

the
Woman Today

A STONE CAME ROLLING
FIELDING BURKE
POVERTY LEGALIZED
ELINORE M. HERRICK

FRANCIS J. GORMAN
GRACE LUMPKIN
DOROTHY D. BROMLEY

APRIL 1936

10 CENTS

the Woman Today

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In 1928 Fielding Burke wrote her farewell to literature and devoted herself wholeheartedly to social work in North Carolina. Although born of an old Virginia family, Miss Burke saw the needs of the South, and felt herself drawn into the struggle of the workers. She became intensely interested in their economic problems, and organized relief for strikers. The desire to speak up for the oppressed workers impelled her to write "A Stone Came Rolling" which was recently published by Longmans, Green & Co.

Elinore Morehouse Herrick, whose article on the New York Minimum Wage Law we print in this issue, led the campaign and conducted the lobby at Albany which resulted in the passage of this law, and was a member of the first Minimum Wage Board created under the Act. Mrs. Herrick gained her understanding of labor problems from the viewpoint of the workers by going to work in a rayon factory fifteen years ago. In 1927 Mrs. Herrick packed up her two children and returned to college to complete a course interrupted by marriage. She graduated in 1929 from Antioch College, majoring in economics. She was appointed Regional Director for the National Labor Relations Board in New York, Connecticut and New Jersey, and as labor adviser has drafted various codes. She is Chairman of the City Mediation Board, and enjoys the reputation of being the outstanding woman mediator in labor disputes in this country.

Miss Louise Thompson is a well-known and devoted worker among Negro women. Miss Thompson was elected a member of the Women's Committee of the National Negro Congress held in Chicago in February of this year.

Three years ago Grace Lumpkin was awarded the "Maxim Gorky Prize" for the best proletarian novel of the year, "To Make My Bread." Recently she wrote another book, "A Sign for Cain," published by Lee Furman, which was widely acclaimed by the critics. Miss Lumpkin grew up in the South among the scenes she describes and is rapidly gaining recognition as an interpreter of the New South, of the Negroes and poor white sharecroppers.

Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, whose column in the New York World-Telegram is one of the most popular women's columns, hails from Chicago, where she graduated from Northwestern University, class of 1918, cum laude. She has contributed articles on social, feminist, scientific and political subjects to the best magazines, and has gained a wide following among men as well as women.

Theresa Wolfson has had a long and distinguished record both as a labor writer and instructor. She is the author of "The Woman Worker and the Trade Unions" and other books dealing with women in industry.

The movement of housewives against high meat prices in the summer of 1935 in New York City not only gave impetus to housewives in other cities and states to do something about reducing high prices, but was the pioneer movement out of which came a new method in the strivings of consumers to lower the high cost of living—namely, the consumers' strike. Miss Rose Nelson, chairman of the Women's Councils of Greater New York, was among the foremost leaders of that New York movement.

Ruth Gannett did the very inviting vegetables which appear on our food page in this and in our first issue. She has illustrated two books, one "Sweet Land," by her husband, Lewis Gannett, and another, John Steinbeck's "Tortilla Flats."

Frances Wills took her M.A. at a New York college, and has taught home economics. She often lectures to nurses on diet and infant feeding. At present she is writing a book popularizing vitamins.

Mrs. Charles Lundquist is the chairman of the Farmer-Labor Women's Federation of the State of Minnesota. Mrs. Lundquist is doing pioneer work in arousing self-confidence in women to be leaders in the political life of the country. The many clubs of the Farmer-Labor Association in Minnesota where women are active owe their success to a great extent to the splendid work and leadership of this devoted leader among women.

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BOOKS

By Caroline Marx

SOME years ago—about seven or eight—there was an extraordinary invasion of these shores by English and European authors who came to tell us what was wrong with our country, and particularly with our women and their culture. They toured the women's clubs all over the country, making all sorts of disparaging assertions. Some of them may have been true, many were preposterous. Some were irritating and some were downright insulting. It must be admitted that they got away with it for awhile—their audiences seemed to enjoy spending money to hear themselves belittled.

In his new book, John Erskine takes pretty much the same attitude that those visiting gentlemen once found effective. He lampoons the women, assuming, no doubt, that the ladies will enjoy his accusations even if they don't consider themselves guilty.

He starts out with a facetious title, "The Influence of Women—and Its Cure," and

a playful dedication "To the Men of America—Those Who Remain." If he had adhered to that mood of persiflage all the way through he might have given us a clever and funny book—we don't object to a little fun poking.

For example, when he's discussing marriage among the intellectuals he's at his best.

But suddenly he becomes serious and begins to speak of the mass influence of women. From there on he says very little with which we can agree, in fact, very little which will seem valid to any audience. He says, for instance, "Most American women believe their place is in the home, but give a new turn to the formula; they mean an easy home, a home with few or no children, where the work is done by mechanical gadgets or by servants, or where husband and wife eat out. They mean that woman's place is in the leisure class, the class which is free to organize its influence and take charge of the workers."

Would Mr. Erskine have us reject the mechanical gadgets? Is he speaking of the same leisure class we heard about from Mr. J. P. Morgan? His 30,000,000 families having a maid? And if by organizations he refers to the D.A.R. and the W.C. T.U., don't the men have their American Legion and Elks?

Somewhat further on he says, "When the women talk of preserving the Constitution you can't be sure what they mean. Since they are not given to quoting the document, you may even doubt whether they've read it." That sounds like the D.A.R. again but how about the Liberty League? Have the members of that great organization read the document and what do they mean when they shout that it must be preserved?

You see the trouble is that you can't generalize about women as Mr. Erskine has. They have the same economic problems as the men.

(Continued on page 30)

Movies . . . By Irene Thirer

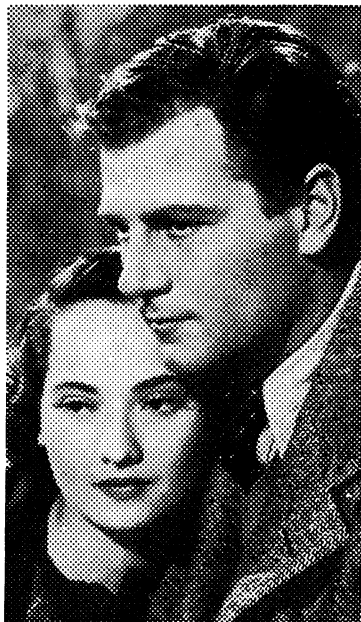
IT'S common knowledge by this time that producer Samuel Goldwyn, perhaps the bravest and most enterprising of the independent movie magnates, had trouble with Mr. Will Hays' organization before "These Three" went into production.

"The Children's Hour," now in its second highly successful Broadway year, could not, with Hays' permission, be converted to the screen. Its strange theme was not, according to censorship committees, fit food for the movie masses.

Mr. Hays turned thumbs down on Miss Lillian Hellman's play. And Mr. Goldwyn signed Miss Hellman to go to Hollywood and write a screen script—bearing the title "These Three."

We saw "These Three" the other day—and it is a magnificent picture. In background, and as to tempo and mood, and even as to names of characters, it is "The Children's Hour." But—we believe even Mr. Will Hays and his disciples will be completely satisfied with what they've done to the plot. They have altered it so little as to do no damage whatsoever to the effectiveness of the story. Yet, they've got-

ten around the point which bothered the censors: unnatural love for one woman by another.



Merle Oberon and Joel McCrea in "These Three"

THE Karen and Martha of Mr. Goldwyn's film are wondrously fond of one another. There is an indication, however, that Martha loves Karen's fiance, the handsome doctor who helps them found their country school for girls. The mischief caused by the brat pupil is on this account. She viciously and untruthfully declares an impropriety exists between Martha and the doctor. It is vigorously denied. But it causes despair for all concerned. And yet, the picture is righted by a convincingly satisfying conclusion. It does not let you down. Miss Hellman, if anything, has improved upon the quality of her footlight manuscript.

As to performances, Miriam Hopkins and Merle Oberon give warmth and sympathy to Martha and Karen. Joel McCrea is charming as the young medical man. Bonita Granville is an adolescent hell-cat as the brat, Mary Tilford. And little Marcia Mae Jones gives a notable account of the frightened chum who carries out the brat's commands to the chagrin of the unhappy teachers.

(Continued on page 30)

BY ten o'clock that morning every woman in the tenement knew that Mrs. Michaels had lost her pearls. Very early Mrs. Moriarity, putting her garbage into the cans on the sidewalk, told Mrs. Ranson, who had just come from taking her eight-year-old Johnny through the traffic to school.

"It's a great loss for poor Mrs. Michaels," Mrs. Ranson sighed.

"Probably she's lost them to get the insurance. These people!"—Mrs. Moriarity winked at Mrs. Ranson—"They even envy you the sheets you hang on the line to dry."

"Mrs. Michaels seems an honest woman," Mrs. Ranson answered. She didn't care much for Mrs. Moriarity, because Mrs. Moriarity talked out of her window to other people's husbands and after four glasses of beer she would behave as no woman should toward another's man.

Upstairs on the fifth floor, in the rear flat that looked out on the backs of other tenements, their clothes lines and fire-escapes, Mrs. Michaels sat at the back window and by its light looked in the tin box again. There were three rooms in the flat—the small back one for the boys, the kitchen in the middle, and the back one which had two windows and twin beds, just as rich people had. Mrs. Michaels bought the beds one year when her husband had a long season in the garment trade. It was a relief to sleep by herself, to have a place she need not share with her weak husband. How she had hated to acknowledge that he was weak! How she dreaded to acknowledge to herself that she was the stronger one and must take the responsibility for the family because he would not accept it.

Mrs. Ranson peeped through the open door leading from the flat into the hall. She saw the dull walls where plaster was coming off, the weak-coffee-and-milk colored wood-work that was painted so by the landlord because it didn't show dirt. She saw them, but did not notice especially, because each day she saw the same in her own flat. But she did notice the twin beds that had been disarranged by the search under mattresses for the pearls. On top of each bed the old-country feather covers sat on the mattresses like half-blown balloons. Mrs. Ranson came into the room toward Mrs. Michaels.

Life grew very dark for Mrs. Michaels when she lost her pearls, because they were her Aladdin's Lamp, doing wonders at the pawnshop when hard times came. But then Mrs. Moriarity dropped in, and things began to happen.

The Pearl Necklace

By Grace Lumpkin

"Come in," Mrs. Michaels said. She got up holding the box to her bosom, but sat down again as Mrs. Ranson drew up a chair.

"I've looked everywhere," Mrs. Michaels said, despondently.

She took out the different trinkets. Mrs. Ranson was interested to see the keepsakes.

"That is the picture of my little girl. I wear one like it around my neck always. My boys I couldn't spare, but the little girl, it was hard to see her go." Mrs. Michaels had deep gray eyes and it seemed that the girl in the cheap little round frame with a lock of metal so a person could wear it around the neck on a chain, had the same gray eyes. "She died of rheumatism of the heart. I saw her dying before me for three years," Mrs. Michaels said. "I pawned the necklace to get money for her. At last the doctor took her to a big hospital. They didn't charge because they wanted to study the disease. She had a day nurse and a night nurse." Mrs. Michaels reached among the twin beds and held up a string of large beads. "I gave these to her when she went to the hospital. They are amber. They came from the old country like the pearls. My little girl kept these under her pillow at the hospital."

"They are pretty." Mrs. Ranson lifted the amber beads into her hands. A streak of sunlight came over the roof of a tenement opposite and Mrs. Ranson held the beads up to look through them. "They are like sunshine," she said. "But those pearls!" She sucked in her breath in admiration. "I don't wonder you are worried!"

"They must be somewhere near." Mrs. Michaels looked anxiously into her room. Her eyes seemed to stretch themselves so

they became large enough to see in every small corner of the three rooms. "I don't know where they ever came from"—she laughed—"I tell you, Mrs. Ranson, I don't exactly know—so now I don't know where they go to. They were given for a present to somebody in my family back in the years in the old country. My son says maybe an officer gave them to some beauty in the family. My son Peter, you know my oldest son—you do not see him often. No, Peter is not his Jewish name, but in school the teacher said, 'your name is Peter,' when he was in the first grade. I had a time with him, because he was my first and it was so hard to make him mind the traffics. I thought every automobile was my enemy. But now with so many others I have learned to take chances. . . ."

"You got to take chances, or you'd be crazy thinking about all those trucks, Mrs. Michaels, and the boys jumping the taxis and street-cars."

"Yes. . . . And Pete had not thought for his life. He teases me saying, 'An officer gave the pearls to your great-grandmother.' But I do not know where they came from. Only I know at times I sit here where the light is at the window and take them out—if they aren't at the pawnshop—and I hold them up and so they seem something like dreams of a place where I've lived once—and also I can feel something like I did when, a girl, I went out from the house we lived in—we kept a toll-bridge in the old country—and in the woods found the first lilies-of-the-valley hanging down on the delicate stems so frail and tender the blossoms—so like the pearls and the pearls so like them. As I looked sitting here the same feeling of joy went through me all over, like the lilies gave me in the woods with the fresh smell of the earth.

"I was just looking at them so yesterday, Mrs. Ranson, because I knew I must give them up for a while as it happens every year my husband gets less work, so I must take the pearls to the pawn or the loan

association and they feed us and pay the rent. I work too. As you know I buy old sweaters and unravel the wool and dye it and knit it again into new fashions—I will show you a new stitch I learned, if this worry would be over—it is like feeling that somebody died yesterday. You forget and there is a pang and you remember. We can live on them a long while. I was looking at them yesterday only—and I remember, or I think so, I put them down in the box by those amber beads, or maybe . . . maybe under that little book—the one—do you see it?—Peter got at school, a personal present from the teacher when he left—we had to take him out at fourteen to work. He worked in a movie

“You ain’t found it yet?” Mrs. Moriarity asked.

“I can’t think any more, Mrs. Moriarity.”

Mrs. Moriarity pulled the mattress flat on one of the beds and sat down on it. “That’s a pretty thing.” She reached over and took the amber necklace from Mrs. Ranson and fastened it around her own collar at the back. She tucked her chin into her neck and looked down at the yellow beads. “You never wear your pretties,” she said to Mrs. Michaels.

“Well, maybe to the wedding of a landsman,” Mrs. Michaels said, but the last was two—three years back.”

Mrs. Moriarity yawned, then she leaned toward Mrs. Michaels.

“What is that fastened at your neck in the back?” she asked.

Mrs. Michaels said, without turning around, “Oh, that’s a chain with my daughter’s picture.”

She put a hand up and felt at the chain. She felt at it self-consciously because Mrs. Moriarity was leaning close to her. As she felt, a surprised look came to her face. She turned around and faced the other women. There were some tears still not dried on her cheeks. The fingers of both hands went to her neck and she grasped the cloth of her dress. “Wait!” she cried out in an excited voice and then, in a whisper, “Wait!”

“Last night,” she said, “I didn’t take off my heavy shirt. It was cold. Maybe. . . .” She loosened the buttons of her high-necked dress, then the buttons of her high-necked winter undershirt. Between the heavy and a thinner shirt lay the pearl necklace lying beside the gold chain! Mrs. Michaels’ fingers touched the pearls. There seemed to be gladness in each finger, she pressed them and danced over the pearls.

Mrs. Moriarity looked at Mrs. Ranson and winked. To Mrs. Ranson the wink seemed to say: “See how smart I am—she had it hidden, and I caught her.”

