still inventing. A new cable code has recently been devised by a woman, which will save business houses all over the world thousands of pounds annually, while Miss Margaret Knight is leading the world in the number of her inventions, having eighty-nine to her credit. It makes a poor goose giddy to think of it all.

THE RELATION OF ARTIST AND AUDIENCE.

By CICELY HAMILTON.

In every human being is the instinct, the desire for make-believe; which, in its essence, is the instinct and desire to make life wider and fuller. Hence the impossibility of suppressing the theatre, the expression of the make-believe impulse; an impulse which comes into being afresh with each generation in the nursery—where the child consults an imaginary watch while he feels the furry pulse of his kitten. Man will and must be taken out of himself at times; by a merriment that engrosses, by a story that entralls him, by sharing the thoughts, the hopes and the fears that the actor embodies for an hour. The child acts the doctor—and ceases to be just a child; the grown man puts away his daily self, the limitations which life has imposed on him, when he watches a ballet or a comedy.

WHY WE FREQUENT THE THEATRE.

The theatre, then, whatever form it takes—from opera to cinema, from tragedy to farce—is an enlargement of the life of its audience; giving them the pageantry, the humour, the insight into the lives of their fellows which their daily existence denies them. The dramatic art of a people, however contemptible in itself, is always worth watching from the point of view of the student of popular psychology; since it is bound to reflect, more or less completely and correctly, the aspirations of its public. The theatre, for the most part, is frequented not because it holds the mirror up to actual life, but because it holds the mirror up to the desires of its public and portrays life as that public would wish it to be—life gaudy, life beautiful, life exciting, or life sentimental. Melodrama flourishes and always will flourish so long as the desires of the many are tinged with adventure and sentiment; while a public that craves for much spending and luxury will be gratified by expensive "productions," the display of dress, jewels, and scenery.

All art that appeals to the many has a tendency to deteriorate; the tastes and aspirations that we share with ten thousand of our fellows are not always our highest and finest. A newspaper with a huge circulation must write down to its average reader; just as a politician who desires to sweep the board at an election is frequently—usually—forced to appeal to the immediate self-interest or resentment which is so far more easily stirred in man than foresight, self-sacrifice, or kindness. It is this tendency—at its worst to baseness, at its most innocuous to mediocrity—that the artist and the critic have to check. It may be true enough that "the drama's laws the drama's patrons give," but the fundamental law that the public shall approve its entertainment is capable of wide interpretation; the actor and dramatist who "please to live" may please by varying methods. By the vulgar joke that is certain of its laugh or by beauty that compels to homage.

ACTOR AND PUBLIC.

In a healthy theatre the influence of artist upon audience, of audience upon artist, would be rightly balanced and balanced for the good of both. The actor or dramatist who respects his art will, consciously or unconsciously, strive without ceasing to rise above the level of that mediocrity with which the public (left to itself) is content; but the necessity of living by and pleasing his public—and therefore of being interesting and comprehensible to a crowd—will restrain him from meaningless innovation and mere highbrow, eccentric experiment. The artist is the creative, the initiative influence; his audience the restraining, the negative influence which, even while it follows him, checks him. . . . That is the right relation between the theatrical artist and his public; the faulty relation is that in which the artist ceases to lead and seeks guidance for his work not from his own creative instinct and the promptings of his art, but from the ascertained tastes of his public.

This latter, or reversed relation, is the real evil of the purely

commercial theatre; whose sin is not that it makes money, but that, in seeking only to make money, it puts the cart before the horse and studies first not the powers of its artists, but the ascertained tastes of its audience. As an instance of what I mean: so many thousand persons have paid their money to witness a certain type of play—and the commercial theatre repeats that type of play until the public, having had enough of it, ceases to patronise the box-office. Such a process inevitably makes for monotony and increases the demand for second-hand, or imitative, work.

DEVELOPING THE CRITICAL FACULTY.

Roughly speaking, the difference between a healthy and an unhealthy theatre is this: in the latter criticism is discouraged, in the former the aim of the artist is to make his audience more critical—more discerning and intelligent, more capable of perceiving the finer mysteries of art. No man inspired by the creative spirit can long cast his pearls before swine—can act or write for an audience that sees no difference between journeyman work and inspiration. Hence the necessity laid on the artist of initiating the audience—if one may so phrase it—into the secrets and beauties of his art, of awakening in his public a spirit of discerning criticism. For without criticism the artist will flag in his efforts; lose respect for his work and respect for himself, and descend to the level of those who are content to please—by any means, however trite and mediocre. . . . As is apt to happen in the purely commercial theatre, where the aim, necessarily is to stifle the critical sense of an audience, to induce it to accept whatever is placed before it, to pay its money for the fare provided—be it commonplace or even vulgar.

It is by this test that we must judge all attempts to improve that much-discussed institution the theatre. Are they sound? Then they appeal not to enthusiasm but to intelligence, and their immediate and obvious effect is a sharpening of the critical faculty, an increased discernment which reacts upon author and player. These, in a healthy, a critical theatre, will give of their best—for fear of that penalty of disapproval which would follow should they give of their worst.

TWO TRIOLETS.

By H. F. KNIGHT.

I.

In Drab Street of Any Town
There ain't much room for kids to play;
The grown-ups go up and down,
In Drab Street of Any Town;
They're thickest by the "Rose and Crown";
They curse you if you're in their way.
In Drab Street of Any Town
There ain't much room for kids to play.

II.

"Keep off the grass; don't pick the flowers."
Well now, I do call that a shame!
I allus thought the Park was ours.
"Keep off the grass; don't pick the flowers";
We can't play much at Fairy Bowers,
Or Robinson and What's-his-name.
"Keep off the grass; don't pick the flowers";
Well now, I do call that a shame!

PRISONERS AND CAPTIVES.

By Mrs. VICTOR RICKARD.

THE LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

A number of newspapers have recently devoted considerable space to exposing the gross abuses which are inherent in the present administration of asylums, and that arise from the laxity of the existing Lunacy Laws. Yet it is extremely difficult, even in the face of so much evidence, to persuade the public that these abuses actually exist. Each time a scandal is brought to light it is argued that the testimony of anyone who has been certified as a lunatic is obviously not to be trusted, and the public generally find it easier and less disquieting to accept the assurance of the doctors that abuses do not exist, and that complaints regarding asylum conditions are the outcome of "delusions."

It is not at all sufficiently realised how large a proportion of the population is intimately affected by this question of the truth about Lunatic Asylums. I have found myself that numbers of acquaintances and friends to whom I have mentioned the subject, have themselves known of cases, or have relatives who are either still in asylums, or have been so at some previous time; and I cannot believe that my range of experience in this respect is exceptional.

A few weeks ago the Ministry of Health stated that there were nearly 100,000 persons actually certified as insane in the asylums at present, while it is a general rule at a rough calculation that about one-third of the inmates of Mental Homes are released every year.

The stigma attached to the suspicion of lunacy in a family, though there is nothing shameful in it, is responsible for a great deal of the mystery connected with asylums, and increases the difficulties of investigation and also the possibilities of secrecy. In the case of cancer, or phthisis, or almost any other bodily affliction there is no need for concealment, but when the affliction is mental, every means is used to place the patient behind an impenetrable wall of silence. Thus, in addition to the heavy distress of the illness itself, the sufferer is cut off completely from the familiar world known to him or her before the trouble arose. What happens behind the closed doors is not known to anyone, and the system of incarceration goes on unhampered by outside intervention or relief; a system which is scarcely ever accompanied by curative treatment, and which, in the case of any mistake in the certification, or of a "borderland" patient, works irrevocable injury upon those who suffer under it.

If the public conscience could only be aroused, the present system could be reformed almost at once, for the necessary reforms present no special difficulty. The two fundamental evils of the existing conditions in asylums are first, that these thousands of patients who are only suffering from a temporary mental disorder, are certified and branded for the remainder of their lives as lunatics, when certification is only an unnecessary cruelty; and, secondly, that inside asylums there is no real treatment, and patients of every class—many of them thoroughly conscious of the horror of their surroundings—are herded together like wild animals.

In nearly all asylums, whether public or private, men and women are lodged who are suffering from every kind of mental disease. Imbeciles, monomaniacs, epileptics, victims of hysteria in its extreme forms, or of melancholia, those who have suffered from nervous breakdowns, as well as other more ugly forms of mental derangement. All these are obliged to have their meals together and are turned out promiscuously into airing courts, or into the grounds, to wander about aimlessly without classification or distinction. These helpless people are left mainly in the care of warders and wardresses who, strange as it may seem, are almost entirely without any kind of training in the treatment of mental disease. In the palatial private asylum there is an appearance of luxury, but the actual conditions vary very little, though £1,000 a year is quite an ordinary charge made for a wealthy patient. No segregation or division exists, except as between the really incorrigible and violent lunatics, and those who are more or less normal. Here,

also, behind the effect of comfort, there is no treatment of any kind, so that, while they remain under detention, nothing whatever is done which can possibly better the mental condition of anyone who is sent to such a place.

That the asylums provide no curative treatment, and that certification is wholly undesirable except in violent and hopeless cases, is a fact freely acknowledged by many of the doctors themselves. But what should be realised more widely is that the power to send people to asylums is frequently and constantly abused. Under the existing law, all that is needed to certify a patient is the signature of any two doctors, whether or not they know anything of mental disease, or even of the patient whom they have to certify. The only other formality required is the signature of a magistrate who need not even have seen the person he is asked to certify as insane.