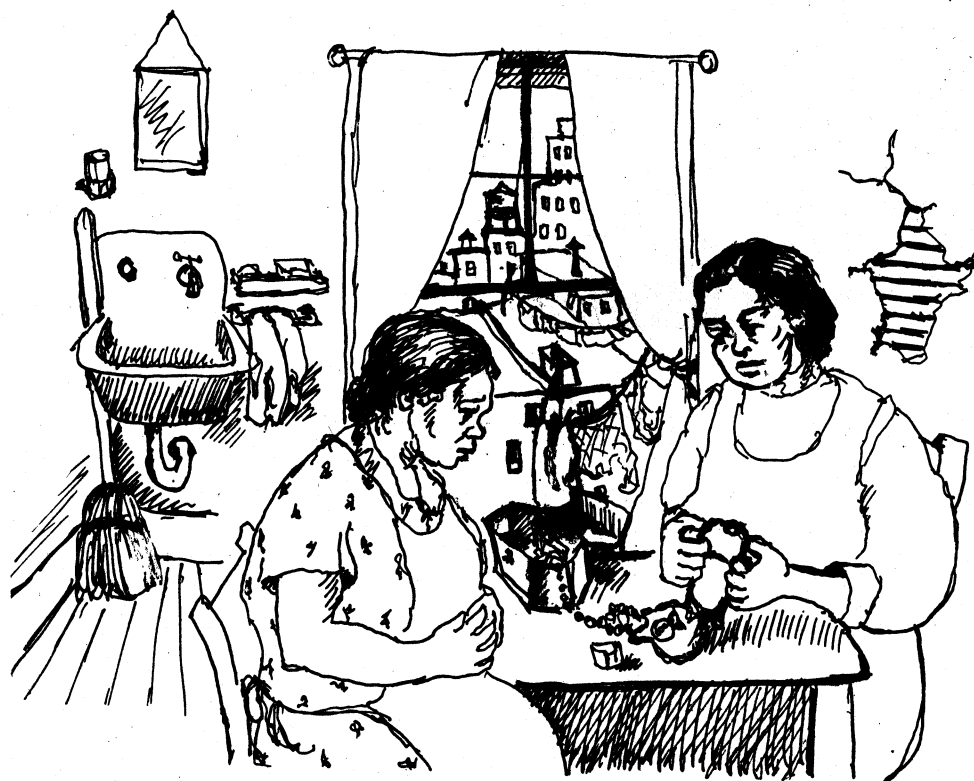
Mrs. Michaels’s dancing fingers reached back and undid the catch and the whole necklace lay in her hands that she held out toward her neighbors.

“I must have put it on yesterday,” Mrs. Michaels said. “I must have put it on just to feel and see it. I remember, I did. And I have thought ‘did my husband take it maybe needing money? Did my sons? Did my neighbors?’ I have had such black thoughts as I looked and searched. And all the time . . . it lay against the chain I wear always with my daughter’s picture!”

Mrs. Moriarity went to the window and leaning out called to a woman on the floor below who was hanging her clothes on the line: “Mrs. Michaels has found the pearl necklace!”

“Don’t wake my husband,” Mrs. Ranson said, “he worked overtime last night.”

By noon, when the children came from school for lunch, every one in the tenement knew that Mrs. Michaels had found her pearls.



Drawing by Rose Kleidman

picture office where they sent out the films. He saw movie actors—one of them brought a tiger on a chain to the office. My Peter came home that day in a sweat. He was in the hall and around the corner came a tiger to meet him and then behind the tiger the movie actor. Maybe I put the necklace under Peter’s book—I was careful to put it in some place because I knew today I must take it to the loan association. And now . . . I don’t know where the money will come from—that pearl necklace seems playing hide-and-seek with my mind.”

Mrs. Ranson said, “There’s Mrs. Moriarity.”

Mrs. Michaels looked up from the box. “Come in, Mrs. Moriarity,” she said, “we just now are looking.”

“Well, you’ve still got these pretties,” Mrs. Moriarity said, fingering the amber beads.

“But the other were—I’ve looked everywhere,” Mrs. Michaels said. “You can see I’ve turned everything inside out”—she looked into the room, and as she looked, because the beds were unmade, the china out of place, the tea and coffee and spice jars on the floor where they had been left after being searched, she saw how dark and ugly the dull place was. She saw it as if she were a stranger who had come in and was seeing it for the first time. Tears came into her eyes and she turned her head quickly toward the window.

The Women's Trade Union League

By THELMA NURENBERG

WHEN the Women's Trade Union League was first organized in 1903 to help women workers through organization, legislation, and education, the trade unions looked upon the new group with undisguised pessimism. Not only was there a prejudice among men workers that women consciously undercut men's pay and thus took their jobs away, but that women did not respond to trade unionism. The eventful history of the League since its inception is indisputable proof that women make good trade union members, first class pickets and hardy fighters for the rights of workers.

There has hardly been a strike involving women workers in which the League has not participated. Trained union organizers have been put at the disposal of workers. The League has not only organized women, but has helped them to conduct strikes, contributed financial and legal aid.

In labor legislation much has been accomplished through the efforts of the League. It has been influential in obtaining improvement of the laws regulating hours of work for women and minors, in the enactment of the Minimum Wage Law for women (recently declared unconstitutional by the New York State Court of Appeals), has been active in the campaign to abolish industrial homework and to obtain state child labor laws and has also fought for the ratification of the Federal Child Labor amendment. It has been influential in bringing many working men's Compensation Law and the State Unemployment Insurance Law.

The membership of the League is increasing steadily. According to Miss Rose Schneiderman, president of its New York branch, this indicates the importance of the League to working women. Under her capable leadership this organization has been influential in bringing many working women into the trade unions. Through her experience as a worker and trade unionist (Miss Schneiderman is honorary vice president of the United Cloth Hat, Cap, and Millinery Workers' International), she brings to her work practical understanding and the knowledge of how to treat with both workers and employers.



Sylvia Salmi

Rose Schneiderman, President, New York Women's Trade Union League.

I asked Miss Schneiderman what she considers the League's outstanding achievement in its work among working women.

"Our record in legislation," she replied unhesitatingly. "But of equal importance to me is our work in organizing working women who have never been organized before, and the organization of new unions where none existed before. We have helped women to organize in nearly all branches of industry. We have been active in the service trades, hotel and restaurants, flower, paper and pulp industry, candy workers, ready-to-wear, and many other industries. We have been working with the Bookkeepers, Stenographers & Accountants Union. Frequently we have had to work outside New York, and our organizers have helped women organize and conduct strikes there."

Educating the workers has been an important and necessary part of the League's program. In her office on the third floor of the brownstone building, which also houses the offices, class-rooms, library, and meeting rooms, Miss Schneiderman outlined the educational program of the League.

"In order for women to participate in the building of a strong labor movement it is necessary for them to understand the

problems which face them," she began. "For this a special training is needed. The aim of this system is to prepare our worker-pupils to become trade-union organizers and leaders."

Classes are held in the evening and on Saturdays for employed workers and in the afternoons for unemployed women workers. Six or seven classes are given for special groups, arranged for by the unions. The students in these classes discuss the history, problems, and tactics of labor, and get training in public speaking and parliamentary law. There are also "mixed" groups where workers from several unions meet to hear lectures. These include a Trade Union Training Course for Leadership, taught by Miss Elsie Gluck, educational director, who has had experience as an organizer, and in classes in English and Public Speaking. There is also a drama workshop and a labor dance group. Another member of the instructional staff is Miss Eleanor Mishnun, the League organizer. Classes in English and Current Events are given for the unemployed.

This year, as well as last, men students were admitted to classes. There is no tuition fee for instruction, but students are selected and recommended by their unions and by the League. More than two thousand workers have studied in these courses since 1922. This year there is a registration of almost two hundred, of whom the great majority are already active union members, coming from about a dozen or more labor unions in the city.

The League believes that the worker-student will use the education she has acquired to take an active part in union organization where she is employed and will fight for better conditions for all workers.



EDITOR, THE WOMAN TODAY:

The Women's Educational Group, a newly formed organization of women textile workers, wishes to congratulate THE WOMAN TODAY on its first issue.

We feel that this magazine will do more to reach unorganized women workers, and show them the truth and necessity of organization, than any other similar publication in the field. We also feel that it will be of great help to those of us already belonging to trade unions in that it is a means of giving us contact with other groups of organized workers all over the country.

We are proud to have THE WOMAN TODAY as the voice of the women workers in this country, and we wish it all the success in the world.

MARY TACCONE,
*Women's Educational Group,
United Textile Workers of America,
Providence, Rhode Island.*

THE WOMAN TODAY



Sylvia Salmi

Rose Schneiderman, President, New York
Women's Trade Union League.

POVERTY LEGALIZED

By

Elinore M. Herrick

AS I write, the news that the Court of Appeals of New York State by a four to three decision has declared the State Minimum Wage Law unconstitutional is just coming in over the telegraph wires.

Two rulings of the courts leave workers helpless, an easy prey to exploitation today. The United States Supreme Court declared last May that the federal government has no right under the Constitution to protect workers from depression wages of \$2, \$3, \$5, and \$6 or \$7 a week. When the Supreme Court decision on the N.R.A. came out, friends of labor said, "Well, then, we are forced back to a states' rights doctrine and the states must regulate wages in the protection of the health and welfare of its citizens." Now the Court of Appeals of the most liberal state in the Union has said the state can not act to stop the vicious undercutting of wages already too low. In God's name, who can then?

Within a week I have found wages of \$3 a week paid to girls who wrap lollipops. In the same period other girls have struck against a 50 per cent wage cut—the third since the death of the N.R.A.—which will reduce their present wages of \$5.40 a week to a mere \$2.70 for a 48-hour week.

It is such workers, the pitiful victims of an uncontrolled competitive system, whom the New York State Minimum Wage Law was designed to protect.

Since August 6, 1934, when the State Minimum Fair Wage Act became mandatory for approximately 2,500 laundries employing about 22,000 women and minors in New York State, the Department of Labor collected \$11,341.04 in back wages for 4,041 employees in 642 plants.

The Spotlight Laundry of Brooklyn, run by one Tepaldo, who brought the test case which has resulted in the declaration of the law's unconstitutionality, was found to have paid women as little as from \$2.12

to \$10 for a work-week as long as 55 hours instead of at least the minimum wage of \$12.40 for a 40-hour week. Some employees had been forced to kick-back the difference between the legal minimum and the substandard wages. Others had been required to sign blank checks. False entries under oath in the company's books concealed kick-backs and fake endorsements of pay checks.

These are the practices and these are the wages now legalized and permitted because of the four-to-three decision of the New York Court of Appeals.

The court says in effect that to prohibit such practices impairs the "freedom of contract" guaranteed by the United States Constitution. I question that the framers of the Constitution ever intended to legalize such a system of wage slavery in this country.

With the present famine of jobs and over-abundant supply of workers for those jobs, there can be no such thing as liberty of contract. Workers are compelled to accept jobs at the wages offered. Thanks to the strange notions of the majority of the Court of Appeals, the State of New York is now prohibited from saying to an employer: "You must at least pay enough to permit these workers to keep life in their

The NRA was killed because it interfered with "States' rights." Now the New York State Minimum Wage Law has been thrown out because it interferes with "freedom of contract." Meanwhile workers are paid as little as \$2 a week. Writing in righteous anger, the author asks a constitutional amendment to protect wage-earners.

bodies and you must pay them a wage which bears some relation to the value of the services rendered."

The net result of such a series of decisions declaring, first, that the federal government has no right to act, and declaring now that the State of New York has no right to protect its women and children from the exploitation of greed in an unsound economic system, throws us into a state of anarchy, where the greed of employers is rampant and society helpless to protect itself.

The will of the people expressed in legislative action can be nullified at will by a court which it is apparently beyond the power of the people to influence, curb, or control in any way.

And when workers strike in protest against the wages of \$2 and \$3 a week in the Southern textile mills, the employers can, and do, call in the state militia to break the strike, to shoot down the strikers, and to re-establish the equivalent of slavery.

In Vermont the Governor and quarry owners who control the banks "laugh" at the wage checks of four cents a week which come to the local bank to be cashed. These checks represent the total weekly cash paid to American-born Vermont men after rent for their miserable company-owned homes has been deducted by the employers who own them.

Mindful of the almost feudal views of the courts, friends of labor have hesitated even in the face of such wages to press the fight for a minimum wage for men. They have relied instead on the long accepted and legally sustained power of the state to protect the health and welfare of women and minor children. Now even such power is taken from the state. This is an intolerable condition.

What is so sacred about a Constitution framed over a hundred years ago and amended twenty-one times to date? A twenty-second amendment to the Constitution seems to be the only way out if we are to protect workers in their most vulnerable spot—the pay envelope.

The politicians seem to fear a constitutional amendment. Others who have fought for ratification of the Child Labor Amendment say such a course is too slow, too uncertain. Other proposals limiting the power of the courts or requiring more than a majority of one to declare a law unconstitutional are whispered about.

The recent decision of the New York Court of Appeals renders it obligatory to cease whispering and to shout boldly from the housetops that this must be made a "government for the people and by the people."

One million, two hundred thousand women in the State of New York have legitimately looked to the Minimum Fair Wage Law for protection. This case will undoubtedly be carried to the Supreme Court which in 1923 declared unconstitutional an earlier Minimum Wage Law resting only on the necessity of meeting a minimum standard of living. Will the Supreme Court now recognize the economic necessities and justice of the present situation and reverse themselves after consideration of this new law which has added the principle of a fair and reasonable return for the value of the services rendered?

I believe in giving the judicial system of our government a fair chance, but if the judges ignore human rights to such minimum protections as the New York law gives, then believers in democratic government must force the enactment of amendments and statutes which will give the courts no option in such matters.

WOMEN TALK UNITY

MARGARET COWL

THE National Delegates Convention of the Inter-Professional Association held March 14 and 15 in Washington, D.C., launched its program for common action for opportunity and security for women in all occupations. At a dinner at which Miss Mary van Kleeck, chairman of the I.P.A., presided, and which was attended by leading women from important organizations, all were invited to give their experience in the formulating of the program. A memorandum on problems facing women was submitted for discussion.

The development of widespread unemployment, social insecurity and reactionary tendencies in the United States, and the spread of fascism, threatens whatever opportunities women have been able to gain as well as others which they are still struggling to achieve. Such a trend can easily

point the way for further discriminations besides those which still exist by custom in the United States, and is an integral feature of our culture, of which particularly married and Negro women are the victims. A program of common action for women must include equal pay for equal work, no discrimination against married women or Negro women, advocacy of a federal system of social insurance along the lines of the Frazier-Lundeen Bill, the elimination of all legal discrimination against women on the statute books of state and federal government, and the protection of all workers from excessively long hours, low wages and other bad working conditions. Only by uniting with the labor movement can professional workers be powerful enough to effect their demands.

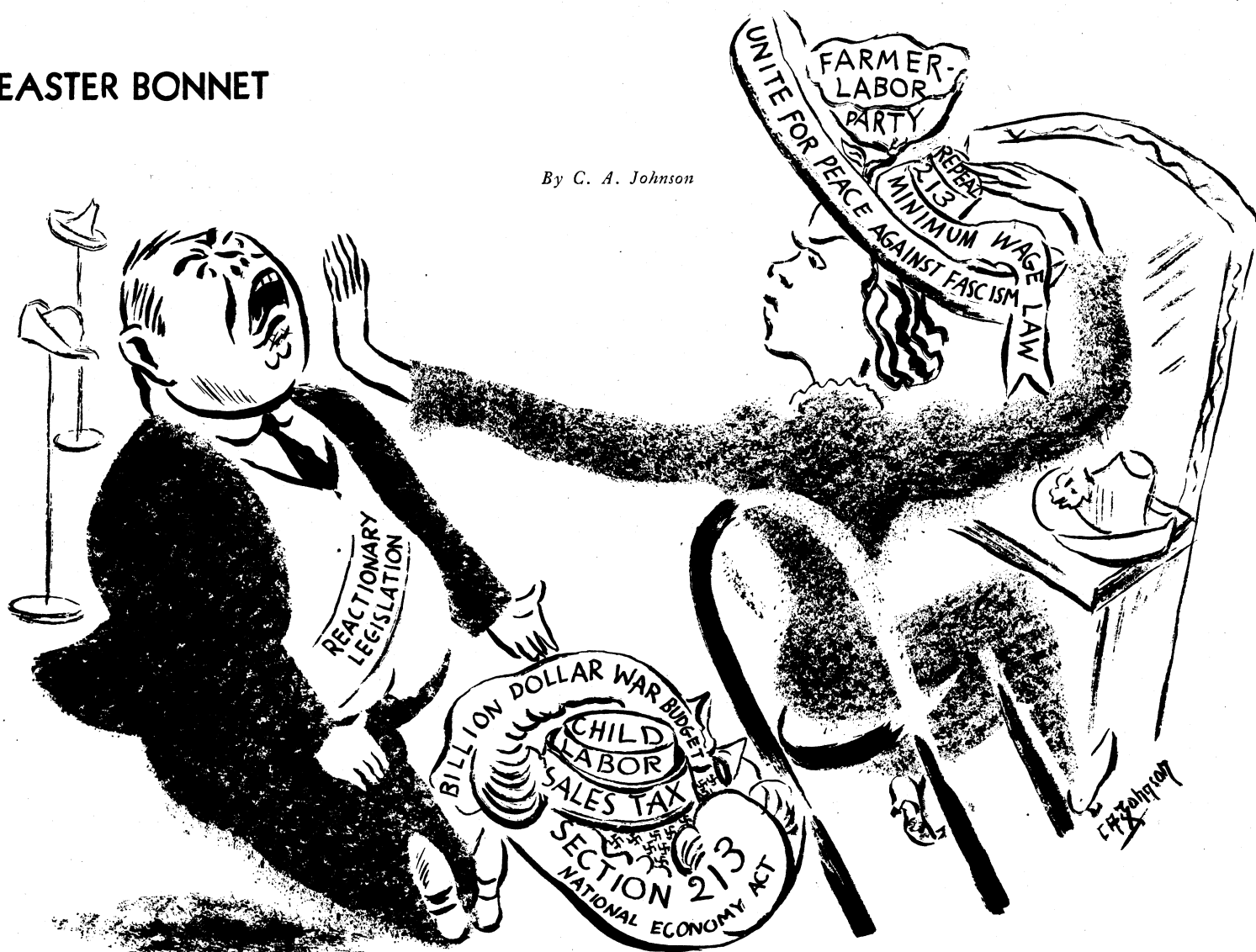
Mary Anderson, director of the United

States Women's Bureau, pointed out that the Women's Bureau is in a position to give information on many of these problems of discrimination against women, that she has seen these problems become accentuated as a means of solving the depression, first by taking married women out of industry, and then by suggesting to take all women out of industry and the professions. In discussing Section 213 of the National Economy Act, she pointed out that the federal government should not carry out discriminations against women. Elizabeth Christman, secretary of the National Women's Trade Union League, commended the inclusion in such a program the enlisting of the support of men. Recognizing the value and necessity of professional and industrial workers help-

(Continued on page 28)

EASTER BONNET

By C. A. Johnson



WOMEN AND POLITICS

FRANCIS J. GORMAN

IS THE HOUSEWIFE'S PLACE MERELY IN THE HOME? Is the woman worker's place merely in her trade union? An outstanding American Federation of Labor leader says "NO!" and thunders a new thrilling challenge to American womanhood.

WOMEN have always been used by employers to beat down the wages and working standards of men. When the last depression came, with its prolonged agony for millions of families, there seemed nothing left but for mothers of children to go into factories and shops and work for any kind of wages so long as they could scrape together a little money for food and clothing.

Some industries, such as textiles, are traditionally women's industries, but the entrance of women in large numbers into industry came with the period following the World War, and during the six depression years these numbers have increased by the thousands.

"Woman's Place Is in the Home"

In all the basic industries—textiles, munitions, rubber, chemicals, metals, automobiles, and electrical equipment, to mention the most important—manufacturers fell over each other in the effort to avail themselves of this vast source of "cheap and contented" labor. This has been women's historic role in industry up to the present time. And that it has been women's part is not entirely the fault of our women workers, for men have been hampered with the old chauvinistic idea that "women are unorganizable," that "women have no place in trade unions," the "woman's place is in the home," and so forth.

But today, picket lines, more than in the past, are filled with women workers. Housewives have begun to organize against exorbitant food prices and rent. Wives of striking men appear on picket lines, full of a spirit of protest and militancy which has, in a number of instances, put the men to shame. And women fall as bravely under

the guns of paid scabs and company thugs as men. The woman is an integral, a splendid and a courageous part of our modern industrial order.

As such, what is her role? Should she be content only with activity in her trade union? Should she stop with taking her place beside her husband on the picket line?

Fascism Destroys Workers' Trade Unions

No. History has fitted the trade unionist, man and woman, for a different role—a role in keeping with our shifting, swift-moving modern world. For no longer are our trade unions sufficient to protect our wages, our working and living standards. The onslaughts of the bosses, with their hired strikebreakers, their deputized murderers, are making trade-union activity more and more difficult. This offensive against our rights is, furthermore, going on under the "protective" eyes of the law. Governmental agencies are turning to armed forces of "law and order" against the workers with cold cynicism, and they do not care whether the workers be men, women, or children.

This means that we are to be even more viciously victimized by the employing class as time goes on; this means that Pelzer, North Carolina, is not going to be the only place where the clearing of smoke will disclose a valiant woman striker lying dead under the bullets of scabs; this means that the forces of reaction—the few but mighty representatives of the financiers and industrialists—are marching more swiftly and with more determination than before. They have openly declared their intention to reduce the working class to a state of complete pauperism, through wage-slashing, cutting off of relief, and trade-union persecution. Through such boss unions as the National Association of Manufacturers, they have already signified their intention of entering politics "directly." The past has taught us the influence they are able to wield through their heretofore "indirect" method of controlling the forces of our government. We know how the direct methods of Fascism have crushed the work-

ers' trade unions in Germany and Italy.

We can see, furthermore, that in this country we have the beginnings of just this sort of oppression. Does not Governor Eugene Talmadge of Georgia use concentration camps to subdue striking workers? And is this not the precise method employed by Hitler? Yes, it is. Haven't there been attempts to force company unions on the workers in a number of industries?

Yet in Germany, by Hitler's own words, he could not have been successful in his subsidized seizure of the state controls if it had not been for the support of the women of Germany. At the Third Nazi Congress in Nuremberg in 1935, Hitler said: "I would not be here now if it were not for the women of Germany."

What, then, are the women of the United States to do? Surely, in the face of the experiences of the working class in European Fascist countries, where the population lives in terror and under severe oppression, the women of the United States are not going to play similar roles, are not going to make it possible for the reactionary, open-shop employing and financial class of this country to subjugate the people to a Fascist dictatorship!

A Labor Party to Fight Reaction

I know the women of this country will play no such role. For the pages of textile history are strewn with the memories of valiant women textile workers.

The odds are against us now. The government no longer belongs to the people as a whole, but to a small crowd of financiers and industrialists. What are we to do, men and women, to save ourselves from slavery?

The working class has but one resource in the face of these overwhelming odds. We can meet the power of concentrated wealth in but one way now—through the solid united ranks of all the people of this country who are opposed to the terror and oppression of a fascist dictatorship.

How can the people be mobilized to block the advancing forces of reaction? Through

(Continued on page 26)

the Woman Today

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THE WOMAN TODAY has received many letters from women expressing their fear of what a threatening fascism in the United States may do to our workers, especially our women. They have read much of how fascism in Germany has destroyed the economic independence which women have won. Fascism started by destroying the living standards of those who work. Now in the United States we see widespread unemployment and consequent great economic and social insecurity. We see the courts in our country intervening in the economic problems on the side of Big Business. The courts are declaring unconstitutional social legislation enacted in the interests of those who must work to live. Among the recent acts of such a nature is the decision of the New York Court of Appeals declaring unconstitutional the Minimum Wage Law for women. Twenty-two thousand women in the laundry industry in New York City, together with their dependents, are actually told to live on from \$2.00 to \$10.00 per week. Big Business scores again.

And who can question that the movement to oust married women from civil service positions not only in the federal government but in state and city governments is not in some way connected with the act of the courts to knock the bottom out of the wage level as well as to eliminate a group of women from employment and thus set a precedent for industrialists to follow. Witness the remarks of Mary Anderson, director of the United States Women's Bureau, on page 8 of this issue, revealing that suggestions have been made first to remove *all married* women from industry and then to eliminate *all* women in industry as one of the means of solving the depression.

Attorney General John J. Bennett is taking steps to place an appeal before the United States Supreme Court against the decision of the New York Court of Appeals. Upholding the New York decision would mean that women in industry in New York, New Jersey, Illinois, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Ohio, where a minimum wage law protects them, will be given the "liberty" to work and starve.

It is the women in industry in the states above mentioned who must make their protest felt against the action of the New York Court of Appeals. And the women in other states whose standard of living is threatened by such a decision should join them. Not only are women in industry directly affected—but women in the professions as well, and all must work together not only for the maintenance of the Minimum Wage Law, but also for the

repeal of Section 213. In this common protest they must solicit the support of men in industry as well as all organized labor.

THE WOMAN TODAY suggests that our women readers, and particularly members of trade unions, send letters to the judges of the Supreme Court at Washington demanding that the decision of the New York State Court be invalidated. Send similar letters to your Congressman, to your Senator.

THE WOMAN TODAY calls the attention of all its readers to the challenge to American womanhood by Mr. Francis J. Gorman on page 9 of this issue. We invite all our readers to send us their comments.

THE MILITARY BUDGET of the United States government for the Army and Navy Departments has increased from \$533,597,243 in 1935 to \$744,839,588 in 1936. And now it is being further increased to \$937,791,966, according to the estimated budget submitted to Congress on January 6—an increase of 75 per cent! It was to protest against this tremendous appropriation for war purposes that a delegation of the friends of peace appeared before President Roosevelt in March. The signers of this protest included: Dr. Mary E. Woolley, president of Mount Holyoke College, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, honorary president of the National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War, Professor Charles G. Fenwick, president of the Catholic Association for International Peace, Dr. Ivan Lee Holt, president of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. The protest was signed by 450 prominent persons.

MAY 3RD IS MOTHER'S DAY. We suggest the organization of women's peace parades in the larger cities on Mother's Day as a means of voicing the demands that war appropriations be used for constructive purposes such as increased educational budgets for more and better schools, federal appropriations to the states for W.P.A. projects, for cash relief to the unemployed, for day nurseries.

OVER TWENTY-FIVE of the largest women's organizations in the United States have banded together to secure signatures to the "People's Mandate to Governments" for disarmament. The latest women's group to join is the Women's Committee of the American League Against War and Fascism.

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14 Apartments a Day . . .

By ERMA LEE

“WHY wouldn't we strike? Would you work for \$11.50 a week? Yes, I know we're supposed to work only eight hours a day but we stay right there until we've finished our fourteen apartments each—cleaned, dusted, two beds changed, kitchen cleaned, garbage emptied, bathroom spotless, linen changed and foyer cleaned—fourteen apartments a day per maid before we go home!”

“But I hear your tips average as much as your wages,” I said.

“What a joke! That's what you hear from the manager, but if we average \$2 a month in tips we'd do well. The tenants think we are well paid; we are warned not to talk to them about our conditions. Now that we're out on strike they are finding out about us and one woman even refused to let a scab chambermaid into her apartment, and she protested against riding in the elevator with a scab—it was dangerous, she said. The tenants are sympathetic, but there are lots of things they don't know. They don't know that we girls can't even give them soap until we bring in the little pieces that are left over! They blame us when there's no soap but we can't get the soap!

“We have to live on \$11.50 a week, pay room rent and buy meals, and besides, we have to wash and iron our own uniforms and organdy collars; they have to be spotless—at our expense.”

Another girl breaks in—

“Why, the manager said any of us that joined the union would never get back! He couldn't give us a \$2 a week raise, but he's paying the scab chambermaids \$8 a day with meals and a room thrown in. Think of that!”

“What about conditions right on the job,” I asked. “Do they treat you all right except for wages and hours?”

“Indeed they do not! We get the devil from the housekeeper—who gets \$30 a week—and from the linen maid—who gets \$22 a week—and if the tenants complain to the manager he blames the housekeeper, who either takes it out on us or the linen maid, and if we are even not polite enough we just lose our jobs. If a girl stands up for herself to the manager, the housekeeper or the linen maid gets even—you see, those two are always disputing among themselves



Women Hotel Workers on Strike

and they try to make us take sides. We have to take everybody's blame and are fired whenever they feel like firing us.”

“Have you belonged to the union long?” I asked.

“No. For years the chambermaids of New York City tried to organize. Many worked for as little as \$25 a month and as many as 60 hours a week. But we couldn't do much alone. Now we belong to the same union as the men—all the hotel workers in one union—Local 32C of the Building Service Employees' International Union.”

“What about the men's conditions in your hotel?” I asked.

“Maybe you won't believe it, but the night porter works 75 hours a week for \$15! And the elevator men work split shifts so nobody can tell how long they work. If the people only knew our conditions surely they would help us.”

These strikers were from the Hotel Tuscan, a typical New York City residential hotel. Not one of the largest, nor the most expensive. Rents run from \$90

\$11.50 a week. That is why we organized

up for one room. The tenants belong in the “income” class—they don't worry about “jobs.” The Tuscan is one of that large class of New York hotels controlled by the banks and realty interests. Most of them lost their independence when the banks took them over on mortgages during the depression. The banks demand the interest; the profits must not stop; the management drives the employees faster and longer, and at last they organize—and what an organization!

New York City is plastered with pickets and banners and parades. The police department admits 40,000 are on strike in 2,374 buildings; the union claims 70,000 out from 6,000 buildings—elevator men, porters, firemen, chambermaids. The downtrodden and scorned “unskilled” are rising, fighting back. Their demands are extremely moderate: the 48-hour week, \$2 increase in wages, and, most important, the closed union shop.

Meanwhile winter cold is still with us; there's no heat, no hot water, garbage piles up in the halls. The tenant wonders: he is paying a rent based on the high cost of service—so the landlord says. On the cold streets the pickets tramp, tramp. Tenants take them hot coffee, sandwiches.

The realty associations and bankers refuse to settle; no closed shop for them. Smugly they sit on Park Avenue, surrounded by armed guards, plainclothesmen and city police. No settlement, they say. Profits must go on!

Buy Union-Made Hosiery

The following is a list of brands of ladies' hosiery produced by firms who have signed the National Labor Agreement in the hosiery industry, and as given by Mr. Emil Rieve, president of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers.

Aberle, Berger Emerald Toe, Best Maid, Blue Moon, Bronze Lady, Conrad's 42, Dorella, Dorothy Ann, Esse's Maid, Filace, Finery Coral Band, Fulton, Gold Stripe, Gotham, Happiness in Every Step, Heart of Value, Holeproof, Holyoke, Junice, K-T-C, Kitten-Tred, Knee-Hite, Lady Helen, La Femme, Leeds, Longwear, Luxite, Mannings, Mantell's, McCallum Hosiery, Modern Maid, Onyx, Phoenix, Proper Hosiery, Rivoli, Rollins Runstop, Ruby Ring, Style Step, Treasure, Tivoli, Valcort, Vivanit, Voice of Style, Washington Maid.