In the vast majority of cases it is certainly true that no doctor will certify a patient without considerable grounds for believing that he is acting for the best, but I have seen one certificate for insanity which committed a perfectly sane man to an asylum on the grounds that he was "extremely talkative" and that "he spoke to me (to his doctor!) about his private affairs, and invited me to his country house."

It is not the doctors, however, but the petitioners whose judgments or whose motives are open to objection. I know of one poor woman over whom this threat of certification has hung for a long time, who lives in dread that her husband, who desires to have her sent to an asylum, will force her through personal cruelty into an act of violence, so that he may be provided with sufficient cause to persuade the doctors that she is out of her mind. She is now on the verge of a breakdown, and once her husband can satisfy the medical authorities that she has given way to some rash action, her fate is practically sealed.

Women stand in much greater need of protection than men, under the present law, and it is to the women who are now active in public life that we must look for the reform that is most urgently needed, to secure proper treatment in borderland houses where patients can go of their own free will, and without being treated as lunatics. And the Lunacy Act should be so amended as to provide really adequate safeguards against wrongful certification, by only allowing doctors and magistrates with real knowledge of mental work to issue certificates.

I can give no better instance of the silent tragedies which are going on from week to week in asylums throughout the country than by quoting a case of which the details have been supplied to me by a lady doctor who has devoted endless care and trouble to assisting those who have been broken by the present system.

A woman of a little over forty was admitted last summer to the wards of a County Asylum in the North of England; she came from a Southern county, where she had spent a happy childhood. She had married a small grocer in a busy northern city, and brought up a family. Then the war brought her misfortune. Her husband's business was not prospering, and she became anxious about their livelihood. Her own health was by no means good and she began to grow thin and worn. Her mother-in-law fell ill and had to be nursed until she died, and by that time this poor woman's strength and nerves had given way. She became unable to manage her household affairs, and the dread of abject poverty began to prey upon her mind.

When my doctor friend found her in the asylum her memory was quite clear. She could tell everything that had occurred and her mental faculties were in no way dimmed. She had no delusions. Her great fear had been that her relatives might send her to an asylum, and she had implored her husband not to do this, but he, poor man, had no alternative. There was no sanatorium or "Rest Home" to which he could send her, and he did not know what to do. Her friends, impressed with the idea that she might become suicidal, had sent for the Relieving Officer, and so the shrinking, stricken woman was condemned to go to the very place she most dreaded. She was suffering from no aberration, from nothing but sheer despair. Lonely, defeated, and desolate, she became physically prostrate, and though every care and attention was bestowed upon her, she only lived ten days after admission to the asylum.

Such, stated very briefly, is the history of a poor soul whose fate, in all human probability, need never have befallen her.

THE PROFESSIONAL WOMAN.

PIONEERS STILL.

Much has been heard lately of the position of women in industry, and until some of the disabilities under which the woman worker is suffering at the moment are removed much will continue to be heard on that subject. Critical as is the situation in the industrial world it will, however, be regrettable if interest is exclusively absorbed therein; for the position of women in the professional world also demands—and merits—attention at the present time. The passing of the Sex Disqualifications Removal Bill is indeed a landmark in the path of women's progress. At one stroke barriers which have stood for years have been swept away. Henceforward a woman may exercise as wide a choice as her male relatives in selecting her profession—though this is not to say that her path will be other than thorny at first. For the material poverty of women as compared to men is such—and parental prejudices die so hard—that for long to come it will be far more difficult for the girls of a family than the boys to secure the wherewithal to obtain the coveted training. The paucity of scholarships and endowments in girls' schools and women's colleges is an additional handicap for the clever girl as against the clever boy. Moreover, even when such initial obstacles have been surmounted and entry to a given profession effected, women while exposed to the same fierce competition as their male colleagues, will have those additional struggles to encounter which always fall to the lot of the pioneer. The uphill course the medical women had to pursue—until the war provided the long awaited opening—is more than sufficient evidence of the truth of this statement. The conventions yet to be broken down, the trials that have still to be endured, will certainly not deter women from utilising these new opportunities, to secure which so much toil has been expended and so many sacrifices made.

Of hardly less interest than the opening up of what may be called, from the women's point of view, the "new" professions is the changed spirit, the revived activity that is being manifested in those callings which women have long since made their own. To prove this it is only necessary to refer to the agitation for better status, conditions and remuneration in the nursing profession, the demand for "equal pay for equal work" put forward by the women teachers, and the protests which are being voiced by women clerks and secretaries against unfair dismissals and relegation to inferior work. In all these occupations women are organising, asserting themselves, beginning to "feel their feet." They are realising what it means to have achieved liberty; they have still to learn to use it most wisely. It is perhaps just at this moment when they are dimly apprehending the power they can—and will—exercise that they are most in need of good counsel. And this is just the time when there is most danger of exploitation, for there are many would-be advisers whose chief desire is to direct—for their own ends—the influence which, as they are well aware, professional women are capable of exerting.

THE PASSING OF THE WAR-WORKER.

The much-advertised "war-work" of women has perhaps tended to obscure the steady, unobtrusive progress of the trained women of the country. In the new and hitherto untried occupations suddenly thrown open to them by the war, women of the most varying social class and the most divergent education and upbringing were necessarily more or less on a level, inasmuch as they were all equally unskilled in the particular work they were suddenly called on to perform. In such circumstances it is not surprising that many prominent posts in war-time occupa-

tions have been bestowed on women more distinguished for other qualities than for academic qualifications or previous record of paid work. With the subsidence of war fever, however, technical qualifications will again come into their own. It is of the utmost importance to the professional woman that high standards should be maintained, and that the expenditure of time and money necessary to secure the requisite attainments should be rewarded by favourable chances of securing such work as may be available in that particular field.

One great danger for the professional woman undoubtedly lies in the possible extension to her of that bureaucratic control which has for long been exercised over the manual (woman) worker. Whether manual workers or brain workers, men have always advanced their interests and substantially improved their position by combination. But the conditions of employment—and of life generally for women—until very recent days have been such as to militate against Trades Unionism, and in consequence such progress as has been made has been secured by legislation of a "paternal" character. A comparison of results must demonstrate to the professional woman that for her the best line of development will be found in organisation with her fellow workers, and in the maintenance of independence of Government control.

THE COURSE TO BE ADOPTED.

It is urgently necessary that, in addition to making their way into the "Unions" controlled by the men with whom they are now increasingly working, professional women should give all possible support to those associations of their own which are already in being. The Federation of University Women is a case in point. During the war many of its activities were absorbed by the Professional Women's Register of the Ministry of Labour, but with the coming of peace and the resumption of independence the Federation should be in a position materially to assist the fortunes of University and professional women. A strong and representative "Trades Union" to voice their claims is certainly badly needed at the moment. This point may be illustrated by a very recent occurrence. Much has been heard of the setting up of a committee to disburse, on behalf of unemployed and untrained women, £500,000 of the National Relief Fund. It is announced that the training of women for professional work will be under consideration, and yet at the time of writing—with the exception of officials—there is no representation of University and professional women on the committee. The moral would appear to be that all such women should, by supporting appropriate organisations, register effective protest against such treatment. It behoves professional women to be very watchful of the thin end of the wedge of control. Those who direct entry to employment may so easily extend their activities to other aspects of the particular calling.

Professional men, after many "ups and downs," have organised themselves into self-contained corporations, which prescribe not only rates of pay and conditions of employment, but also rules of conduct for their members. The British Medical Association, for instance, is certainly an enormously powerful body in these respects. It is a useful example too—from the point of view of the subject under discussion—for the position of men and women in the medical profession is identical. We do not find the women doctors seeking, or obtaining employment, under the ægis of any Government Department. The doctors conduct their own affairs; vacancies are notified through professional channels through the "Public Appointments"

section of reputable daily papers or in the columns of the *British Medical Journal*. The women teachers again have evolved their own methods of obtaining work—e.g., through accredited agencies specially devoted to the interests of teachers, through advertisements in educational journals, etc. It is greatly to be hoped that the progress of the professional woman will be generally on these lines—i.e., that she will take her place in the appropriate organisation already created by her male colleague, that her remuneration and the conditions of her employment will be settled by her "Trades Union," and that methods of notifying vacancies in that particular field shall be controlled by the Union. This applies not only to such long-established professions as law, medicine, and teaching, but to the theatrical profession, journalism, and others of later development. Nor is it conceivable that the independent business woman can make headway on other lines than these.

In the meantime, while women are "sorting themselves out" and qualifying for the different callings they are now free to adopt, it would appear to be of the first importance that they should give all possible support to such organisations as the London Society for Women's Service and the Central Bureau for the Employment of Women, which depending entirely on private enterprise have no other object than the promotion of the interests of, and the rendering of assistance to, educated women seeking work. Their continued existence—unlike that of a Government Department—depending entirely on the success of their efforts in that direction.

E. H. P.

NORTH AND SOUTH.

BY DORA MELLONE.

A dialogue between Mrs. McFetridge and her cousin Lizzie. Mrs. McFetridge sewing. Enter Lizzie in a hurry, excited.

LIZZIE: Weel, what's wrong?

MRS. MCFETRIDGE: Naethin ava.

L.: Och, when I got the caird "Come at once" I were that scared I just started off, and here I am.

MRS. MCF.: Weel, Samyel were readin' the paper, and pechin' and gruntin', and I sez, "What is it, Samyel?" and he sez, "Och, that puir Lizzie, there in Dublin, and they're all goin' mad and shootin' at the Lord-Lieutenant and they'll soon be killin' other. Dear, dear, if she was only in the North." "I'll write for her," says I. "No," says he, "there's a thing they call a 'phone, and they say ye can hae a crack wi' a friend in Dublin or in New York." "Quit your bledgers, Samyel," sez I. "'Phones is for quality, they're no for the likes of us. I'll just send a caird, what I were aye used with. That'll bring her."

L.: Aye, so it did, and gied me a good fright. There's no killin' in our street; and what a hurry you were in, sendin' for me, when you knew I was comin' at New Year. And you're still spriggin'. Sure you're no that ill aff ye canna rest ye a bit.

MRS. MCF.: We canna complain, but we're no like yon ould man in America, who couldna sleep thinkin' what he'd do wi' his millions of money. We hae plenty of meal and a wheen prettas in the gairden and a wee stack of turf, and Mrs. Afee, the cook at the big house, gies us a drop of sweet milk. But how's the wee shop, Lizzie? I doubt them Dublin people never pays for what they get?

L.: Nawthin' of the sort, Mary. I never done sae weel in my life. The poor bodies buys their bits of tay and sugar, and their oil and soap, and though it's so dear they pay for it over the counter. If ye say, "Times is hard," they just say, "God

is good, and when He shuts one door He opens another," though they're that poor they don't know where they'll be next week.

MRS. MCF.: Weel, did anybody ever hear the likes them! Me and Samyel, we likes to have a pound or two in the Post Office, and a few shillins in the purse to go on with. We wadnae put in War Loan, for 'fraid we might loss it.

L.: Sure it's as safe in the War Loan as in the Post Office, ye couldna loss it. We have no money put past, wi' the coal four shillin's a bag and turf a penny a sod, and ye'd hardly see the bit of cabbage ye'd get for sixpence, and as for rent, it's cruel, six shillin's a week for a room; though, thanks be to God, we make out wi' the wee shop, and Andrew earns a little in the post office, though I doubt he'll soon be a lameter wi' the rheumatism; still, he doesna grumble, but says, Tak one day at a time. Whiles I see how well aff I am, when I think of other women, up early and late, and the work never done. Nae wondher the girls doesna get married.

MRS. MCF.: Wumman dear, ye'd never object to marriage! Look at me and Samyel; him working out in the field, and comes in till his denner, and I hae the place redded up, and then out again till evening and we has our tay, and then sittin' at the fire, me knittin' and him readin' the *Newslatthar* and sayin', "Listen here, Mary, you hae got the vote and ye'll need to be mindin' what I say and larin' how to vote, and dinna be like the weemen that says, 'I canna make them figures, a cross'll dae weel enough—what I was always used with.'" "Och, Samyel," sez I, "sure I heard all them frae the lady at the schoolhouse the other evening, and you wouldna come or she would hae larned you too."

L.: Aye, we had meetin's in Dublin, and the poor ladies was heart scalded thyrin' to get the women to vote; some wouldn't, for 'fraid their husbands would know who they voted for, and some wanted to give all their votes to the tall lady that was explainin' P.R. as they call it, but that would have spiled their paper. There'll be a quare lot of spiled papers anyways, for most of them has forgot how to make figures.

MRS. MCF.: Weel, Samyel says he can larn frae the *Newslatthar*, and goes on readin', and I sez, "Och, Samyel, thou's all lees," and he sez, "Sure, they wadna prent lees in the paper; wumman dear, ye couldna know betther nor the *Newslatthar*." And when the candidates comes round we gie them a quare hustlin', and they're that polite, takin' off their hat and, "Dear me, Mrs. McFetridge, this is a wee palace! Mr. McFetridge, you should be the proud man with such a wife. Oh yes, we'll see that the Council carries out all your suggestions; you'll have all those houses built in less than no time. We only wish there were such intelligent voters in the South of Ireland."

L.: South of Ireland, indeed! It's like their impidence! Or'ngemen couldna hold a candle to the Sinn Feiners for brains; they were just takin' a rise out of Samyel, but when they're in they'll tak nae notice of him or you, wouldn't recognise you on the street, and they'll go on the same as they always done. But, Mary dear, we'll argie nae mair the night. Exit Lizzie.

Mrs. McFetridge alone.

Maybe if the weemen stirred theirsels something more would be done. They could help the men that's thyrin' to put things right, and canna do it their lone, the poor bein's, wi' all the goodwill in the world!

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THE QUEST OF THE TRUE BAGHDAD.

By EVELYN SHARP.

(Author of "Somewhere in Christendom," &c.)

III.

D 459 sat in her stuffy prison cell, making her thirteenth postman's bag. The admirable system of ventilation, always brought to the notice of interested visitors, did not work, because the two gratings on which it depended were choked up with dust and old bits of paper; and D 459 was suffering badly from brain lassitude and anæmia consequent upon her six weeks' sojourn in Bethel Gaol.

It was the end of her term of imprisonment, and to-morrow she would be out. The few days' grace she might have gained by exemplary conduct had not been granted her. The conduct of D 459 had not, in fact, been exemplary. Like all first offenders, she had contrived to break a number of rules the existence of which she never discovered until she broke them; and when she suggested that a better plan would be to place a printed copy of the regulations in every cell, she was told she had broken another rule by being impertinent. Similarly, when her presumed vicious instincts led her to make her bed in the ordinary hygienic way, instead of rolling it up in a tight sausage and depositing it on the wet floor in the corner of her recently washed cell, she found she had transgressed what was regarded as a vitally important regulation; and when, because nobody directed her to the water-tap from which she was commanded to fetch her own water, she walked inadvertently in the opposite direction, she seemed to have broken another of almost equal importance. On the day that the upper stuck to the lower of the two tins in which her dinner was served, so that she never discovered what the *pièce de résistance* was and had to subsist on two tepid, half-boiled potatoes from the upper tin, she was reported for not taking her food properly; when she tried to explain how it happened, she fell into disgrace for "answering back;" while she was in disgrace they forbade her to go to Chapel in search (presumably) of more grace.

If she remained seated on her wooden stool—as she did at first from sheer astonishment—when the door of her cell was flung open and the Governor or Chaplain walked in uninvited, the warden lifted her to her feet, firmly though not spitefully, by the collar of her prison blouse—a most unsafe proceeding in the case of a regulation costume which was made on the pattern of a giantess. If, on the other hand, she started to her feet on the appearance, also uninvited, of the matron, she roused suspicions of wrong-doing—not always unfounded suspicions, it is true, as on the occasion when she was caught sacrificing a valuable piece of butter in order to obscure the observation hole in her door.

Nothing she did in those early days of her imprisonment was right. Had the matron, by no means an unkindly woman, been less absorbed in the care of her nine hundred charges, she might have wondered why D 459 was so unlike other suicide cases, why she did not mope in the day time and scream at night, and behave generally like a hunted animal; she might even have discovered that for the first time in her experience she was dealing with a woman who had attempted to commit suicide after serious deliberation instead of in a fit of madness. As it was, she had no time to do more than record as insubordination the manifestations of a spirit that was not cowed by imprisonment. So D 459 lost her good marks and her week's grace.

Then a reaction set in. The pathetic absurdities of her situation, which at first served her the good turn of appealing to her sense of humour, began to lose their novelty and with it their power to nerve her into resisting the deadening effects of prison life. Bad food, bad air, want of proper exercise, all took their toll of her poor reserve of vitality. Her mind and soul felt atrophied; she grew haunted, especially at night, by the sense of the locked door, of those hundreds of unhappy women herded under the same roof. She felt she was being beaten by circum-

stance, that soon she would not care if she were beaten or not, that when she got out—if she ever did get out—she would have become like any other victim of the penal system, who drifts from prison to public house, and back again to prison. The only difference, if there were any difference, between her and her companions was that they, probably, did not realise their situation and she still did.

A slight improvement in her condition was effected through the tardy discovery on the part of the authorities that she had been committed to the second and not the third division. This caused her removal to a rather better cell, where her wooden seat had a back to it: it also caused the substitution of B diet for C diet, or, for all she knew, of C diet for B diet, and the provision of a third-class prisoner to clean out her cell every morning. And it was the third-class prisoner who restored her human interest in things and saved her from a morbid breakdown.

"Wotcher in for, and how much did he give you?" asked the third-class prisoner on her first appearance in the cell of D 459. She spoke in a hoarse whisper, when the warden in attendance was looking the other way. She was a kind warden, that one, and did not show herself unwilling to give conversational opportunities.

D 459 conveyed the necessary information in the furtive tone and manner demanded by the occasion. The girl nodded and imparted particulars of her own case in thick and adenoidal gasps.

"Chap give me in charge for pinching his money. Wanted to git rid of me, see? He never turned up to charge me—no fear! But the copper, he'd got plenty of evidence, the swine! So I up and told 'im off, and the Beak got mad and give me six weeks hard."

After that, a queer friendship sprang up between these two derelicts and brought a quite disproportionate amount of joy to the heart of at least one of them. There were other chance acquaintanceships, too, made at the water tap, or on the way to Chapel, or the more infrequent way to the bath—odd scraps of intercourse with ghosts of humanity, drawn together by a feeling of equality unimagined by those who have never found themselves outside the social pale. And gradually, through the tired and bewildered mind of D 459 there ran one clear thread of thought—that when she had shaken off her feet the dust of Bethel Gaol she would fight tooth and nail against the evils that made Bethel Gaol possible.