Women Hotel Workers on Strike

HOUSEWIVES

Get Together

By ROSE NELSON

THE WOMAN TODAY will publish letters of interest to housewives and mothers. Letters dealing with consumers' problems are welcome.

EDITOR, THE WOMAN TODAY:

A conference to bring together the various organizations in the neighborhood of the Bronx section in New York City for the reduction of high prices and the repeal of the sales tax was held in February. The conference was called upon the initiative of the Women's Councils of the Bronx, and was sponsored by the Bronx Settlement House. Delegates came from the Bakers' Local 164 of the American Federation of Labor and the Women's Label Club of that local, from Councils of the Unemployed, from the Parents' Association of the Bronx House, the Parents' and Teachers' Association of Public School 42 and from groups of tenants in the large tenement houses of the Bronx. One hundred and twenty-five delegates represented 70,000 people.

Some of the decisions of the conference were: to issue a petition addressed to the food monopolies demanding that part of the processing tax returns they receive under the rice millers' decision be returned to the consumers in the form of lower food prices. To send a delegation to the eastern division of the American Meat Packers demanding a reduction in meat prices. That a delegation be sent to the Board of Aldermen, the Borough President and the Mayor urging repeal of the sales tax and suggesting that open hearings on repeal be arranged. To solicit the aid of trade unions in this work, and to ask them to adopt resolutions favoring sales tax repeal. A committee of twenty-five was elected to organize mass meetings where the people of the neighborhoods of the Bronx will be informed about the work of the conference.

Molly Picheny.



Drawing by Peggy Bacon

A Woman Today Consumers' Club (A Letter from New England)

EDITOR, THE WOMAN TODAY:

Congratulations on THE WOMAN TODAY. It's positively swell. The best barometer is the effect it has on the workers and housewives, which was perfect here.

A group of women here are taking up the question of forming a neighborhood WOMAN TODAY Consumers' Club. Will send more about this later. We all wish for your permanent success.

M. B.

Day Nurseries

EDITOR, THE WOMAN TODAY:

I wish to call to your attention that there exists in the City of New York a number of day nurseries supported from W.P.A. appropriations. There is an allowance of 11 to 15 cents for each child in most of the nurseries, which is not enough. There is a staff of one head teacher, four other teachers, a dietitian, a nurse, a doctor, and three maintenance workers for 30 to 35 children in each of nearly all these nurseries.

Last summer there were set up day camps for children in Van Cortlandt, Inwood and Bronx Parks. Food was provided by the city. But very few children were taken care of.

Mothers' clubs are organized. Many mothers are asking for birth control information. Wherever the mothers are insistent they get assistance. Home relief bureaus supply the cost.

An attempt was made to establish day camps for mothers in the city parks. Some mothers asked that these camps be under the supervision of the mothers themselves. But since the mothers were insufficiently insistent on this, this attempt fell through.

There are some kindergartens that get their funds from the state. These are not so well taken care of. Better equipment and supplies are needed for the kindergartens.

Not many mothers in the neighborhoods know about the existence of these few (few according to the great need for them) day nurseries with appropriation from W.P.A. funds. If the mothers in the different neighborhoods could only get together in greater numbers in mothers' clubs, then they would work out the necessary program and work together to achieve same. Summer is coming and our children would fare better if we could get camps established for them in the city parks. Could THE WOMAN TODAY help in broadening this movement?

A Mother.

[The attention of readers of THE WOMAN TODAY is particularly called to this letter from A Mother. The suggestions in this letter could apply to all large cities in the country. We call upon our readers and especially mothers who are interested in furthering the program for mothers and their children to communicate with THE WOMAN TODAY. The mothers can use THE WOMAN TODAY as a medium for getting together. We suggest that women join the mothers' clubs already existing in their neighborhoods; that where no clubs exist to immediately get a group of friends together and canvass the homes of other mothers to set up such a club. THE WOMAN TODAY requests mothers to send in information about the work of their clubs for publication so that other mothers may profit from their experience.—The Editors.]

A Word to the Wise

By
DOROTHY DUNBAR
BROMLEY

Courtesy New York World-Telegram



Banker Witnesses Shows U. S. Oligarchy

The testimony of Mr. J. P. Morgan and his conferees before the Senate Munitions Committee spoiled my appetite for breakfast. For it brought home to me afresh that when it comes to questions of war and peace this United States functions not as a democracy but as an oligarchy. Plainly it was not the representatives of the people that cast in this country's lot with the Allies, but a small group of powerful men.

Not once did Mr. Morgan and his partners have any qualms about forcing this country into the war through their activities in financing the Allies. It is true that Mr. Morgan expressed the pious and hardly original sentiment that "no one could hate war more than I do," but in the next breath he said he "was proud of this country when the President asked Congress to declare a state of war."

You would think he would feel some slight responsibility for the 126,000 American soldiers and the 8,500,000 soldiers of all the belligerents who laid down their lives for no good purpose. For it is indisputable that the war could not have dragged on four interminable years without American credit and American goods, which Morgan & Co. made it their business to secure for the Allies.

If Mr. Morgan had really hated war as much as he says he does, or if he had believed that the common people have the right to determine their own destiny, he and his partners would hardly have worked hand-in-glove with the British government, keeping it indirectly apprised of secrets which had leaked out in Washington.

Why Not a Reward on Earth for Nurses?

I've always been of the opinion that the faithful should be rewarded on this earth and not have to wait until they get to heaven. So I think the nurses should be allowed to work an eight-hour day and get a fair return for their professional labor.

Their grievances unfortunately have fallen on deaf ears because it suits patients and doctors to have the nurses stick to the twelve-hour schedule. Nursing is a grand profession, but it is far from a bed of roses. If you're a day nurse on private

duty you turn off the alarm clock at 6 and are on the job in your starched uniform at 7. There you stay, without a breath of fresh air and with only half an hour off for lunch and for dinner, until 7 in the evening. I have a young friend who kept these hours for nine long weeks, *seven days a week*.

It's a bad situation and I don't see how nurses are going to help themselves out of it. Nurses can, of course, join the Association of Hospital and Medical Professionals, a new union affiliated with the A. F. of L. Nurses, like doctors, have their ethics, and they aren't going to leave their patients and go on strike.

The more immediate answer is an eight-hour law for nurses.

To Foil the Devil She'd Work the Child

The Staten Island club-woman who is sniping at the Child Labor Amendment utters the profound sentiment that "the devil finds work for idle hands." But after considering Mrs. Clark B. Allen's profundities I begin to wonder whether the devil isn't busy finding work for idle women.

Perhaps it's not fair to call Mrs. Allen idle, since she has four children. But she admits that she has little taste for house-keeping, and that she devotes the major share of her time to running the Staten Island Federation of Mothers' Clubs and to various sundry forms of club work.

The Federation of Mothers' Clubs, no

doubt, does excellent work, but I can't understand why its president should be so anxious to see American children toiling at factory wheels. Why should she say, "This country cannot afford the luxury of the proposed Child Labor Amendment because it would keep too many children in schools."

This seems a curious sentiment for a former school teacher, who ought to believe in the virtues of education. I'll agree with the argument that youngsters of 16 to 17 should have the opportunity to work at jobs that will not injure their health—provided they haven't the capacity or the desire for further education. But I'm at a loss to understand where Mrs. Allen gets her dope that Congress would pass laws forcing everybody up to 18 to be kept in school if we had the amendment.

The amendment authorizes Congress to "limit, regulate, and prohibit the labor of persons under 18." So I suggest that the National Child Labor Committee send Mrs. Allen a copy. They might also inform her about the working conditions among children under 18 in dangerous occupations, and on night shifts. Then she may understand why the framers of the amendment—who weren't labor leaders—so phrased it as to give Congress the power to "prohibit" persons under 18 being employed in certain kinds of jobs.

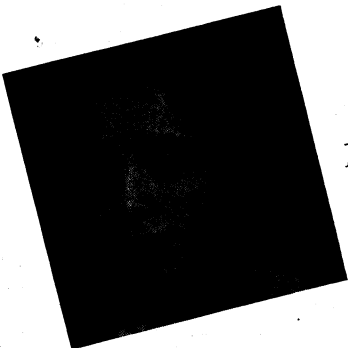
"Let Freedom Ring"

It is one thing to read statistics on child labor past and present, and it's another thing to see wan children shaken out of their slumbers while it is still dark to take their places at the machine looms. This is the fate of the McClure children in Albert Beins' play *Let Freedom Ring*, which is based on Grace Lumpkin's fine novel *To Make My Bread*.

After a winter of slow starvation in the mountains the mother's wages of \$5.00 a week seem like riches to her, and she can't be persuaded by the mill manager to keep the children out of school to work at the looms for \$1.50 a week. But she discovers soon enough that they can't subsist on her earnings, and so the boy and the girl who have known the freedom of the mountains become part of the whirring machinery of the great mill.

(Continued on page 28)





By Louise Thompson

TOWARD A BRIGHTER DAWN

EARLY dawn on any Southern road. Shadowy figures emerge from the little unpainted, wooden shacks alongside the road. There are Negro women trudging into town to the Big House to cook, to wash, to clean, to nurse children—all for two, three dollars for the whole week. Sunday comes—rest day. But what rest is there for a Negro mother who must crowd into one day the care of her own large family? Church of course, where for a few brief hours she may forget, listening to the sonorous voice of the pastor, the liquid harmony of the choir, the week's gossip of neighbors. But Monday is right after Sunday, and the week's grind begins all over.

Early dawn on the plantations of the South. Dim figures bend down in the fields, to plant, to chop, to pick the cotton from which the great wealth of the South has come. Sharecroppers, working year in, year out, for the big landlord, never to get out of debt. The sharecropper's wife—field worker by day, mother and housewife by night. Scrubbing the pine floors of the cabin until they shine white. Boiling clothes in the big black iron kettle in the yard. Cooking the fat-back and corn pone for hungry little mouths. She has never to worry about leisure-time problems.

The same dawn in Bronx Park, New York. There is yet no movement in the near-by apartment houses. From the subway come women, Negro women. They carefully arrange the *Daily News* or *Mirror* along the park bench still moist with dew, and sit down. Why do they sit so patiently? It's cold and damp in the early morning.

Here we are, for sale for the day. Take our labor. Give us what you will. We must feed our children and pay high rent

in Harlem. Ten cents, fifteen cents an hour! That won't feed our families for a day, let alone pay rent. You won't pay more? Well, guess that's better than going back to Harlem after spending your last nickel for carfare. . . .

So thrifty "housewives" drive sharper bargains. There are plenty of women to choose from. And every dollar saved leaves that much more for one's bridge game or theater party! The Bronx "slave market" is a graphic monument to the bitter exploitation of this most exploited section of the American working population—the Negro women.

Over the whole land, Negro women meet this triple exploitation—as workers, as women, and as Negroes. About 85 per cent of all Negro women workers are domestics, two-thirds of the two million domestic workers in the United States. In smaller numbers they are found in other forms of personal service. Other employment open to them is confined mainly to laundries and the tobacco factories of Virginia and the Carolinas, where working conditions are deplorable. The small fraction of Negro women in the professions is hampered by discriminatory practices and unequal wages.

The economic crisis has placed the severest test upon the Negro woman. Representing the greatest proportion of unemployed workers in the country, Negroes are discriminated against in relief and

Cramped and crushed by prejudice and discrimination, fingers worn to the bone by ceaseless labor at coolie wages, the Negro women are the most exploited group in America. But they have banded together for the fight for freedom, and will win.

work relief. Negroes must pay high rents for the worst housing in any city. Segregated Negro neighborhoods are invariably deficient in nurseries, playgrounds, health centers, schools. And in the face of such adverse conditions, Negro women must maintain and rear their families.

It was against such a background that there assembled in Chicago on February 14, 15 and 16, 1936, Negro women from all sections of the country for the National Negro Congress. They made up about one-third of the eight hundred delegates, men and women, who came together from churches, trade unions, fraternal, political, women's, youth, civic, farm, professional, and educational organizations. Women club leaders from California greeted women trade unionists from New York. Women school teachers made friends with women domestic workers. Women from the relief agencies talked over relief problems with women relief clients. Women from mothers' clubs and housewives' leagues exchanged experiences in fighting against the high cost of living. Negro women welcomed the white women delegates who came to the Congress as an evidence of the growing sense of unity between them.

The Women's Sub-Session of the Congress dramatized the conditions facing Negro women everywhere. Neva Ryan, slight but dynamic, pictured the plight of the domestic workers of Chicago and the steps being taken to organize them. Rosa Rayside of New York told how they already had an A. F. of L. charter there for a domestic workers' union. Tarea Hall Pittman, state president of the Federation of Women's Clubs of California, emphasized the necessity of linking together the struggle of women workers with professional women. Marion Cutbert of the National Board of the Y.W.C.A. and National Treasurer of the National Negro Congress, greeted the delegates and urged the need for organization on all fronts. A white delegate from Detroit, Margaret Dean, told of the valiant fight made in

(Continued on page 30)



By Louise Thompson

...D A B...

Is your little boy or girl "good"? Michael was, but his teacher and his mother knew that it might be a sign of something wrong—and they talked it over, TOGETHER.

SHOES

for Michael



Drawing by C. A. Johnson

MRS. BRENNAN couldn't understand what was wrong. Those insistent letters from school asking her to please call, broke into her daily routine and added a fresh worry. She didn't have the time to "call," what with six little Brennans to take care of and Dad Brennan laid up in bed with bronchitis, contracted on the outdoor works job.

True, Mrs. Brennan hadn't talked things over with Mike, but he was such a good boy, taking on his twelve-year-old shoulders part of her burdens. Didn't he go to market for her every day, and wash the dinner dishes, and take four-year-old Irene down for an airing every fair afternoon? Mike didn't run wild like the other boys on the block, never putting in an appearance until meal time. How Mrs. Brennan wished he could have the ordinary necessities of life—a decent pair of shoes, instead of those sneakers he wore in all kinds of weather. He was a good boy and she didn't want to bother him about the letters from the teacher. . . .

Dear Mrs. Brennan: Michael has been absent five times this month. If you could call to see me . . .

But this time things would be settled! Mrs. Brennan was there first thing in the morning. The teacher was there to teach Mike, and if he stayed home, that was his mother's business.

Glowering, Mrs. Brennan pointed to her son's shoes. "You wouldn't go out in those if it was raining, would you? I've been to the relief office to get a new pair for him, but they won't do anything about it because my husband's "employed."

Miss Faxon looked. "Oh! Is that the

only pair he has? I hadn't noticed. With forty-six in the class it's quite impossible to get to know each pupil. You see, Mrs. Brennan, Michael wouldn't say anything when I'd question him about his absence—and no wonder! Children don't like to let the world know that their families are barely struggling along." Miss Faxon thought of her latest cut in salary which, the city fathers said, would be a contribution toward clothing of needy children.

"Mrs. Brennan, a teacher is held responsible for the attendance record of her class. If the child goes without shoes, if he gets sick easily because of what is known as malnutrition, the teacher is held accountable. I may have been hasty with Michael. Forty-six children and pressure from above—and from below, too, because children want to be treated individually.

"I'll send word to the relief office, stressing the urgency of shoes in this case. If mothers and teachers got together more often . . ." As Mrs. Brennan listened her anger began to cool.

But the problem was not simply one of shoes. Michael's mother didn't guess that he was experiencing a great feeling of insecurity due to his underprivileged, underclothed, undernourished condition. Added to this, there were too many burdens for his youth and not enough companionship with other boys his age.