Well, here was the last day of it, and to-morrow she and her third-class handmaid were going out. To what? As she stitched away drowsily at her postman's bag, a wave of depression swept over her and she vowed she did not care. Her initiative, after six weeks of suppression, lay dormant. For the moment, her high aims seemed ludicrously inappropriate, and what power she ever thought she possessed of shaping her own future and Milly's seemed gone. If she had been suddenly told that her term of imprisonment was to be indefinitely extended, she felt she would still have gone on sewing mechanically at the coarse canvas seam.

She stopped now because she had come to the end of the seam. For some moments she sat dully with her hands in her lap, scarcely thinking. Then she moved alongside of the door and placed herself flat against the wall in the one spot of her cell that was not commanded by the observation hole. Very cautiously she drew a worn and dingy scrap of paper from the thick coils of hair beneath her prison cap. She unfolded it swiftly for the fiftieth time since the day of her commitment, when a kindly, though not unbribed constable handed it to her as she stepped into the prison van. It was quite short, and she merely

opened it as a matter of form, for she already knew it by heart.

"I will do my best to get you out, but am afraid that any influence I may have had in the past will have gone; for I am about to pay for having bought the wrong Baghdad—the one, as you said, that anybody can buy. But whatever happens, I will meet you on your release."

Gerald Arlington.

So she knew now that it was Gerald Arlington whom she had met on that momentous evening, to whom she had turned because she wanted so desperately to hear a human voice respond to hers before she cut herself off from life. Gerald Arlington, M.P.! The "coming man" as the newspapers called him. The man who had long ceased to sit on the Labour Benches and had gone back on his class, as his constituents said of him in that South London district where she had been sweated and starved.

The irony of his proffered friendship made her smile as she read his note for the last time; then she tore it up and hid the fragments in the ventilator behind the hot-water pipes. To give him his due, he had served her purpose, that evening of blue mist and will o' the wisps; and she had made her desperate attempt, abortive though it was, with steadied nerves.

"Is anybody coming to meet you to-morrow?" she had asked of Milly, that morning, under cover of the clatter made by pail and scrubbing-brush.

"I don't think!" was the emphatic answer. "Ain't got no one to come, 'cepting farver; and he's had to go into the House, most likely, now I ain't there to keep 'im. What abah't you?"

"I don't know. Probably. Oh! I mean—I hope not," said D 459, absently.

Milly sniffed, and sluiced a flood of water in acute proximity to the rolled up bedclothes. "You're a toff, o' course you are!" she muttered, more hoarsely than usual. "Knew it all the time. Shan't never see you again. Cheerio!"

"I'm not a toff," disclaimed D 459, eagerly. "My father kept a sweet-stuff shop in a seaside town. That isn't being a toff, is it? You see, he died and left me nothing but his debts. I paid those off by selling everything up, and came to London with five pounds. That's all there is about me."

"You talk like a toff, anyhow," said Milly, when the next opportunity occurred.

D 459, her watchful eye on the back of the attendant warden in the passage, repudiated this insinuation also. "I may have had more education than you have, perhaps. I love books, and I read everything I could get hold of when I was at home," she murmured cautiously. "But I'm not half so useful as you are; I never learnt to do anything that could make money. I never even learnt to make friends till I came here. You—you are the first friend I ever wanted to have."

"Straight?" whispered the girl, incredulously. "Well, if this ain't a rum go!"

IV.

Punctually at eight o'clock in the morning, a man in blue serge suit and soft felt hat stood waiting in the rain outside Bethel Gaol. Three times the great doors opened and discharged a group of women. In twos and threes they slouched across the courtyard, lingered a moment at the boundary gate where a policeman stood on guard, then melted away into the big grey city whose outcasts they had become. Occasionally they were met by friends; but the restraint of these rare meetings lent them a pathos that was less obvious in the sordid isolation of the forgotten ones, who just drifted away unnoticed.

In the interval that followed the third issue of discharged prisoners, the well-dressed man on the opposite side of the road became uncomfortably aware that the policeman was regarding him with cynical derision. Sensitive as he was to the opinions of others, Arlington at once felt that some of the glory had gone out of his adventure. What had appeared during weeks of rather pleasant suspense an attractive enterprise suddenly began, in the face of a sniggering official and a drizzle of rain, to assert itself as a fool's game. He looked impatiently at his watch, glanced up the road at the tram terminus, determined impulsively on flight, wavered, and was lost. For the prison doors creaked ajar once more while he vacillated, and, to his

credit, he forgot all the smaller vanities in the rush of real emotion that swept over him.

In the wide stone doorway two women stood framed; one of them a mere girl, of the type than can be seen in any workshop or factory; the other a woman, tall, mature—a woman who did not scrape her feet along the ground as she came across the courtyard, though, like her companion, she wore a restless, hunted look. When someone strode imperiously towards her and drew her past the boundary gate and away from Milly, she yielded passively, as though it were a relief to be saved the trouble of acting for herself.

"You knew I should come, didn't you?" he said, and laughed almost boyishly.

She drew a long breath and looked past him up the road. "Why did you come?" she asked. But she did not listen for his reply. The swish of wind and rain against her face told her that, after all, it was good to be free. Her balance was still further restored by the discovery that trams still ran and London still existed, facts of which she had become incredulous within the silences of Bethel Gaol.

Her eyes wandered to the man at her side, and, dazed though she still felt, his attitude struck her as a little ridiculous. The fact that the policeman evidently regarded him as her sweetheart penetrated her consciousness at the same time.

"Why are you here?" she cried, and pulled her hand away. "I—I don't understand."

"You will when you've had some breakfast," he answered enthusiastically, and bore her with speed across the road. A slight access of sanity made him wave his stick at a passing taxi; it was engaged, and went smoothly on its way.

D 459, resisting an impulse to laugh feebly, struggled to collect her wits. "But we have nothing to do with one another, you and I," she protested, again disengaging her hand. "I'm a discharged criminal, an outcast—"

"I'm an outcast, too," he interrupted. He scanned the horizon fruitlessly for another cab.

She waved his remark aside with the gesture he recalled more vividly than anything else about her. "You an outcast!" she repeated with scorn. "With your detestable Bills for keeping women from earning an honest living! You!"

He stopped looking for a taxi, and led her gently by the arm towards the tram terminus. No tram was waiting, and he made her sit down on the County Council bench while he stood over her, consciously imposing his will upon her scattered senses. This was the moment he had been waiting for, and he meant to enjoy every second of it. And D 459 no longer attempted to resist him. Her spasm of initiative had deserted her. Weakened in mind and body, she could not even think.

"Oh, that's all right about the Bill," he said, thrusting his hands in his pockets. "I've chucked the whole thing, you know. Spoke against the Government at the Second Reading, carried the House right with me; in fact, made 'em withdraw the Bill altogether. What do you say to that, eh?" She said nothing to it, and he went on in a crescendo of self-satisfaction. "Of course I had to offer myself for re-election; constituents were got at and made themselves a nuisance, and all that, you know. Then they outed me, the blighters! So here I am; a nine days' wonder—that's what I am. Mean to say they didn't tell you about it in there?"

In spite of the spiritual regeneration of which he felt magnificently conscious, there still remained enough of the old man in him to make it seem incredible that there should be any spot in the kingdom where his great scene in the House had not been talked about.

"Don't you want to know why I did it?" he asked rather wistfully.

"Why did you?" she forced herself to say, since the question was apparently expected of her.

He plunged into the explanation he had been saving up for her ever since her appearance in the dock had played havoc with his neatly ordered existence. She learned that it was she who had made him see his whole life in a new light. Henceforth, she was told, he would be an outcast like herself; his life was to

be dedicated to the cause of outcasts; he had done with politics and parties; the only way to help the people was to stay outside Parliament, to become one of them, to live their life and share their lot. Did she realise that she had made him see all this, the day she talked of the difference between the true and the false Baghdad? The least she could do was to stand in with him now—with him and the working people whom they both wanted to help.

Again he laughed like an enthusiastic boy. When he saw that she still sat like a stone and said nothing, a little tenderness crept into his flamboyant mood. Poor little woman! he reflected. He had been too abrupt with her; he had not given her time to take it in.

"Of course, from the conventional point of view, we are complete strangers," he said, sitting down beside her on the damp iron bench. "But you and I have done with the conventions, what? For that matter, you know all there is to know about me, being a public man and all that, what? As for you—well, it's true I couldn't find out much about you from the police court people—officials aren't particularly obliging when you're no longer in the political swim. Perhaps they didn't know anything about you? Well, that don't matter to me. I believe in intuition—always did. I've seen you and heard what you had to say, and I've made up my mind about you. Good Lord! The way you stood up to that silly ass Marshalsea was good enough for me! Well, will you do it? Will you throw in your lot with me, for better, for worse, what?"

He paused. She did not say she would throw in her lot with his. She did not say anything at all. She just sat and looked straight in front of her, without moving; she sat so still that she hardly appeared to be breathing.

He went on in his loud energetic voice. "Say the word and I'll take you to my housekeeper right away, and she'll fix you up and give you some breakfast, and we'll talk things over. I'm a practical man, and I like to have things fixed up all square. Then I go ahead, and nobody can stop me."

Again he paused. She showed no sign of wishing to stop him, or, for that matter, to urge him forward. For the first time a suspicion of anxiety crept into his exultant self-confidence. But he swept it away again instantly.

"I don't know what you feel about marriage and those things," he blustered on. "Personally, I feel I've done for ever with conventions of all kinds—of all kinds. Daresay you feel the same, what? However, we can talk all that over and see where we stand."

His breach with the past was so complete that free love seemed an appropriate feature of the splendid lawless future he saw in front of them both. "Well," he concluded, laying his broad ugly hand upon hers as they lay still and white in her lap, "what do you say?"

He thought how he would love to dress her, to teach her to make the most of her wonderful hair, how he would enjoy waiting for her to look up and give him her strange slow smile. Women had hitherto played a very small, and certainly not a romantic part in his life. At first, he had been too jealous of his career to give any woman the choice of spoiling it. Later, the women of the set into which he won his way never quite allowed him to feel at his ease with them. They were always gracious, never friendly. Even the Under-Secretary's daughter—but of her he did not care to think. Apart from her, he could remember many lonely hours when he half wondered if it was all worth while, this sacrifice of the simpler things of life for an adventurous political career. He was sure now that it had not been worth while, and his eyes kindled with something very like passion at the thought of passing the rest of his life with the woman at his side, who bore herself like a queen in her shabby garments. The possibility of her declining to pass the rest of her life with him did not occur to him. He hugged his satisfaction at having had the discrimination to distinguish such a rare diamond in the rough.

D459 sat and looked straight in front of her with aching eyes. She began to hate this man who sat at her side, overwhelming her with his exuberant middle-age when she wanted to be alone, to take her own time to wake up slowly from her

six weeks' sleep. She wished he would get up and go away. Why did he not get up and go away?

But he did not go away; he waited for her to say something. She recognised wearily that her only chance of escape lay in giving him her answer quickly. She could think of no way of putting it that would not seem incredible to him, and to her simply brutal; but she supposed she would have to try.

She drew herself away from him and rose to her feet. "I am sorry, and I thank you," she said slowly. "But our ways are not the same—oh! can't you see they are not a bit the same?" She motioned him on one side as he sprang up, full of protestations. "Please let me speak," she begged, and continued haltingly, finding her words with difficulty. "You see, I am a real outcast, and you don't know what that means. You think you know, but you don't. One election defeat doesn't drive a man into exile—real exile, like ours. You can go back again to-morrow, if you like. And you will go back—oh, but yes, you will! Real outcasts can never go back. They are not romantic and interesting as you think they are; they are dirty and tired, their clothes smell, and their language is filthy. Directly you came up against real outcasts you'd know that you could never belong to them. But I do belong to them, and I love them, because I know what has made them and me what we are. If I came to you I couldn't spend my life fighting for them, fighting for people like—like—"

She stopped abruptly, and a look of bitter dismay crossed her face and drove out all its gentle refinement. "Milly!" she cried shrilly. "Milly! Oh, my dear, my dear, where are you?"

A stab of pain shot through her as she realised her neglect of Milly. This philanderer had taken advantage of her dazed condition, had kept her dawdling over midsummer madness while she forgot Milly—Milly, the first human being she had ever wanted to love as a person, and not merely as a Christian neighbour.

She looked wildly up and down the street. There was no sign of the girl. Other people got into the trams that came and went. Other people lingered at street corners, or bustled about their morning affairs; but among them was no Milly. "Milly, Milly!" she called despairingly, and began to run back towards the quieter street, where the prison entrance was.

When, cursing the unknown creature who was responsible for spoiling his great moment, Arlington came up with the woman in black, he found her questioning the policeman frantically. She turned round, her eyes full of reproach.

"He says she waited several minutes after you took me across the road. And then, when I didn't come back, a man came along and persuaded her to go off for a drink. But she waited for me first—she waited for me first!"

Mechanically he followed her as she ran down the street, apparently quite distracted. All the glamour had gone from his adventure. The true Baghdad, he reflected sourly, was as great a frost as the one he had thrown away at her bidding. He added the stale comment that women were all alike. They made a fellow smash up his whole life for them, and then chucked them for some trifle not worth a ha'penny damn. *Milly*, indeed!

An empty taxi came slowly by. He asked himself savagely why he didn't hail it and cut the whole damn show. But he did not hail it.

D 459 had vanished round the corner of the road. When he followed her and saw her again, she was forging her way laboriously through a crowd that had gathered outside a particularly unattractive looking beer house. From the heart of the jostling throng came hoarse cries in a woman's voice. A policeman's helmet could be seen bobbing up and down near the storm centre; another man in uniform was coming across the road to his rescue, and an Inspector strolled slowly down from the police station at the far end of the road.

The crowd swayed and parted in two, just as Arlington reached the spot. Directly facing him as it divided was Milly, struggling in the grasp of a policeman. Her hair had come down, her blouse was torn open to the waist; her face, distorted with rage, seemed to him hardly human. She looked as if she had been drinking.

"Lemme get at him, the dirty tyke!" she screamed, in her coarse, ugly voice. "He took my thruppence, all I got, and kicked me when I arst him for it. Why don't you cop *him*, 'stead of me? Lemme go, you! Ah—h!"

A string of horrible oaths ended in a sickening shriek of pain as the constable, perhaps new to his job, perhaps wanting to bring it to an end, twisted her arm. It was at that moment that Gerald Arlington, receding involuntarily from the revolting scene, caught sight again of the woman in black.

Through the jumble of heads he suddenly saw her face. A blaze of fury lit up the tired eyes when Milly screamed. He had never seen such a look of concentrated hate in the face of any woman, and it shocked him inexpressibly. Then the crowd closed round her again, and shouts and cries went up at something he could not see. Another moment went by. He stood fascinated, unable to escape. The people surged apart once more, and in the hideous gap he saw D 459, looking, he thought,

more like a wild beast than a woman, raining furious blows upon the policeman who held Milly by the arm. Then the second constable came up, and the crowd scattered fleetly as both women were taken up the street towards the police station.

The man who had laid his future at the feet of one of them stood looking blankly after the sordid little procession. There were several things he might have done, but he did none of them. He just stood there, staring up the street with eyes full of misery. In his ears rang the voice of the woman who spoke with a throb in her throat: "Directly you came up against real outcasts, you would know that you could never belong to them!"

A tram driver, about to start his car, saw him standing there, and followed his gaze up the street.

"Friends of yours, sir?" he asked with a jocular wink.

Arlington laughed hastily, and boarded the tram.

THE END.

THE HOME IN PARLIAMENT

Because the home-loving woman so often thinks that Parliament is no concern of hers, and, because as a matter of fact Parliament has a great deal more to do with the home than you imagine.

And because, during the coming Parliamentary Session in particular, Parliament will be discussing and deciding a number of questions which every good housekeeper must understand:

For these reasons you will find, every week on this page an article about one home question with which Parliament is concerned, showing just how the home comes into Parliament's discussions and debates.

You will find this article because the "Woman's Leader" knows that only the woman who understands how Parliament is dealing with her affairs can be a really responsible citizen and a really reliable home-keeper.

MILK OH!

Now, if this article were intended for male readers I should begin like this: "It is of the very first importance that we should realise that the health of the coming generation depends, in the first instance on a plentiful, rich, clean, and efficient milk supply. Milk is the chief, almost the only form of nourishment for the young child and, unlike the ordinary food commodities, there is no satisfactory substitute for it." But I am writing primarily to women, so that I need not enlarge on a fact with which your own personal experience has made you familiar, and can content myself with having merely recalled it to your mind. Let us then go on to consider what is wrong with the present supply of milk in this country. First of all, what about the quantity? Is there enough to go round? The answer was "No" before the war, and it is much more emphatically "No" to-day. Five years ago, if the total amount of milk produced in this country had been shared out equally among the whole population, women and children alike, the ration per head would have been half a pint a day. If the same thing were done now the ration would be only quarter of a pint a day. And the quantities given as absolutely necessary for children in an Order of the Ministry of Food are one and a half pints for children under eighteen months and one pint for children under five years, while common sense tells us that even mere adults require half a pint daily at the very least. Now this surely is a very serious matter, for it means that the great mass of the poorer population are not getting enough milk for a healthy existence.

But what about the quality? It would be some consolation perhaps to know that if our country did not produce enough milk for its children it at least produced the best. Unfortunately this is not the case. Perhaps it will surprise you to learn that the milk we consider good enough for our hospitals would be called "Grade C Milk" in America; that is to say, milk that has too many bacteria to be fit for any ordinary domestic purposes and must only be used for manufacture or cooking!

And lastly, what about the price? Well, we know something about that! Or have we grown so used to paying 5³/_d. or 6^d. a pint that we have forgotten that once in days not so long gone by we used only to pay 1³/_d.?

Now let us try and find out some causes which underlie the present insufficiency, inferior quality, and high price of our national milk supply. There is no doubt that as regards quantity the kind of food on which our cows are fed has a great deal to do with it. Another cause that makes for insufficiency of supply is our haphazard methods of distribution. Often you will find

that the milk produced in one country area, instead of going direct to the nearest towns, travels for miles across country to other places, or even if it does go to the neighbouring towns travels thither by roundabout routes. It seems a great pity that there is such a large army of retailers, all working independently, to bring our milk from the wholesale depôts to our doors. Some of them will at times have surplus supplies that are thrown away, while others are unable to let their customers have as much as they want. This slipshod way of distributing milk also largely accounts for its inferior quality. You will understand that in order to maintain the cleanliness and freshness of the milk it must be got from the farm to the home as speedily as possible; but under our present system—or rather lack of system—it spends much time in trains and railway stations and depôts, and that it often gathers dust and germs, and by the time it reaches its destination it has certainly lost something of its first freshness. We need, too, a really efficient system of inspection and of testing milk at central depôts to avoid any that is contaminated in any way ever being sold to us.