However, many things became apparent as Miss Faxon talked with the boy's mother. "I've noticed, Mrs. Brennan, that Michael keeps to himself. He doesn't play around like the others do. He spends a good part of the day in day-dreaming. His life isn't an easy one, and he's creating a more pleasant

life for himself in his imaginings—a private world of his own.

"It isn't healthy for a boy to be too 'good.' He's separating himself from other children; becoming 'different' in a little dream world of his own. A little more companionship, a little more running wild with the other boys on the block would make him a much more normal and happy child.

"I'd suggest that Michael be relieved of marketing and taking care of Irene, except on special occasions. It will be difficult for you, but you wouldn't want your son to grow up to be a person who is content merely to dream—a person who is incapable of action."

Mrs. Brennan saw the point. Perhaps Mr. Brennan would talk to the boy oftener.

They'd walk over to visit the animals on Sunday, beginning this afternoon. Mike would be free of marketing so he could play ball with the boys.

Miss Faxon thought that would be a good beginning. But in her mind's eye she saw millions of other Michaels deprived of childhood—and their struggling parents and many other Miss Faxons harassed by large classes. Would they get together?

By Lillian Henry

A black and white illustration of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a white dress with a ruffled collar, looking out of a window. The view outside shows several trees with green leaves. The illustration is on the left side of the page, partially overlapping the text.

A STONE CAME R

The First Chapter

B RITT HENSLEY and his wife walked together about their new home. They had the lifting hearts of explorers, in spite of the feeling of familiarity always lingering about a place where generations have trod from birth to death. Those generations were easily adopted by Britt. He softly rubbed the weathered facings of doorways, and leaned against ancient apple trees with restful attachment. No lineal descendant of Jacob Holderness, shot by a Tory squad in one of the pre-Revolutionary skirmishes of 1777, could have felt more at home under the great oak in the barnyard or on the rock seat by the old well.

The months in town at a carver's bench had been torment for him. He had earned his money stolidly, neither swift nor clever at his work, longing to exchange his nibby tools for an axe that he could swing as high as his head, a hoe to bite the earth with, a plough whose handles he could grip while the loam crumbled and furrowed under his advancing feet. He wanted his will to dance freely on a chosen way, subject to none but wide-lapped mother earth and an indulgent father sun.

Ishma turned twilight eyes on him in a way that warmed life and made it seem secure. "You'll not be honing for the mountains now, will you, man Britt?"

"What you mean? They ain't been botherin' my mind."

But she knew he had yearned his heart sore. "There'll be room to turn your plough here."

"Ay, a feller'll not be fallin' out of his field, as they say of us up there." His eyes roved the land, which was by no means level but variously undulating, with tucked-in surprises and unexpected horizons. Piedmont land. "A man can stop here an' his feet not be wantin' to run from under him. Lucky for us Jim Holder's wife would ruther be runnin' a boardin' house in Denver. Jim didn't much want to leave the farm, but the gray mare's the better horse in that family. An' all I've got to do is to pay the taxes an' take keer of the land."

"Till they come back."

"I'll not be lookin' for 'em. It's a long way to Colorado. We won't make any money, but we'll live good. We'll not be afraid to ask folks to our table. They can put up for a week if they're a mind to. Some o' yore friends, now, out of a job—we'll clean up that big, back room an' let 'em come an' go."

Isma caught his hand, her eyes eagerly smoldering. "How do you always know what I'm wanting, Britt?"

"'Cause I know you, I reckon. You don't s'pose I'm just thinkin' about pleasin' myself on this old farm?"

"You don't mind when folks say you are too good for me?"

He laughed till his shoulders, against a plum tree, shook the white buds above their heads, making a showery scandal in that delicate congregation. "I'm not going to get so good I'll have to die. You needn't count on that, big girl."

She gave his hand a tighter squeeze. Britt. That's something I can't joke a

He turned his head away, abashed.

They crossed the yard to the well. He had carried out the rotten planks an' open the doors proudly. The floor shone of the box. The bottom was made of deep. "Cover that twice a day with fresh keep milk sweeter. I'll draw the water well is so deep the water's like ice, an' with lookin' at it."

Ishma lifted her wrists to remind the years when she had wrestled with living. "But if you're goin' to work in all you're goin' to do." His face shadowed ran upward on each side of his young for his wife to "work in town," but a hundred times and there seemed no other make a little money to get the things supply.

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The First Chapter in the Stirring Novel by

FIELDING BURKE



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He turned his head away, abashed by his rush of feeling.

They crossed the yard to the well-house, and Britt threw
open the doors proudly. The floor shone, likewise the water-box.
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of the box. The bottom was made of white pebbles, six inches
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Ishma lifted her wrists to remind him of her strength and
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"Tom Jeff Ferrabee ought to be comin' over."

"You've said that three times. What's behind it?"

"A young Guernsey. With her second calf. And pourin'
the milk."

"But the price, honey! We have to spend carefully. Our
pile wouldn't be more than a few inches if it were all in pennies."
"She's not costin' a dollar."

His wife's face grew serious. It was so easy for Britt to
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"Oh, I see you've got that big field ploughed!"

"Planted, too."

And there's a horse in the pasture!"

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TRADE UNIONS

By Erma L. Lee

IN a recently signed union agreement between the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union and four employes' associations in New York City covering 105,000 workers there is a provision forbidding child labor. No workers under the age of 18 are to be employed.

* * *

C. M., our correspondent in the fur workers' union, informs us that women especially made great advances in their recently signed agreement. About 3,000 women are employed in the trade as machine operators, hand sewers and finishers. Wages were raised and now range from \$42 to \$46 for a week of 35 hours. The furriers' union is a militant industrial union and the present leadership has followed the correct policy in securing equal wages and conditions for the women members of the union.

* * *

AGNES FAHY has just been elected second vice-president of the Newark Newspaper Guild. She was promoted into the post held last year by Virginia Lee, who has declined renomination.

* * *

AT a luncheon given by the Woman's Party, Antonia Brico, conductor of the only Woman's Symphony Orchestra in these United States, said the Musician's Union had rendered invaluable service to the union in its formative period. The orchestra is one hundred per cent union.

* * *

THE Women's Trade Union League clubhouse is headquarters for the chambermaids on strike in New York City. Free meals are supplied, banners and signs painted, and the building is a beehive of strike activity. Eight women organizers are assisting the chambermaids.

AT the national convention of the Inter-Professional Association just held in Washington, Elisabeth Christman, national secretary of the Women's Trade Union League, spoke on the need for union organization of women and offered the cooperation of her organization with the I.P.A.—the "Switchboard" organization which is attempting to coordinate the legislative work of all labor groups and women's organizations.

* * *

WOMEN'S Trade Union League members should make a serious attempt to send delegates to the national convention of the League in Washington, May 4 to 9.

* * *

THREE women are now on strike with the men members of the Newspaper Guild against the *Milwaukee News*—owned by Hearst—which refuses to recognize the Guild and grant their demands for a five-day week and a minimum wage. Women everywhere are urged to support this strike. Hearst is the outstanding exponent of fascism—woman's greatest immediate menace.

* * *

ISN'T it a coincidence that the Government Printing Office has just at this time also refused to continue the five-day week and Public Printer Giegengack discharged without a hearing Jesse Manbeck for "non-cooperation" because he introduced a resolution in the Washington Typographical Union protesting against the six-day week. Printers should demand Manbeck's reinstatement without delay. Union members know that the Assistant Public Printer, Miss Jo Coffin, will raise her voice in defense of free speech and union hours for her fellow union members.

A TELEGRAM FROM WILLIAM GREEN

EDITOR, THE WOMAN TODAY:

The decision of the New York Court of Appeals, unless reversed by the U. S. Supreme Court, blocks the way to safeguarding the wages of women and minors by legislation. The federal judiciary outlawed our federal agency for fixing minimum wages industrially so that a wage bottom should protect workers against competition in low wages and now the most promising state endeavor to guard against unfair competition in low wages for women and minors is nullified by the highest tribunal of the New York judiciary. Unless the Supreme Court overrules the New York judiciary there seems to be no way society can protect itself against unbearably low standards of wages for women and children.

The women themselves may organize in unions that they can bargain collectively with their employers through representatives of their own choosing. It is obvious that individual women workers are powerless to bargain individually with their employers to fix wage standards. It is equally obvious that society should make the right of wage earners to union membership in order to bargain collectively an enforceable right. The enactment of state laws supplementing the national labor relations act by extending this right to workers not under the protection of federal laws is a basic step in assuring all workers the protection of minimum wage standards.

The union is the dependable safeguard of all workers—men, women, and minors.

WILLIAM GREEN, *President,*
American Federation of Labor.

READERS' LETTERS . . .

By BESSIE BYRD

BEING most eager to meet our readers face to face, so to speak, I decided to have myself photographed. Well, I went and did it. The result? Horrors!

Was that frowning person with that harassed and worried look on her face, I? Was that what worrying over bills and waiting for subscriptions to come pouring in was doing to me? No! This was not the kind of face to show the world. Something drastic had to be done about changing it—the face I mean—and lo and behold it was done. Here is what did it.

From the Women's Council No. 1, Boyle Heights, Los Angeles, Cal. "Enclosed please find a check for five dollars as a donation from our Council towards the new magazine. Most of our women are either on relief or earn very little but nevertheless we will start off by ordering a bundle of fifty of your March issue. Hoping that you are getting a similar response from other Councils throughout the United States, we remain . . ."

Isn't that a tonic?

And listen to this from a Miss Lillian F—, New York City. "I have just finished reading THE WOMAN TODAY and am quite enthusiastic and happy over it. I have waited many years for this type of magazine to appear and I do hope it will serve its purpose well."

Yes, Miss F—, we pledge that it will.

From Muskegon, Michigan. "Your March issue is a 'honey.' Keep up the good work."



May we have your support
and comments on THE
WOMAN TODAY?

And how we will.

Again comes response from the West Coast. Dr. Marie D. Equi of Portland, Ore., has sent in fifteen subscriptions, and from San Francisco, Cal., comes payment for a bundle of 200 copies plus a donation of \$8.00 and three subscriptions.

The West Coast is certainly on its toes—so are we.

The following women from the Illinois coal regions have dug deep down in their pockets to do their bit. They are: Agnes Burns Wieck, first state president, Illinois Women's Auxiliary, Progressive Miners; Mrs. Mary Voyzey of Springfield and Mrs. Lillian Burnette of Marissa, state officers of the Illinois Women's Auxiliary, Catherine De Rorre, Du Quoin, only woman member of the executive board of the Illinois Workers' Alliance,

Mrs. Elizabeth Fothergill, East Peoria, former board member of the Women's Auxiliary, Progressive Miners, and Mrs. Rose North of Marissa, socialist leader and active auxiliary woman.

May we expect them to go on digging for subs among their friends?

And here is a telegram from Minneapolis that erased the last tiny wrinkle from my brow. "Magazine wonderful success. Sending check. Send hundred and fifty more. Mrs. Charles Lundquist."

These and many more favorable comments about the first issue of THE WOMAN TODAY are just what was needed to make one feel that it was worth while, indeed, to have put in those few extra hours of work. All those working on the magazine have done just that—put in many extra hours to give its readers a magazine that would be inspiring as well as entertaining.

Each month this column will be devoted to giving readers a "Byrd's Eye View" of what people all over the country think of THE WOMAN TODAY. Here's your chance to speak your mind. So come on folks—flood my mail.

But wait, here comes the postman. Oh-h-h-h. Quickly, some water. Miss Byrd has gone into a good old-fashioned faint. The Woman's Council of Greater New York has just sent in *one hundred subscriptions* and the only thing that will revive good 'old Byrd will be the same quick action from other cities.

IN OTHER LANDS . . .

By LILLIAN LESLIE

FROM AMSTERDAM comes word that a woman is among those leading the movement to boycott the Olympics in Germany. Miss Schuurm, running champion, has announced that she will not take part in the contests in Berlin.

AND WHILE WE'RE ON GERMANY: There is a great deal of indignation over the shortage of meat and the high food prices. Demonstrations of housewives have been witnessed in several German cities. In Bochum there were tumultuous scenes in the market place when a butcher refused to sell bacon unless a quarter of a pound of expensive sausage was bought at the same time. No arrests were made, but the police conducted the woman who had spoken for the others around the corner into another street.

BY WAY OF CONTRAST: Examination of several hundred workers' budgets in the Central Volga District, U.S.S.R., reveals tremendous increases in consumption

for the year 1935. Meat and bacon consumption has risen 130 per cent, sugar by 174 per cent, clothing by 63 per cent. And beginning with January, 1936, the price of wheat flour and bread has been reduced 10 per cent.

PARIS: The program of the People's Front Committee includes the following points: Respect for the right of women to work; application of trade union rights to all.

GREECE AND BELGIUM send news worthy of honorable mention in the history of woman's fight for equality. In Brussels, Belgium, a great demonstration for the right of women to work was organized by the Socialist women's organization and teachers' organizations. The Women's Committee Against War and Fascism took part. Resolutions were passed demanding the repeal of the emergency order of February 1935 limiting the work of married women, and protesting the elimination of

women as teachers.

Greek women are fighting legislation expelling them from civil service and bank positions. Thirteen national women's organizations have united for this purpose, and have included in their program the fight for political and social rights for women, and the protection of mothers and children.

NAOMI MITCHISON, famous English writer and Member of Parliament, is among the 65 M.P.'s who have signed a resolution for the release of Ernst Thaelmann, the general secretary of the Communist Party of Germany, who has been held prisoner by the Nazis for two years.

FIVE WOMEN are among the 30 anti-fascists who are being charged with giving leadership to the rebuilding of the people's common front against fascism in Austria. Among those charged with "high treason" are Socialists, Communists, women workers, a woman journalist and others.

FARMER-LABOR WOMEN'S CLUBS

By Mrs. Charles Lundquist

Not content to lag behind their men-folks in public life, the women of the Gopher State have formed a series of clubs to aid in the work of the Farmer-Labor Association—shedding an interesting light on the questions raised by Frances J. Gorman on page 9 of this issue.

TO bring women up to date politically—this is the purpose for which the Farmer-Labor Women's Federation of Minnesota was organized. The problem of showing women their responsibilities to the body politic and the duties they have for the welfare of their families and homes is a big and vastly important one. The depression has taught us that the security of one home depends on the security of other homes, that when the buying power of one home is cut off, other workers' homes are affected by the decreased market for goods. The housekeepers of the nation are living the economic breakdown every day. We have to adjust our budgets to meet salary cuts, unemployment, or relief allowances. To insure the working woman's taking an interest in politics, whether she works in kitchen or in factory, on the farm or in the city, we have only to prove to her that the security of her home is dependent on the kind of political state under which her home is maintained. We in Minnesota are setting out to make the proof convincing through our Farmer-Labor organization.

Let me explain our set-up. The Farmer-Labor Party is that organization which is headed by the Farmer-Labor candidates and their committee-men, two of whom are appointed by each candidate. It functions only during a campaign. The Farmer-

Labor Association is a permanent organization of workers and farmers and meets at regular intervals the year round. Membership in the Association is open to anyone who is willing to support the principles and platform as drawn up by the Association assembled in convention. The annual membership fee is one dollar, half of which is devoted to the education of the members. The other half is divided between the local and the state organizations. Every county in the state has one or more local Farmer-Labor Association clubs.

Local Farmer-Labor clubs carry on a variety of educational programs in an attempt to bring the real issues of government before the people. An organization of voters who meet regularly to discuss the activities of our elected officials constitutes an embarrassing threat to the politician who would prefer to be left to his own devices and forgotten by his constituents between elections.

Realizing the great potentiality of the women's vote, we saw with regret that at first they lacked interest in the Farmer-Labor Association. Inquiry among women brought out the fact that they felt inadequate in their understanding of the problems under discussion, that they were hesitant about going to meetings which were attended in many instances only by men, and that they felt unequal to holding their own in expressing themselves and working through the maze of parliamentary procedure. So, with the hope that a woman's organization would go a little way toward solving the problem of interesting women in the Farmer-Labor movement, a small band of women set out in 1928 to establish

a state Farmer-Labor Women's Federation.

Our formal organization is very simple. Each congressional district has its own chairman and as many local clubs as the number of interested members warrants. These congressional chairmen comprise the state executive board of the Federation. Each club carries out its own plans of activity, conducting study groups covering subjects ranging from public utility rates through social legislation and world peace. During campaigns our women do yeoman service in house-to-house canvassing, stumping through the state, and peddling literature.

Through participation in the Farmer-Labor Women's Federation, we are gaining in self-confidence and are developing leaders among ourselves. As a natural corollary to the stimulation of women's interest in government comes—slowly to be sure—direct activity in serving their communities. It is our aim to encourage these qualified women to enter this field of endeavor where women are not especially welcomed by the career politician who knows so well how to confuse his feminine constituents with beautifully worded phrases about the sanctity and security of the home—the basic problems of which he probably knows only as empty, meaningless words.

Woman's place may be in the home, but the home is no longer the isolated, complete unit it once was. To serve her home best, the woman of today must understand the political and economic foundations on which that home rests, and then do something about it.

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Women in factory, mill, shop, office and home — write the *true story* of your life, describe your working conditions through THE WOMAN TODAY. Names will not be published if so requested.

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WHITE COLLARS Are Wilting

By THERESA WOLFSON

Not a fashion note, this searching article by a well-known student of women's affairs nevertheless is a forecast of a new style of thinking for office workers.

EVERY morning there belches forth from subway stations a steady stream of workers, at Wall Street, at Brooklyn Bridge, at Fourteenth Street, the Loop in Chicago, Market Street in Philadelphia; women workers most of them, neatly tailored, perhaps with heels a little run down but with white starched collars and cuffs. The collar and cuffs are significant. They represent a badge of respectability, a sort of sign of one's job. In fact to all the world they are what the Chinese call a symbol of "face."

The woman who works in an office may be the daughter of a bricklayer or carpenter or a class-conscious tailor. She is one of four million workers in offices in the United States of whom 51 per cent are women. She may be one of 931,000 bookkeepers and accountants in the United States, or one of 1,997,000 clerks, or one of 811,000 stenographers and typists, but she is unique in that she has graduated from public school, that eight out of ten of her kind has had a high-school education or some special training in business school, and that she considers herself as belonging to a class apart from that of her father and mother. The very nature of her job, perhaps the nature of her education, has made her feel that her life is inter-linked with that of her employer. Not alone because she owes her job to him but because she admires his values of life, his pattern of thinking, his clothes, his idiosyncrasies.

She considers herself a member of the middle class. She believes in the protection of private property but she owns no property except her meager personal belongings. At least one-third of her number work in offices employing 25 or more workers. She may never have seen her employer, she may work for a corporation, a large life insurance company, or a law firm, but if she is a secretary or typist or file clerk she comes in contact with men of the middle class who have a stake in the present system and are quick to impress her with the importance of preserving that stake.

In the halcyon days of prosperity she averaged, according to the National Industrial Conference Board, about \$1,260 a

year, which was slightly less than the earnings of manual workers in 25 industries. In 1931-32, 20 per cent of a group of over 5,000 office workers earned less than \$20 a week, 23 per cent earned between \$20 and \$25, and 24 per cent earned under \$30 a week. In a study made by the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor of 43,000 office workers in 1931 and the first three months of 1932, 57 per cent had salaries ranging from \$75 to \$124 a month. Sixty per cent of the 15,000 women clerks in insurance firms, mail-order houses, and public utility offices were paid less than \$100 a month.

In 1929, office appliance industries turned out \$900,000,000 worth of goods on the retail markets. They shipped out of the factories into the offices: adding machines, bookkeeping machines, addressing, duplicating, tabulating, and billing machines. They lightened work, cut wages, and decreased employment! The white collar on Miss Office Worker's dress began to wilt. The pride which she took in the individualistic nature of her job as secretary to the boss or as his stenographer was blasted by the introduction of a dictating machine!

Even belt systems were introduced into large offices, and the filing and billing clerks found themselves on both sides of the belt just as their brothers have been working for years in the machine shops and automobile factories. Speed and efficiency became important watchwords of the business office and though the working hours of the office girl are comparatively short, about 39 hours a week, nevertheless the tempo and demands of the office have increased.

The increased mechanization of the office has been responsible for increased training on the part of the office worker. She cannot get a job unless she can handle several machines and her versatility becomes an important attribute in securing a job. Inasmuch as each office has its own particular technique of operation, the employment policy of most large offices is to lure girls as young as possible, train them in the ways of the office, and then let them depend upon possible vacancies for promotion or increased salary. Most office jobs for clerical workers are of a blind-alley nature. There are few chances for advancement.

Miss Office Worker may meet her colleagues in the rest-rooms or lavatories of the offices, or at the corner cafeteria, but

the discussion rarely concerns itself with simple essentials such as wages or hours, or union organization. A group of garment workers or millinery workers will meet and talk about these matters unashamed and boldly, but generally for the office worker such talk would brand her as "radical" or queer. However, in the last few years, office workers have begun, though only in small numbers, to look forward to organization into trade unions.

Of thirteen million white-collar workers in the United States, four million are office workers, of whom 51 per cent are women. The great majority of these are not in the trade unions.

What is there about the psychology and aura of an office job that makes it so difficult for the worker to organize? Two and a half million women work in offices at machines requiring varying degrees of skill and training, with opportunities for economic advancement definitely limited. To be sure this is a picture that affects men office workers as well. The trade unions have not bent sufficient energy in getting to these workers to join the organizations?

Lewis Corey in his excellent study of *The Crisis of the Middle Class*, describes "the middle class as a split personality, tormented by the clash of discordant interests." Office workers may be of working class origins, but in the United States up until the last few years, they think and feel and act as do the middle class entrepreneurs. They pile into the subways every morning and evening, they rub shoulders with workers belonging to trade unions, but they dream dreams of acquiring security, of achieving beauty and charm, by the aid of the thousands of crutches that are offered to them in the subway advertisements, over the radio, in the newspapers! It is hard to throw away dreams, and for Miss Office Worker doubly so! Her collar may be wilted, her dress shiny, her shoes run down, but the awakening to the importance of joining a trade union organization to improve her status, to really give her "face," is slower in coming than that for the industrial worker. All of the dangers of the depression beset the office and threaten the office worker's already low standard of living. She must learn faster to join with her fellow workers in a common fight, to pull herself out of the morasses of capitalism. Improvement of her economic conditions can be achieved through an effective trade union.

A STONE CAME ROLLING

(Continued from page 17)

"Me an' Tom Jeff. He ploughed a good lot o' that field, and wouldn't take a cent."

Ishma's misgivings were renewed, but she kept silent.

"If I had a doubt in the world as to Tom Jeff's rights to that horse, I wouldn't give him standin' room on my place."

"No, you wouldn't. But I wonder if that old morality is anything to be proud of, Britt? Crystallizing injustice till you have to shape your bleeding soul to it."

"Ah, but you wouldn't tech him either."

"I don't suppose I would," she admitted slowly. "We've all lived in the old trap so long it seems a part of us. But—"

"I don't see how you've got so much done, Britt. Shall we go back to the house now?"

"We'll go through the orchard. There's a trail right to the kitchen door." They took the path through the grass that was already a foot high. "I'll have to cut this with a scythe. Can't get the mower in here, the trees are so close."

"A mower, Britt? A mowing machine?"

"Tom Jeff is goin' to set hisn right over here. We won't have to bother about not gettin' to cut the hay at the right time, watin' to borrow."

His wife gave him a helpless look. "It's all right, big girl. A man died who was owin' Tom Jeff, an his widow begged him to take the machine off her hands for the debt. It don't figger in the mortgage he gave the bank. But if they find it on the farm they'll nab it, right or wrong. And we don't mean to let 'em find it."

Ishma began to laugh. Her laughter flowed over Britt, catching him up in a musical gale. She didn't stop until his forehead was a frowny network and he had begun to dig the ground with his iron-tipped shoe heel.

"What made you laugh like that?"

"Two old conspirators—you and Tom Jeff. I hope you save your necks."

"I swear, Ishma, we h'ain't the faintest notion of cheatin' the bank."

"Of course not."

"You said 'conspirators'."

"Can't you conspire for right as well as for wrong?"

"It's nothin' to laugh at. A man losin' his only way of makin' a livin'. And a family too."

"How much family?"

"Two little boys—babies, just about—a wife—an' a girl by his first wife. She's goin' to work in town."

"And live with them in the two rooms?"

"She'll stay with an aunt. But there's an awful big family there, and the man out of work. Her board money will help out."

They walked toward the house under a tall grape arbor where the air seemed thin

and acid after the thick pockets of orchard fragrance they had pushed through. Out of the arbor they stopped by a short row of little bee houses, each painted white, and with a green cupola. Britt didn't care for the society of bees, but Ishma held out her hands and let two or three stragglers light on the back of them. She liked bees. They knew how to work and fly too. It wasn't true that they toiled senselessly, ever mass driven.

"Ned is not afraid of them," said Britt. "He laid down on the grass yesterday and let them crawl over his face. I give you and Ned the bees, and welcome. But I'll make the new hives when we need 'em. Tom Jeff says he'll show me how to make these modern ones, story and roof-parlor. They'll be swarmin' next month, and I'll have to be ready. We'll get at it the first rainy day."

"I've heard of farmers falling behind because of rainy weather, but you'll be out of luck if it isn't a rainy season, you're laying out so much for the wet days."

"Tom Jeff will help me—if he stays around here—"

"But he has two rooms in town, hasn't he?"

"He don't have to keep 'em."

Ishma moved on, but stopped by every bush, making her smiles and comments more frequent for Britt's sake, as she found it more difficult to accept her happiness and keep her mind from the struggle she had left behind her in the town.

"You cut the grass with neighbor Ferabee's lawnmower, I suppose. I see it leaning against that pear tree."

"I didn't ask him for it. He brought it over in his car, with the potatoes."

She decided not to register "potatoes." "He's got a car, has he?"

"Awful old. But it pulls."

"And the bank gets it?"

"There's a lot of parts that Joe Cunniffe gave Tom Jeff when he patched it up for him. He's goin' to keep *them*. It ain't likely the bank will want the rest of it."

They were at the kitchen door. There was only one step—a slab of rock—wide and hospitable. Britt turned the door knob with an unsuccessful effort at nonchalance. Ishma saw his nervous grip on the knob and prepared to be enthusiastic as he threw the door open. But no preparation was needed. Her enthusiasm was unfeigned. The length of the kitchen was double its breadth, and that was more than generous. There were large windows wide open letting in waves of sweet air. At one end was a cook-stove, but Ishma's eyes were on the big fireplace, with a real ingle-nook and bench, and such pots and pans!

"We'll get an oil stove for the summer," Britt hastened to assure her.

"But the winter, Britt, the winter! The fires there, and bread from that oven! I wish Ginny Stark could see it!"

"Run your hand over this table, honest! It's more'n a hundred years old. Two hundred, maybe. Not a bit of varnish on it, and polished like glass. And so big you can have all your mill buddies out for Christmas dinner."

"Oh, Britt! And that little one by the window is just right for us three. We'll have supper there."

"Ned is sure to bring some fish. I'll make a fire in the fireplace and cook 'em."

"How did you get the kitchen so clean, Britt?" She was opening the pantry. "Mrs. Holder must have been a wonderful housekeeper. Look at these empty jars. Hundreds of them, and shining like sunlight."

Britt looked embarrassed. "Did you wash them, sir?"

"I had some help."

"It was never Tom Jeff. A man couldn't do that shining job."

"It was Deely. His wife."

"Oh! She's been here too! That accounts for the rooms all swept, and the windows without a speck on them. And I've been thinking of you as my miracle-man."

She sat down in the kitchen rocker, and Britt sat on one of its stout arms. "Ain't we lucky, big girl?"

"I've never heard of such luck, Britt. Or such neighbors."

"There's a room upstairs I didn't show you."

"I noticed that. Have you got Deely locked up in it?"

"No. Fairinda fixed up that room. The girl, you know."

"The girl I don't know. She has a lovely name. I suppose it suits her. Gold hair, blue eyes, and fluttering angel figure?"

Britt stared. "You do know her?"

Ishma rose up, laughing. "Come on, old helpless!"

The upstairs room was large and square. On the front a glory of sunlight came through the window. At the end a stupendous white pine stood far enough away to admit the air, and near enough to supply cool shade. The furniture was old, massive, dully gleaming. There was nothing like it in the rooms. Here was treasure.

"Why didn't Sue Holder sell these things if she didn't want them? I know what it means, Britt. She's coming back."

"Oh, this ain't Holder furniture. It's Fairinda's. It belonged to her mother, and she left it to Fairinda. Tom Jeff couldn't sign it away, 'cause it wasn't his. He wanted me to save it for Fairinda, and how could I refuse when we had so much room? They said we could use it. This'll be our room."

"I don't want it, Britt. I don't like dark, heavy things. I like that other big room across the hall where that little thin

(Continued on page 24)

"The Hand That Rocks the Cradle of Liberty"

By ISOBEL WALKER
SOULE

WOMEN often make or break a strike but in the past week I have stood on a platform and talked to the women of a strike. The Vermont marble and quarry workers' wives, mothers, daughters and sweethearts—all of them sitting through a long hearing and mass meeting and building up hope, hope in a delegation that came from many points of the compass. A delegation led by Rockwell Kent—a group of scientists, writers, poets, labor leaders, trade unionists and journalists who gathered to hear the story of the Vermont Marble Company and its workers—an impartial group who, after listening to the hearing from two to six-thirty o'clock on February 29, attended the mass meeting that was held in the Town Hall of West Rutland that evening and voted unanimously for the support of the strike. It was there that I noticed the women of the strike look up from the audience at us on the stage and I felt that there was no doubt but that the strike would be won, for I read courage written on their faces.

In this strike it is the women who are carrying on in weather-beaten, drafty tenements; it is the women who try and get relief, and have to beg for emergency relief. One woman told us she had to walk seven miles to the overseer of the poor. (Overseers of the poor in Vermont handle all emergency relief.) He finally gave her a slip of paper for an order for a family of six people—one each of flour, four yeast cakes, five pounds of sugar, two oleomargarine, macaroni, and oatmeal (oatmeal nearly always wormy). She presented her slip at the store—the storekeeper said he would send the order. When it arrived there was no flour. She trudged back to the store—the only excuse she received was "orders." We then asked if anyone else had received such treatment and a number of women stood up in the audience and said "yes, they had had the same experience." Imagine whole towns on a starch diet! If they have any food at all. Union relief has been on the average of \$1.86 for a family per week—and that is not State or Town Relief—that is Union Relief. The State boasts about no relief and that there is no State money for relief. Emergency Relief is handled only by the towns and then under pressure. It seems strange that the State has enough money to spend from \$800 to \$1,600 a week for

Deputy Sheriffs. Why protect one family at the sacrifice of hundreds of other good citizens?

One woman said to me, "I have five children, there are seven of us and we are hungry, but we are not as hungry as we were before the strike; that is one reason our men struck. But if we have to die of starvation—we will stick it out to win the strike."