And now as to the price. In the first place, this too must be accounted for by the uneconomical methods of distribution. There are too many wholesale dairymen and too many retail dairymen working in competition. The fact that all through the war Co-operative Societies have been able to sell milk more cheaply than the private retailer shows how this adds to the price. Other causes of the high price are the increased railway freights and the high cost of foodstuffs for the cows. Also, it must be remembered, that the Government has felt it necessary to fix a high maximum price for milk in order to encourage farmers to make more of it and increase the national supply. It really seems a vicious circle. To get more milk we must pay more, and the more we have to pay the less we can afford to buy!

Well, when Parliament comes to tackle this problem—and tackle it it will surely have to very soon—it will have no easy task. What it will do we cannot say. But one thing seems certain—there will have to be increased production and more unity in the methods of distribution. Whether we shall achieve these ends by a system of subsidies, more control, and general patching up of our present methods, or whether, as some people urge, we shall make the whole milk supply a national and municipal concern, owned by the country and managed by a central board in conjunction with municipal authorities, remains to be seen.

K. GIBBERD.

"THE WOMAN'S LEADER" IN LITERATURE.

BOOKS AT RANDOM.

The Holiness of Books.

Among the very first things that a child should be taught in the nursery is the holiness of books: in the very bookish atmosphere in which Fuze was brought up a natural reverence for books was thought far more important in little children than cleanliness of body or sanctity of soul. We were one of those rambling Irish households in which all the principal ingredients of life are left to Chance, though the final, humane seasoning is for some illogical reason very carefully considered according to an ancestral receipt. A medicine bottle is said to have strayed into our drawing-room one day labelled in a parent's handwriting "STRYCHNINE (I think)"; but my word! if a child used slang or was guilty of a false concord in speech, then the tears would flow! Among books we youngsters moved as among intact Portland vases, and to this day, inhuman though it sounds, I would far prefer to see a child pulling the wings off flies than tearing pages from the most unnecessary and worthless book that can be imagined. As for seeing a person, often a so-called person of taste, turning over the leaves of a book from the bottom of the page, holding this between unwashed finger and thumb and moodily dog's-earing, tearing open uncut pages with the forefinger, turning down a corner to mark a day's instalment of reading, laying the open volume face downwards on a greasy table, throwing it carelessly on a chair so that it drops, on all fours as it were, on the floor, pulling out fly-leaves, under-lining, scribbling "Very true!" or "I entirely disagree with this" in blue chalk in its margin, pressing orchids and other succulents in it between inefficient sheets of blotting-paper, letting it warp in heat, letting it bulge in the damp—all these horrors attempted cold-bloodedly by professed friends of mine and before my very eyes are worse torture than the Devil's Toothpick. For there is anyhow something satisfactorily constructive in getting your teeth stopped, in spite of the dentist's "Very little pain" and his stock questions on the prospects of winter sport in Switzerland.

Editions-de-Luxe.

Coupled with this human feeling for the sufferings of books one finds among sensible people a dislike of books too good to use, elaborate bindings which ought really to be in a bank safe, but call out from the bookshelf: "We are uncut, unopened, strictly limited first editions-de-luxe printed on hand-made paper and signed by our world-famous authors—*procul, o procul este, profani!*; in English, "Hands off! We have never been looked into; to do so would be to knock two hundred pounds at least off our auction-room value. Now go away!" What is the good of books like that, except to sell at once and buy Government linen with the proceeds? I like the story of the old chap who was enlarging in a library on the value of books, saying they were friends who never failed him whatever his mood and did not sour with time. The reply he got from his audience was that he certainly acted up to his principle by never cutting his friends! Booksellers miss the point of this story; they are so obsessed with the fictitious value they put on their wares that they find the old man's action or inaction most praiseworthy.

Publisher and Bookseller.

But what use can books ever be but to be read with pleasure, to be left clean for reading again, and to look workmanlike on a shelf. Why books are published uncut beats me: one of the biggest London publishers once explained to me that he only

did it for the sake of the booksellers; and that actually if he really cut the pages in his factory he would save I can't remember how many hundred pounds a year by sending the shavings back again to pulp into paper. This publisher blamed everything on the bookseller: the bookseller must have uncut pages, and the bookseller, he went on, must have so many thousand words in any novel he offers for sale, even if half are padding; so many poems, irrespective of quality, in a book of poetry; so much tooling on the covers of a "presentation" leather book; the bookseller insists on paper wrappers, on certain types, on certain colours for book-covers, on this, on that, and on the other. He got so technical that I couldn't follow him far beyond this point, but had a feeling that the bookseller blames it all on the book-buying public, as surely as the public, the few who mind, blame it back on the publisher. Anyhow, this vicious circle gets more vicious every year, so that now to go into an ordinary shop where new books are sold and expect to see even one of them in a plain, strong, unwrapped, cheerful, dignified, properly-lettered, un-pomegranate-and-lotus-ed binding is to expect snow on August Bank Holiday. Yet a hundred years ago a badly-turned-out book in a decent class bookshop must have been almost impossible. What is responsible for the relapse? Can it originate in the academic ideals of our ironically-named Art Schools? Presentation books are hateful without exception; they look so smart on the little table at Prize Giving, or when one marches up amid the encouraging noises of the school and takes them wrapped in tissue paper from the hands of benignant authority; but once opened at leisure they prove in spite of their full-morocco and gilt edges to be the very dullest of duds, printed on what is obviously the cheapest newspaper, with unreadable print, indigestible literary contents, and always some school motto stamped on them or "awarded to" on the fly-leaf that makes them unreturnable to the bindery where they started.

Mrs. or Elizabeth Barrett Browning?

I was feeling like this in a bookshop recently when I picked up a book called "Mrs. E. B. Browning's Poetical Works." The format was execrable; the book contained, hiding the author's really good poems, a great mass of her raked-up worst; but most of all I disliked the "Mrs. Browning." Good heavens! must a great writer be remembered even after death only as someone else's wife, just because she happens to be a woman? It becomes all the worse when one remembers that Elizabeth Barrett was a famous poetess when Robert Browning was an all but unknown and not very eligible young man, who had published an unintelligible poem called "Sordello," of which a great critic had said that the only two lines that he could understand were the first and last, but they were both lies:—

"Who will may hear Sordello's story told,"

and

"Who would has heard Sordello's story told."

Their romantic marriage, about which nonsense is always being written, was a considerable condescension on the lady's part. So, musing, I waited for the shopman's back to be turned, and picking up a limp morocco "Robert Browning" from the gift-book tray scored out the offending title on the paper wrapper (I hate paper wrappers) and wrote instead:—

"The Poetical Works of Mr. Robert—Barrett.

How do you like that for a change?"

and strolled unconcernedly and contentedly from the premises.

FUZE.

"THE WOMAN'S LEADER" IN DRAMA.

FANTASY AND THE SUBURBS.

"The Fold" at the Queen's Theatre.

One rarely finds a novel in the kitchen in which nine-tenths of the characters are not titled. I suppose it is the same principle which makes the Marchioness Townsend lay the scene of her play in Acacia Villa, Tufnell Avenue, Bayswater, S.E. But the scene in Acacia Villa is more like the real thing than ancestral halls in which the kitchen-maid spends her mental evenings out. At times it is very like indeed. This is partly due to the setting—the stuffed birds in glass cases, the suite of chairs, the sideboard, the piano with the draped back. It is also largely due to the actors, especially to Mr. Sidney Paxton and Mrs. A. B. Tapping as Mr. and Mrs. Perkins, the Nonconformist father and mother-in-law. Mr. Perkins preparing for evening chapel, sorting out a set of black hymn-books and putting his slippers to the fire against his return. Mr. Perkins on his return from chapel putting on his slippers before the fire amid pious yawns. Mr. Perkins beating time with closed eyes while Edie "gives them a tune on the harmonium" is a singularly life-like and little caricatured performance. Mrs. Tapping as Mrs. Perkins is a little more grotesque, a little nearer caricature; but on the whole she is the worthy mate of Mr. Perkins—a real inhabitant of Bayswater.

This is the fold in which the young couple, Edward and Edith Gibbs, are shut. Edith is the pretty, dowdy daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Perkins. Edward Gibbs is the wandering sheep who does not love the fold, and since he is played by Mr. Godfrey Tearle he is of course a fine, handsome young man. He is an elementary school master. But though wearing the clothes, speaking the language, and living the life of Bayswater, he has a soul above it. He can speak French, Spanish, and Italian. He plays the piano—not hymn tunes—on Sunday, and refuses to go to chapel. One can see that he will not remain long in the "fold."

He does not. He makes the acquaintance of a Russian dancer, who leads him on most shamelessly. He has three suits made in London, and goes up to town every evening by the 6.20 train—to the horror of Bayswater. In the third act we see him in the heart of Bohemia—at an evening party given by the Russian dancer. The room is brilliantly decorated in a most Russian manner. The attire of the ladies is equally gorgeous and scanty. The men consist of a Russian prince who appears to "keep" the Russian dancer, a playwright in a plum-coloured suit using multi-coloured language, a baronet M.P. who has strayed in for no apparent reason, and Edward Gibbs. Although Edward Gibbs is in immaculate evening dress, and the distinguished favourite of his hostess, he does not seem to be enjoying himself very much. It is really a very boring party. Occasionally one of the ladies sings or performs a dance, or the poet breaks into a monologue about all the colours of the rainbow. For the rest they do nothing but drink champagne and smoke cigarettes. Edward Gibbs does nothing but pour out champagne and light the cigarettes for the company. Really he might as well be singing hymns at Bayswater. He appears to feel this himself, for when the Russian dancer suggests that he should leave his wife and live entirely with her, he refuses and beats a hasty retreat to Bayswater.