Another woman tried to get a doctor for her child. Here is a quotation: "We are trying to find the Overseer of the Poor so he could get a doctor for us. We went through snowdrifts as high as the fence posts—then we had to come down street again before we found him. He didn't want to get any doctor at first because he said us people were costing the town a lot of money. (Remember only Emergency Relief and Union Relief can give \$1.86 per family, but that is better than 2-cent checks at very rare intervals.) I then spoke up and told him he better get one because if the baby died it would cost the town more and he said he guessed I was right. So he gave us a paper to go. Then we had to look for a car to take us to Rutland, 35 miles away. And nobody would take us, the snow was so bad, and we had no money." The nearest free hospital is in Boston. The Proctors, owners of the Vermont Marble Company, built a hospital in the town of Proctor, but if one of their employees was ill, \$3.50 was deducted per week until the bill was paid for medical

care. And out of a \$13.30 salary, where \$5.40 is deducted every two week, staggered with the next two weeks for other expenses—light, water, insurance—so that by the end of the week sometimes there are 20-cent checks and even 2-cent checks. Often yellow vouchers—when one is paying off hospital charges—and other indebtedness to the Proctor family, particularly as the average family is six children, you can realize how often the worker sees yellow vouchers. A feudal family, the Proctors, living off their own people, for many of the workers are from families that have worked for other generations of Proctors. Also the Proctors seem to have forgotten that Vermont is not a dead state; it has been a somnambulant one. Now it has awakened to its crisis. Once before it was the cradle of liberty and I know that the backing up by these heroic women will not only rock the cradle but help win the strike. They have marched beside their men; they marched Thanksgiving Day upon the town of Proctor; they were hungry, but on their placards was written, "You may eat your turkey but we want Partridge." Partridge is an official of the Proctor Company—the armed deputy sheriffs were given turkey to eat.

The children often can't go to school because of lack of clothes. When the truant officer calls and he realizes that he is responsible for their attendance at school, he sees to it that they get one set of stockings and underwear. He remarks that they may stay in bed while their clothes are washed out, if they ask for two sets. And this is happening in a State that recently issued a pamphlet for winter sports entitled: "All of Vermont a Winter Play Ground." For whom? may I ask. For it is quite a different circumstance to go up there well fed and clothed, to go snowshoeing and skiing and to quit when you want to, to go into a well-built house with a large open fire and to have a choice of food. But when you are under-nourished and under-clothed, and facing starvation, if you are on the picket line below zero, and if at any minute you may get a bullet in your back from a deputy sheriff—that isn't what I would call "All of Vermont a Winter Play Ground."

One hundred and eighty-six families are to be evicted April first.

Bad publicity, Vermont—bad publicity.

A STONE CAME ROLLING

(Continued from page 22)

furniture looks lost. I'm going to make it dance. I'll paint it rose-pink, and the walls sky blue.

"Fine! I don't keer for this either."

"We'll let Deely and Tom Jeff have this room."

"Honest! What you mean?"

"Would you mind, Britt?" Her smile was so sweet that he didn't suspect her of teasing.

"Why, I'd like it. The house is so big they wouldn't be in the way, and they won't cost anything, for I'll make plenty to eat."

"Cost? With their cow for milk and butter, their calf for beef, and their horse, and all the other things to save us from buying? And I know Deely counts on doing the canning the way she washed those jars. I'll not have to stay away from work next week to help get settled."

"You will too, by golly! You promised me a week."

The look he gave her brought a flush to her forehead and underlined her eyes with a crescent of bloom. Britt didn't have to do all the blushing in the family.

They heard Ned whistling, and moved together to the window, as eager as if a beloved guest were arriving. Their child was not just a small person to be put off and on with familiar tyranny. He had been staying on the farm with Britt, riding the bus in to school. His mother had kept at her work until Saturday noon, and all the week he had not seen her. There had been a struggle in his mind between staying at home for the afternoon, watching her discover the place, and the maturer conclusion that his daddy ought to be sole showman of the day. Besides, fishing was good, and what about providing the first family supper in the new home?

He saw them at the upper window and waved his catch, a rock fish and two bass, that flashed in the sun. Ishma's eyes met his in silent greeting and Britt shouted, "Hello, fisherman of Holderness!"

"Twelve inches!" called Ned, and went on to the well. They began talking of him in the usual way of parents where there is only one child, finding freshness in the thousandth repetition.

"I'm glad he likes to wear shorts," said his mother. "He outgrows a pair of trousers in two months."

"Can't come under my arm now by an inch." Britt gave his arm a horizontal stretch to show her that her son was tall indeed, though she knew his height to the fraction of a millimeter. "When I told Ferrabee that Ned was only twelve, he said, 'Come on, farmer, put three years to that!' What you think about his school now, Ishma? Better satisfied?"

"I've found out that it can't hurt Ned. He will always do his own thinking."

"You mean he'll do yours. You're just alike."

"Why, Britt, you know he looks just like you!"

"He's got your eyes, and your ways and thoughts."

"Well?"

"Golly, I'm satisfied!" He caught her in both arms and kissed the red to her cheeks. But his compelling blood did not keep him from making sure that his son was not in sight.

Ned had drawn water and was cleaning the fish. If you were making a "tan-bark stew," you would put the fish through seventeen waters, according to Sam Woods, the revered local authority, whom no one contradicted because a taste from his pot silenced all dissenters. But for simple broiling, three waters was enough, and Ned soon had the fish ready for the pan. Britt kindled a small fire in the fireplace, which was so big and black that they could easily imagine they were around a campfire in the open night. He broiled the fish, while Ishma stirred up corn cakes with butter-milk brought from the Ferrabees. There was lettuce, there were tomatoes, from the Ferrabees. She toasted some crackers for the final bites, to be eaten with peach preserves—from the Ferrabees.

"It's a good way to get used to them," she said. "We'll hardly know it when they arrive."

"They're not coming until Monday," said Ned.

Ishma was down before the fire inspecting the fish. She lifted her head quickly. So it was all settled before she came.

Britt looked guilty, but Ned was serene. "We told them we knew exactly what you would do without waiting to ask you. They were awfully worried—standing mighty night on their heads—weren't they, dad? Fairinda wanted to go into town and see you, mother, but I told her she didn't have to, and she'd know why soon as she looked at you."

"You're pretty sure of me, aren't you, son?" Her low laughter started their own and made a harmony in the room.

After supper they sat long at the table. There was much to talk about, but they were half silent with the comfort of being together. There would be time for talking in the days ahead. Ishma forgot that she was not to be a constant presence in those days. She forgot the town, that burning face of consciousness revealing itself through a mesh of struggle, perplexity and pain. The soft dusk fell like a great cushion between her and life that ached and starved. Could any future for mankind offer more than the daily, fulfilling touch of love? She knew better, but she played with the belief, more abandoned to the moment because she knew its brevity.

She was tired, and when Ned began to talk contented herself with the sound of

his voice, hearing his words as an indistinguishable flow. But he had a keen audience in Britt.

"How's the tackle Tom Jeff gave you? Good for bass?"

"You bet it is." Ned rose from the table. "He'll want to bring Mrs. Ferrabee's chickens over tonight. The bank'll get 'em Monday. I'd better shoot across and help him, dad."

Ishma heard that. "How far is it, son?"

"A mile and a piece."

He stepped off, so untroubled by his mission that his walk became a casual saunter before he was out of sight.

The Ferrabees had fifty fine Rhode Islands, and three bunches of young ones "nigh ready for the frying-pan." After they were safely sheltered at Holderness, though it was late, Tom Jeff and Britt decided to bring the cow and calf over. "When it's a case of savin' a cow, it don't go against the Almighty to take a little time from Sunday," said Tom Jeff.

"Don't you know," asked Ishma, after she had taken his ready hand in friendship, "that farmers out West are getting together and stopping such sales? Isn't it time for Southern farmers to find their back-bone?"

"Lordy, go against the banks?" He couldn't see that at all. A debt was a debt, and Jim Carter did let him have the money. He'd save as much as he could though. The cow was his, the horse was his, and the mowing machine. He'd get that later. It was safely hidden under a pile of straw innocently heaped up until you couldn't tell it from the other big stacks around it.

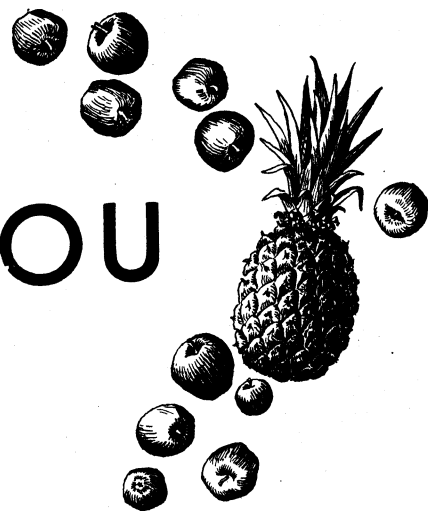
Ishma looked despairingly at Britt. He was one of the local farmers now. Why didn't he help organize them? Britt tried to look away, but she made him face her. Well, he was too new, he said. He'd have to get a foothold in the neighborhood before folks would listen to him. Couldn't she see that? She did, but she felt there was more than that to his hesitation. He was wanting her to let him alone—let him keep the peace he had found—above all, to come into it with him. His little sixteenth-century peace, with its foundation long washed out!

Tom Jeff thought it would be better for the cow to be milked by a familiar hand on the first day in her new home, and said that he, or Deely, would be over by milkin' time next morning.

But it was Fairinda who came. Everybody rose late that Sunday at Holderness. Fairinda petted and sleeked and milked the cow, not hearing a stir or seeing a soul. She strained the milk and decided to leave it in the well-house without drawing fresh water for the box. That would be a noisy process and disturb the sleepers.

She was carefully closing the well-house door when she heard a step behind her and

(Continued on page 28)



FOOD FOR YOU

By FRANCES WILLS

JUST what is a balanced diet? If you were to ask this question of ten experienced homemakers, I'll warrant you'd receive ten different answers. Such are the confusing opinions that surround this most important and vital health question.

"But why," you ask, "should it now be necessary to balance diets, when only a short time ago the idea was unheard of? Why disturb that nice, comfortable, old-fashioned idea we have been brought up on that one should eat what he likes and that taste is the natural guide in the selection of food? Why shouldn't we be allowed to indulge in our favorite dishes to our hearts' content?"

Scientists and nutritionists have come along and given us quite a food-jolt. They tell us that eye and taste appeal are important, but unless our diet is balanced, we run a serious risk of affecting our health. They have experimented and definitely found out that vitamin and mineral foods can not only keep us well, but can contribute towards building up a superior degree of health, and that following one's taste is not the ideal guide because it doesn't lead one to the most healthful kinds of food.

Many of us live almost exclusively on a one-sided diet—a diet that lacks minerals and vitamins. You, yourself, know ten friends who subsist principally on a meat, bread and potato diet. This is a one-sided diet because it is so poor in minerals and vitamins. Whatever your diet, if it lacks minerals and vitamins, it is one-sided. And this is so dangerous that it is now called a "deficiency diet." Such a diet does not provide the body with all the elements needed to keep our internal machinery working properly. Indulging occasionally in foods lacking the elements mentioned above is permissible, but we underscore the word *occasionally*. It is the continued lack which is dangerous to your health.

We need plenty of Vitamin A foods to protect us from colds and infections. We

need Vitamin B foods to stimulate appetites and promote good digestion, and feed our nervous system. If our diet lacks Vitamin C, scurvy will result. Without Vitamin D, bones and teeth will be affected. Pellagra will result from lack of Vitamin G foods.

We need iron for our blood, and calcium and phosphorus for our bones and for many other important functions in the body. There's a long list of minerals we need which we will not go into for the present. Suffice it to know that for good health we need all of these elements.

Now, it would be quite impossible for every homemaker, when planning her meals, to keep an eye on each food for its vitamin and mineral value. We have, therefore, devised a very simple plan that, if followed carefully, will assure that all the minerals and vitamins are included.

And here's the trick! Build your menus principally on milk, fruits and vegetables, and you'll not only be balancing your menus, but also safeguarding the health of your family.

These three classes of foods are veritable mines of health elements. Raw or cooked, you can't go wrong, although preference should be placed on the raw foods for the most vitamins.

Fortunately, the commonest and most inexpensive of this trio are richest in vitamins and minerals. Carrots, cabbage and all green and yellow vegetables cannot be surpassed for their health treasures. Milk, and all its products are ideal, for in these foods we have rich amounts of nearly all the vitamins and minerals. When oranges are high, raw apples and practically any other fresh fruit in season can pinch-hit.

No matter what the price and season, fruits and vegetables will furnish you with more vitamins than hearty, heavy foods.



By hearty, heavy foods we are referring to the spaghettis, white rice, white bread—which lack vitamins because they have been bleached and devitalized—and such other foods that contain fat and starch a-plenty.

Not that we do not enjoy the hearty and stimulating qualities of meat. But if your budget does not permit of very much meat, you need not worry about your diet if it contains milk, cheese, buttermilk and other milk products, and plenty of green and yellow vegetables and fruit.

If you are under the impression that only meat can satisfy, or that a meal is complete only when meat is the main dish, it might be well to call your attention to the fact that milk and cheese contain a protein substance which is far ahead of meat when it comes to building body tissues.

In a word, the ideal diet—and the most healthful one—consists of rich amounts of milk, fruits and vegetables.

In the next issue of this department we will show you how to build breakfast, lunch, supper and dinner menus with this marvelous trio, so that your family will take their health foods with pleasure.

Here are some recipes that are not only vitamin and mineral rich, but also have that eye and taste appeal.

Cabbage and Pineapple Salad

Combine shredded or chopped cabbage with drained, crushed pineapple. If desired, add chopped or broken nut meats. Moisten with cream dressing and pile high on crisp lettuce.

Cream Dressing

- 1/4 tablespoon salt
- 1 teaspoon mustard
- 2/3 tablespoon sugar
- Few grains cayenne pepper
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 egg (slightly beaten)
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/4 cup vinegar

(Continued on page 26)

WOMEN AND POLITICS

(Continued from page 9)

the organization of a united Labor Party, based upon and organized by the working class, and inclusive of all the dispossessed in this country!

No working class ranks can be "solid" without the women. No trade union and no political party is wholly effective unless it is supported by the women. I therefore urge every woman trade unionist, every unorganized woman, and every wife of worker and farmer or agricultural worker to join hands with the thousands of working class people now fighting for the creation of a strong, militant, political defensive against the advancing army of our reactionary tyrants, the bosses and the bankers.

Without the women of the United States, we will all be tied to the chariot wheels of the "great" and ground to dust beneath them—a broken helpless working class.

With the women of the United States as a stronghold of this people's defense corps, the Labor Party, we can laugh in the faces of the bankers and employers who would destroy us. They have the power of money, but we have the strength of numbers!

I make this appeal and this challenge to

the women workers of the United States: *You must take the initiative in mobilizing the women's battalion of the Labor Party.* Draw in your fellow women workers, your housewife friends and the wives of workers in your communities! Make the first move for the organization of our defense against reaction! Explain to your husbands, if they are not now interested, the necessity of combining trade-union activity with political organization!

What is the answer of the women of the United States to this challenge?

FOOD FOR YOU

(Continued from page 25)

Mix dry ingredients, add egg, butter, milk and vinegar very slowly. Stir and cook over boiling water until mixture begins to thicken. Strain and cool. This makes an excellent dressing for fruit salads.

Baked Rarebit

- 1 lb. soft, mild cheese
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- ¼ teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/3 teaspoon paprika
- 1½ cups milk
- 4 cups of bread cut in cubes
- 3 eggs, slightly beaten

Sprinkle a layer of bread cubes in a buttered baking dish, cover with one third the mixture of salt, pepper, and mustard and repeat twice, making three layers. Add milk to beaten eggs, and pour over bread mixture. Bake twenty-five minutes in a moderate oven, 350° F. Serve at once.