So far, except for a few incidental improbabilities, the situation is an interesting and not unreal one. The hero is placed between the dreary Puritanism of Bayswater and a Bohemia

equally artificial and dreary. Many modern young people find themselves in much the same position. It often takes them years to see that a reasonable life lies far from either of these places, years more to find it. The Marchioness Townsend evades the problem by the introduction of a *deus ex machina* in the person of the Baronet M.P., who drives down to Bayswater on purpose to ask Edward to become his secretary at a salary of £800 a year. At the same moment he discovers that his wife, the apparently commonplace daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Perkins, writes exquisite poetry, which has already been accepted by an editor. So the new life begins neither in Bayswater nor Bohemia—but in Brackenbury Hall.

"Uncle Ned" at the St. James's.

It seems inevitable that in a few days the whole caste will be in bed. Mr. Ainley has a very bad cold, and Uncle Ned is one of those affectionate characters who cannot talk to a woman without putting his arm round her waist, or to a man without holding his button-hole. Perhaps Mr. Claude Rains, the detective, and Mr. G. W. Anson, the butler, will escape—otherwise the whole delightful company is doomed. Not that his cold in any way interferes with Mr. Ainley's performance. If anything, it makes him more interesting. A hero, especially of the very manly type, is never so interesting as when slightly indisposed. Witness the exquisite passage where Sir Charles Grandison is obliged to take a sniff at Lady Clementina's salts. Mr. Ainley does not, of course, need salts, but he has a series of beautifully coloured handkerchiefs, which are nearly as moving.

Mr. Ainley's is not, however, really a sentimental performance. On the whole, he and Mr. Randle Ayrton, the rough diamond of a father who is finally polished up, make a brave stand against sentimentality. Again and again they pull the author out of that bog of treacle into which, if left to himself, he would constantly wallow. They cannot, of course, keep him entirely out of it. But everything that good acting and, to use a favourite word of the author, "a sense of humour" can do to serve him is done. No point is lost, and many are made in the acting. And the dialogue has a certain lightness and wit of its own.

One expects Mr. Ainley to be good, and Mr. Randle Ayrton. One expects Miss Irene Rorke to be a good deal better than she was as the governess heroine. The real surprise of the evening was the acting of Miss Edna Best, as the flapper. As a rule, a flapper on the stage is a woman of about twenty-five with her hair in a pigtail and a habit of jumping about and clapping her hands as insignia of youth. Miss Edna Best is really young. Her voice has the ringing high-pitched freshness of the girl of fifteen. When she skips across the room one feels that it is her natural mode of progression, and she never claps her hands. She acts very well, too. She is perfectly natural on the stage, fearless, absorbed in her part, and at times really comic. In Mumsee she had a part a trifle too young for her, and rather vulgarly and unpleasantly written. Even there she was attractive—but now she has a part which entirely suits her, and the effect is surprisingly delightful. It is very pleasant to see an actress so young and so promising, with, it is to be hoped, a long and brilliant career before her. What parts will she be taking in ten years' time? Let her look about her and be careful.



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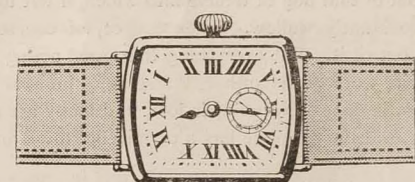
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NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS AND FROM OUR SOCIETIES.

PARLIAMENTARY.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILLS.

Our members are aware that there are at present three Criminal Law Amendment Bills which are being referred to a Committee of the House of Lords. These are those introduced by Lord Sandhurst, Lord Beauchamp, and the Bishop of London respectively. That proposed by the Bishop of London embodies those points from other Bills which are comparatively non-contentious, and which have been supported by many important women's organisations.

The four most important points in the Bill are as follows:—
1. That the age of consent should be raised from sixteen to eighteen.
2. (a) That the plea of reasonable cause to believe that a girl is under age should no longer be accepted as a defence for her defilement.
(b) That the limit of time during which action shall be taken shall be increased to twelve months after the commission of the offence.
3. That the consent on the part of a young person under sixteen should be no defence in cases of indecent assault.

Lord Sandhurst's Bill includes, in addition to certain of these clauses, two important clauses which the N.U.S.E.C. in common with other women's organisations feels to be very dangerous. One is Clause 3, which empowers a court to order a young girl to be detained in a rescue home until she is nineteen. The other is Clause 5, which makes the communication of venereal disease an offence.

The objection to these clauses is obvious. First, it puts much too much power in the hands of the court and is directed against girls only. The second amounts to an extension of the notorious Regulation 40 D to the whole population.

Further information concerning these Bills will be given later. In the meantime Societies are urged to obtain copies of the Bills and to study them.

A meeting is being organised by the Criminal Law Amendment Committee of the Y.W.C.A. on May 5th at 4.45 p.m. at the Central Hall, Westminster, to which all members are invited, in support of the Bishop of London's Bill. It is hoped that as many people as possible will attend this meeting.

OXFORD SUMMER SCHOOL.

Arrangements have now been made to hold the Summer School at Ruskin College, Oxford, during the fortnight from Saturday, August 28th, to Saturday, September 11th. Ruskin College will hold about forty students, and the rooms will be allotted in order of application. Both men and women are eligible as students, but preference will naturally be given to members of our own and affiliated societies and their friends. Others who are not our members but who are specially interested in the programme will be admitted, and additional accommodation in outside lodgings will be provided if required.

PROGRAMME OF LECTURES.

The syllabus presents some new and interesting features, and is intended to meet the needs of those interested in problems of citizenship. It also aims at providing a short intensive course of training for women who wish to qualify for the new opportunities of work opened out by recent legislation, including the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act.

Short courses have been arranged on the following subjects:—
1. League of Nations.
2. The State and the Citizen: including Infant Welfare; Elementary and Continuation Education; the Education of the Adult; Housing; Public Health; Insurance.

3. The Economic Independence of Women:
 - A. *The Economics of Maternity:* including the Problem of Population; National Family Endowment; Widows' Pensions; the Unmarried Mother.
 - B. *Women as Producers:* including Women in Industry and the Professions; Equal Pay and Equal Opportunity.
4. Some Aspects of the Administration of Justice: including Psychology of Punishment; Penal Reform; the Juvenile Delinquent; the Woman J.P.; the Woman Probation Officer, Policewoman, etc.
5. The Economics of Domestic Life: including Problems of Expenditure and Consumption; Domestic Services; "Costing" in the Home; Communal House-keeping.

There will also be Classes in Public Speaking, Canvassing and Election Work. Ample opportunity will be given for discussion, and debates will be arranged on certain questions where the opinion of women is sharply divided.

Officers of our Societies will be able to discuss problems of internal organisation with experienced workers.

An open meeting and reception will be held on Saturday evening, August 28th, when Professor Gilbert Murray hopes to speak. Other speakers and lecturers who have already agreed provisionally to be present are: Miss Berry, Miss K. D. Courtney, Miss S. Margery Fry, Sir Sydney Olivier, LL.D., K.C.M.G., Miss Picton-Turbervill, O.B.E.; Miss Eleanor F. Rathbone, C.C. J.P.; Mrs. Ross, Honorary Secretary, Women's Local Government Society; E. D. Simon, Esq., C.C. (Manchester Housing Committee); Mrs. E. D. Simon; Miss Rosamond Smith; Mrs. Stocks, B.Sc.; Mrs. Oliver Strachey; Miss Helen Ward. It is hoped to secure the names of other representative and experienced men and women.

A preliminary syllabus has been issued and may be had on application to Headquarters, and a final syllabus with full details of time-table will be ready about the middle of May.

AMUSEMENTS.

Arrangements will be made for expeditions, tennis, swimming, boating, &c.

FEE.

The school fee for the full course will be £1 10s. to members of our affiliated societies and £2 to others. Special arrangements will be made for those who come for a shorter period. The charge for board and lodging at Ruskin College is £2 a week; in outside lodgings according to arrangement.

Residents in Oxford will be admitted to single lectures for a charge of 1s. 6d.

SCHOLARSHIPS.

A small number of scholarships will be open to members of Societies affiliated to the N.U.S.E.C. Full particulars of the terms on which these can be competed for can be obtained from the Directors.

DIRECTORS.

The School will be under the direction of Miss Macadam (formerly Director of Economic Studies at the Liverpool University School of Social Science), Mrs. Hubback (formerly Director of Economic Studies at Newnham College, Cambridge), and Mrs. Stocks, B.Sc., St. John's House, Oxford.

APPLICATIONS.

All applications for information or with regard to membership should be addressed to the Directors, N.U.S.E.C. Summer School, Evelyn House, 62, Oxford Street, London, W.1.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE NORTHAMPTON BY-ELECTION.

MADAM,—Your correspondent (p. 200), writing on the Northampton by-election says: "Miss Margaret Bondfield . . . scarcely touches upon the question of high prices and food control, upon which the whole issue of this by-election rests."

To begin with Miss Bondfield dealt very effectively in her speeches with high prices, entering into detail but rightly seeing that it is not merely a question of control or the elimination of the profiteer but is linked up with our attitude to Russia and the ruin of Central Europe. Further, it is also entirely inaccurate to say that this question is the whole issue at Northampton. An election just now cannot be confined to any single issue, but must be fought on the whole record, the policy and the constitution of the Coalition.

Your correspondent cannot have seen the very effective shop window under Miss Bondfield's committee room in which were displayed articles of food and other commodities with the rise in price marked on each. When such a remarkable woman candidate as Miss Bondfield comes forward it is discouraging to find in a woman's paper such a misleading and disparaging criticism of her.

ARTHUR PONSONBY.

MADAM,—In her anxiety to be "non-party," your correspondent, "C.M." scarcely does justice to the policy of the Labour Party in running Margaret Bondfield in opposition to Mr. McCurdy. There really are two points to bear in mind: one, comparatively small, is whether Mr. McCurdy is the best man to be Food Controller; the other involves the whole policy of the Government, domestic and foreign. With regard to the first point upon which your correspondent, following Mr. McCurdy, says, "the whole issue of this by-election rests," the Labour Party does not consider that Mr. McCurdy has the nerve to withstand the powerful interests which combine to keep prices up, and some who have worked with him actually say they would prefer the "Tory Peer" with whom he comically threatened us if we rejected him. They say the Tory Peer is both an abler and a stronger man.

But the Labour Party refuses to accept Mr. McCurdy's limitation of the issues and in so doing it takes the same view as Mr. Lloyd George in a recent speech. The by-elections may be only an imperfect idea of the mind of the electorate, but they are the only constitutional means by which the people can challenge the policy of the Government. Let those who reprehend "direct action" for political purposes remember that when they try to empty the Labour policy of meaning.

The Labour Party has always advocated food control from the earliest days of the war. But now this is not enough. We want real peace in Europe and the re-establishment of production and trade; we want immediate revision of the Peace Treaties, towards this end; we remember the part Mr. McCurdy played in justifying the Secret Agreements, and we see the harm that has come of them; so we want him retired. We are quite aware of the importance of capital in industry; we think the importance of the individual capitalist has been over-rated and we should like to eliminate him.

I am well aware that I am here stating the Labour Party policy, and that many of your readers won't agree with it. But it has a bearing on prices, as well as on many more important things.

H. M. SWANWICK
(Vice-Chairman, Richmond Labour Party).

A RURAL DISTRICT COUNCILLOR.

MADAM,—Will you grant me space to correct a statement in your "Notes and News" of the 1st inst., under the title "A Rural District Councillor?" You state that "these Councils are composed of village representatives," and you draw the conclusion that this limits the choice of candidates too narrowly.

It is true that each Councillor represents a parish, but he or she may reside in any part of the rural district; so the village is not the unit "called upon to provide a resident (or even nominally resident) representative."

In the interest of the candidature of women as Rural District Councillors, may I ask you to give publicity to this correction?

ANNIE LEIGH BROWNE.

THE WOMEN'S DEGREE STATUTE.

MADAM,—In spite of Miss Levett's invitation to "Fuze" to make further allusion to the Women's Degree Statute, I think he had better leave it alone till he understands the exact position. The Statute cannot now be further amended, but it has to come before Congregation and Convocation and cannot pass before May 11th at the earliest. It will not come into operation till October 7th. It is not thought likely that there will be any serious opposition. The two amendments proposed were thrown out by very large majorities and gave an opportunity to the friends of the movement to show their strength in a "whip" signed by nearly one hundred members of Congregation. The general feeling seems to be that of acquiescing in the inevitable. There is one curious statement made by "Fuze" which should be corrected. The Final Honour School of Theology, which qualifies for a degree in Arts, is open to men and women without any requirement of Holy Orders. The degrees of B.D. and D.D. were, at the date when the Women's Degree Statute was finally drafted, open only to persons in Priests' Orders, and naturally these degrees were not included in those to which it was proposed to admit women. The special conditions of admission to degrees in Divinity having now been entirely altered, there is no reason why women should be prevented from having them, but it is bad policy for the supporters of a Statute to move

amendments. It is quite easy to get changes made at a later time. Many matters of importance to former and present students are as yet undecided and cannot be brought before the University till the Statute has passed its final stage. They will be dealt with by decrees, which will probably be numerous, as the fitting of the Women's Societies into the University is an elaborate business and needs great care. It is not at present possible to say how the University will deal with women who are qualified by residence and examinations for the Parliamentary vote though not for the degree, but those women who have not finished their "Groups" should follow the example of an old pupil of my own, who is a headmistress, and complete their qualification as soon as possible. Full residence will certainly be required, and women who wish to take a degree should ascertain early next term (not during the Vacation) if they have kept it. The degree fees are £7 10s. for the B.A., and, in addition, £12 for the M.A. The matriculation fee, which will probably also be required, is £3 10s. All applications to take a degree must be made through the applicant's society, and not direct to the University, as the permission of the Society, technically the Grace, must be obtained before a degree can be conferred.

ANNIE M. A. A. ROGERS.

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITALS.

MADAM,—In your issue of last week, I notice that you refer to the Scottish Women's Hospitals as having been initiated by the N.U.W.S.S. This is a mistake. The S. W. H. were initiated and administered by the Scottish Federation of Women's Suffrage Societies. The Societies forming the Federation are affiliated to the N.U.W.S.S., and many English Societies gave the S. W. H. generous and welcome help, but in no sense of the word can the N.U.W.S.S. be said to have initiated the S. W. H.

NELLIE M. HUNTER, Chairman, S. W. H.

COMING EVENTS.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION.

The following meetings will be held on the subject of The League of Nations.
APRIL 11.
 In the Carlton Picture Palace, Walthamstow.
 Speakers: C. Jesson, Esq., M.P., L. C. Johnson, Esq., M.P. 8 p.m.
APRIL 13.
 In the Congregational Church, Broadway, Hammersmith.
 Speakers: F. Green, Esq., M.P., Henry Foreman, Esq., M.P., Sir William Bull, M.P.
 Chair: The Vicar of St. Matthew's Church. 8 p.m.
APRIL 13.
 At 30, Queen's Road, Wimbledon.
 Speaker: Miss Rosamond Smith. 8 p.m.
APRIL 13.
 Meeting organised by the Women Citizens' Association at Bolton.
 Speaker: The Rev. F. Hall. 7.30 p.m.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF INEBRIETY.

APRIL 13.
 The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in the Rooms of the Medical Society of London, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, W.1. Council Meeting at 5.30 p.m. Tea and Coffee at 3.45 p.m. At 4 p.m. a discussion will be opened.
 Subject: "Analytical Psychology in Alcoholism."
 Speaker: Maurice Nicoll, Esq., B.A., M.B., M.R.C.S.
 Each Member and Associate is at liberty to introduce visitors.
 For particulars concerning membership (subscription, 5s.), apply to T. N. Kelynaek, Hon. Sec., 139, Harley Street, W.1.

BRITISH DOMINIONS WOMEN CITIZENS' UNION (Indian Section).

APRIL 11.
 In the Minerva Cafe, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
 Speakers: Mrs. Abbott (Sec., I.W.S.A.), Mrs. Patrick Villiers-Stuart, Miss H. C. Newcomb (Hon. Sec., B.D.W.C.U.). 4.45 to 7 p.m.
 Discussion. Tea, 4.45 to 5.15 p.m.
 For admission card, apply to Miss Margaret Hodge, Hon. Sec., 13, Temple Fortune Lane, N.W.4.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FRANCHISE CLUB.

APRIL 11.
 At 9, Grafton Street, Piccadilly, W.1.
 Subject: "The Work of the Police Court."
 Speaker: Lord Walsingham (Barrister-at-Law).
 Chair: Mr. Percy Handcock, M.A. (Barrister-at-Law). 8.15 p.m.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

APRIL 11.
 In the Minerva Cafe, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1.
 Public Meeting to discuss the New Education Act
 Speaker: Mrs. Tanner. 3 p.m.

THE EFFICIENCY CLUB.

APRIL 15.
 In the Conference Hall, Central Hall, Westminster.
 Lecture and Discussion.
 Subject: "The Pelman System."
 Speaker: Mr. T. Sharper Knowlson (Director of Instruction at the Pelman Institute).
 Chair: The Honble. Gabrielle Borthwick. 7 p.m.

"THE WOMAN'S LEADER," APRIL 16th.

The first instalment of "Reactions," a Serial Story by Rose Macaulay, will appear in "The Woman's Leader" for April 16th. Order early from your Newsagent!



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THE DOMESTIC SERVICE PROBLEM

There are readers who for years past have obtained domestic help through our small advertisement columns. Why? Because we can supply them with the kind of service which is so difficult to find at an ordinary Registry Office. See page 236.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

THE PIONEER CLUB, 9, Park-place, St. James's, S.W.1. Subscriptions: Town, £4 4s.; Country, £3 3s.; Professional, £3 3s. The entrance fee is suspended for the time being.

ON THURSDAYS IN APRIL, beginning Thursday, April 8th, Miss E. Picton-Turbervill, O.B.E., will preach at St. Botolph's Church, Bishopsgate, at 1.15 p.m. St. Botolph's Church is one minute's walk from Liverpool-street Station.

ELLOWSHIP SERVICES, Kensington Town Hall, Sunday, April 11th, 3.15 p.m., Dr. Percy Dearmer, "Five-Quarters," 6.30 p.m., Miss Maude Royden, "Christianity in the Twentieth Century." Master of Music: Mr. Martin Shaw.

BIRTH.

THODAY.—To Professor and Mrs. Thoday, at Cape Town, on March 14th, a son. Both well.

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