Question

Mrs. J. B.
Philadelphia, Pa.

Q. When I was growing up I was never allowed to eat hard cooked eggs. My mother even tried to get me to eat them raw. Now I am told that hard cooked eggs are more easily digested than raw eggs. Do you think this is true?

A. Yes. Surprisingly enough, the foremost nutrition experts in this country have found, on experimenting, that soft or even hard cooked eggs are easier to digest than raw. This is the reason they give: The digestive juices must have something with body to it to work on. When an egg is raw, it is too slippery and gets away only half digested. One great doctor prescribes a little of the finely chopped yolk of a hard boiled egg for the baby's diet after weaning.

Here is a warning, however. When you eat hard eggs, they should either be chopped fine beforehand, or chewed very thoroughly.

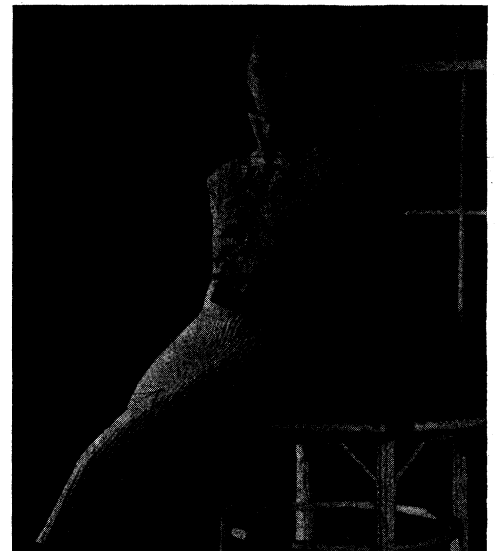
An Advance Pattern

No. 1501. This sprightly jacket-dress comes in sizes 14-20 (34 to 40 bust); If you like these dress patterns, help "The Woman Today" by purchasing them through us.

Advance Patterns follow the newest style trends, and come with full instructions which are simple to follow. They are sold in stores throughout the country.



now, where is my knitting



Bernat

A sun-back sport dress knitted with finest Australian wool. Start this now so that by easy stages, you will have it ready when summer comes. Make a bright, contrasting flannel jacket with a crocheted edge of this same yarn, and you'll have a double duty ensemble. Send a stamped self-addressed envelope to The Woman Today for directions.

"The Woman Today" Pattern Dept.
112 East 19th Street, New York.

Enclosed find 15c for pattern No. 1501.

Size.....
Name.....
Address.....
(Wrap coins carefully)



Bernat

A sun-back sport dress knitted with finest Australian wool. Start this now so that by easy stages, you will have it ready when summer comes. Make a bright, contrasting flannel jacket with a crocheted edge of this same yarn, and you'll have a double duty ensemble. Send a stamped self-addressed envelope to The Woman Today for directions.

fashion letter

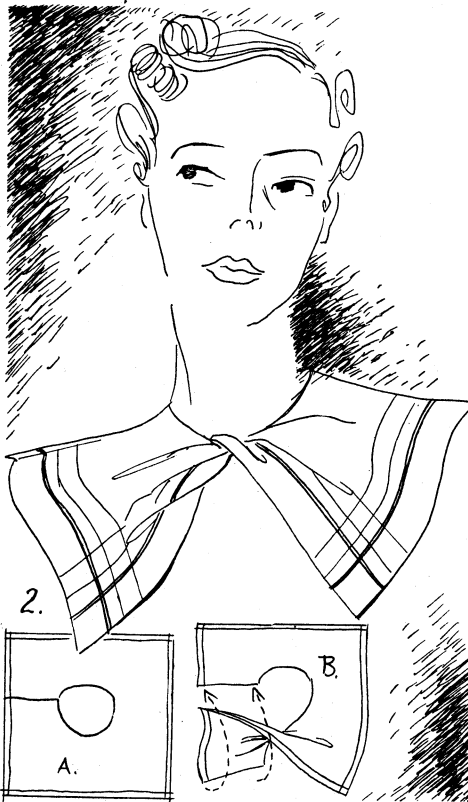


MRS. LILY H. K., an office worker in Oklahoma City, "loves to wear fresh, expensive-looking collars and fronts with her dresses." This information cheered us up like anything, because in the next breath she described her most inspired moment and sent along a pattern. It's a gilet, and pretty masterly.



It should be made of lightweight pique and lined. The dotted lines in the back view (Fig. 1) indicate the normal neckline and should be taken into account when cutting the high neck. The front should be a little more than waist length. The width of the back, *plus* seam allowance. Be nearly as wide as the full width of the neck in back. This is necessary for the wing opening. This width should be

tapered down as far as A to one-half the width of the back, *plus* seam allowance. Be wise and cut a paper pattern to your measure first. The wings snap together at about B and can be embellished with a button on each outside. Mrs. K., however, prefers an artificial gardenia or



vegetable on each side, and so do we—but the upkeep is terrible.

Figure 2 is *something*, and so simple you couldn't go wrong if you tried. It is the unsolicited contribution of a well-known dress designer here in New York. Take a man's handkerchief of the ordinary size in silk or linen—and why not have your initial, big, in the corner? Cut hole for neck, a little back of center and allowing for a narrow hem. Cut also an opening where shoulder line would be. Try on and twist as in B before closing at shoulder. The back can be twisted, too, or worn like a sailor collar. Decide this before hemming at shoulder, then sew on snaps. This is even more so made of pique and lined with a contrasting color. Also consider making it of a figured scarf. Oh, *very* nice.

Figure 3 is our own concoction and we love it. We made it of a yard of handkerchief linen and four exquisite hankies

with drawn-work edges, which we bought pinned together in a slightly shop-soiled packet, much marked down. First, make a plain foundation (A) of a straight piece a little wider than your shoulders (and be sure it's wide enough to pull down over the bust easily when sewn at the sides). Arrange two of the handkerchiefs folded, as B—B, at the neck and stitch down, leaving the lapels loose. Add handkerchief (C) and stitch. Cut the fourth hanky in



two diagonally, and stitch down (D—D). If you have a fifth, finish back of neck with it. If not, use lower corner of C. Cut the linen away from under the handkerchiefs and you will be entranced by the fit of the bias sections. This gilet looks, tastes, and smells like about \$14.50 of somebody's hard-earned money.

All of these ideas are worth making up carefully, not to say lovingly—because they'll wear and wear.

And if *you* have ideas, speak up, woman, we need each other.

GWEN BARDE.

A STONE CAME ROLLING

(Continued from page 24)

turned to see Britt. He gave her a merry greeting and began to let the bucket down into the well.

"Won't you wake Mrs. Hensley?"

"Wake her! We've been awake for an hour, lyin' up there talkin' about the fortune we're goin' to make on Holder farm. You slipped in quiet as a weasel comin' for chickens. I didn't hear you till you opened the well-house door. I meant to help milk. Here, keep your hands off that chain!"

Fairinda, in her embarrassment, had started to pull the bucket from the well. He took the chain from her and drew the water up, his hands playing with the task while he looked at her. What a slim little thing she was! And cheeks as pink as the weigela buds behind her. She looked as if she were flowering out of the bush. Ishma, watching from an upstairs window, was thinking the same thing, and a little more. The young face upturned to Britt's seemed related to the sky rather than earth. But earth would put up claws and draw it down; smudge it with salt tears, the stripes of toil, the clay of too early graves. Work in town! Nothing could protect that slight figure from its losing fight with the machine, wasting hours of overwork, the crude hands of passion, the heavy load of unprepared and bewildered maternity. Britt stood beside her, tall and strong, a protecting god, and no doubt ready to interpose himself between her and any dragon that might dart forth on her path. Ishma loved him so much, she wished she

could give him a daughter like that, on whom he could spend his protective impulses. Neither she nor Ned would ever fill that particular want of his. But what of the day when he must find that he could not protect that beloved fragility? However he shouted and waved his arms, she must become food for the dragons.

Yes, Fairinda was lovely, thought Ishma.

He had finished pouring water into the milk-box, and she prepared to go. "Tom Jeff said he'd come for you all in the flivver by the time you are ready to go to church."

"Church? Oh, we're not going." He was amused by the reproach in her eyes. "We'll take a long ramble, I guess. Maybe go as far as Buffalo Bridge. I want to show my wife the river along there."

"You went to church last week."

"My wife wasn't here then, and I felt lonesome. But I never go when she's around."

Fairinda felt frightened. Was his wife a demon-woman, destroying his soul? She picked up the bucket into which Britt had poured the greater part of the milk, and was leaving with a mumbled good-by, when Ishma came out to the well.

"Wait, Fairinda! We must get acquainted."

Fairinda turned, and was looking at a graceful woman nearly, if not quite, as tall as Britt. Her eyes were big and slate-gray, but you saw they were kind before you knew their color. Her hair was dark and short. It lay in flat ringlets as big as a silver dollar, close to her head. Her forehead was broad and white; her mouth tender and ready to smile. Fairinda saw

all that before she set her bucket down and moved toward her. She wanted to touch this woman's hand, or dress. She wished that she would stoop and let her touch her hair.

In a voice that was hardly more than a squeak, she said, "I am glad to meet you, Mrs. Hensley."

"You mean Ishma, don't you? We are going to be one family, aren't we?"

Fairinda felt more comfortable. Her voice returned to her. "It's perfectly wonderful, your taking us in. Father would die in two rooms."

"It's a great piece of luck for us."

Fairinda was about to cry. She grabbed her bucket, and explained that she had left the flivver down the road, afraid that she might disturb them if she drove up to the house so early.

Britt began to draw water for breakfast preparations. The well-chain caught on a projecton inside the rock frame that protected the well. Leaning over, inside the frame, to unfasten the chain, his foot slipped. Fairinda was watching him, standing where the full light fell upon her. With Britt's sudden loss of balance, she gave out a cry, and on her face was the undisguised anguish of love.

Oh, the poor thing, thought Ishma. The poor little thing!

(To be continued in May issue)

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WOMEN TALK UNITY

(Continued from page 8)

ing each other in promoting their economic and social interests, she pledged the support of the Women's Trade Union League to such a program.

The Association of University Women has for a long time included in its program the problem of discrimination against women, Mrs. Harriett Houdletter, of this organization, reported. She felt that the program of her organization would be greatly assisted by the banding together of all organizations working towards this end. Miss Erma Lee, a member of Typographical Union No. 6, called the group's attention to the experience that protective legislation for workers can only be effected by strong labor organizations. A member of the Woman's Party raised the question that the equal rights amendment solves the purpose of such a program for women. Miss

van Kleck urged the Woman's Party to fight for those objectives for which it is especially fitted, such as civil service status for women, but pointed out that the equal rights amendment would only help to declare unconstitutional all protective legislation for women which, to some degree, protects their standard of living. Miss van Kleck declared that the Inter-Professional Association preferred to follow the lead of industrial women concerning their needs and that instead of supporting the equal rights amendment as it is worded today, the "Workers' Rights Bill," which clears the way for labor legislation, should be supported. Adding their interest and pledging their support, women from the American Women's Association, the Federation of Teachers, the American League Against War and Fascism, the League of Women Voters, reported on their programs concerning discrimination against women.

A WORD TO THE WISE

(Continued from page 13)

You see in the play what the mills do to eager young spirits, and to women's hopes. And you see what they do to the men whose families have no redress if they are killed or maimed and to the women who sicken and die from pellagra. Before the curtain falls you have witnessed the evolution of the soul of a God-fearing woman who shrinks from class struggle, but in the end sees that her children's future is bound up with the future of all workers.

So I say, Let Freedom Ring, not only for the privileged children of the rich and well-to-do, but for the children of the great mass of Americans, no matter what their previous condition of servitude.



The Skin Game

By Sheila Williams

Has a \$50,000 advertising campaign ever improved your complexion? All the same, you'd be surprised what sheep's wool and a five-cent soap can do.

YARDLEY'S and hamburgers—or five and dime soap and a feed? That is the question! And if a gal hasn't what it takes in her purse, she must have it in her head. A word, therefore, to the wise—and the not too wealthy.

At the risk of being Pollyannish, may I suggest that the best beauty aids are free—if you can afford them.

To the sallow-complexioned shop girl who looks with envy at the glowing testimonial picture of Mrs. Reggie Van Astor, may I as much as whisper that Mrs. Van Astor's peach-bloom complexion may be more the result of good food, proper rest, a morning gallop with the 'ounds at Aiken or Long Island, than whatever creams she says she uses?

The "slim, svelte figures of our Hollywood heroines," "the skin you love to touch," "that schoolgirl complexion," "hands that thrill," "that sparkling smile," "glamorous golden hair," and so on, are being wooed by the hopeful sisters of this, our enlightened land, to the gay tune of more than one billion dollars per annum.

An unromantic professor who could see beyond the carmined lips of his classroom beauties recently announced that a score or more Connecticut barns and silos could have been dyed a deep vermilion with the quantity of lipsticks purchased by American women in the year 1935. The good professor, however, did not go to say whether in his opinion painting barns was a more noble duty for the humble lipstick than painting lips.

However, I'm all for it—the lip painting, I mean.

But those of us who juggle a many-sided

budget must gaze with wary eye upon beguiling advertisements, and close our pocket-books determinedly against the smiling maidens in chaste white uniforms who would sell us "beauty" in two jars and a bottle—at a price.

However, we may have our beauty aids, too. It's a matter of knowing how, what, and why.

Take soap. A good, bland, sudsy soap that cleanses the skin is one of the best so-called "beauty" aids. A good soap should cleanse the skin and contain no irritating chemicals. No more and no less.

Arthur Kallet, author of *Counterfeit—Not Your Money But What It Buys*, and co-author of *100,000,000 Guinea Pigs*, did some researches on soap. He compared the qualities of a bar of Yardley's Old English Lavender soap, which sells for 35 cents, with a bar of Sweetheart soap (a little-known soap which sells at 5 cents a cake and at times may be purchased for as little as six cakes for 25 cents) and found the cheaper soap not inferior in any way.

Some of the best-known soaps have to lean heavily on the support of their advertisements.

The unrelenting light of scientific analysis shows a similar picture when thrown upon cold-cream magic. Cold cream is essentially a lubricant, and dry-skinned lassies will use it to prevent roughness and chapping. It is best when used as a lubricant in addition to soap and water, rather than as a cleansing agent substituted for soap-suds. (Be it ever so humble—it's still soap.)

Lanolin, the fatty substance from the wool of sheep, is the basis for most cold

creams. Mineral oil, which melts at body temperature, is the secret of "liquefying" creams. Fortunately for Mrs. Public and her kid sister, both cold cream and "liquefying" creams can be used with safety, because it has not been necessary for manufacturers to add harmful ingredients to these products to make them work.

Bleach creams, freckle removers, and the like, however, should be avoided. And stay away from vanishing creams—which are not really creams at all. They are composed mainly of stearic acid, which is used to a large degree in making soap. Now you wouldn't leave the soap on your face before applying powder—would you?

Most of the cosmetics sold over the five and dime counter are as good as the catchily boxed and bottled products endorsed by your favorite movie star. (By the way, she gets a few thou' for lending her name and picture.) The desirability of X.Y.Z. cream—and the profits to Mr. X.Y.Z.—have been known to be considerably elevated by a \$50,000 advertising campaign.

BEAUTY EDITOR:

Miss Woodward's article on Beauty was a joy.

In discussing astringents, she recommends one-fifth of an ounce of alum in water, but she says nothing about how much water to use. Can you supply the information?

—ANN STREETER

ANSWER:

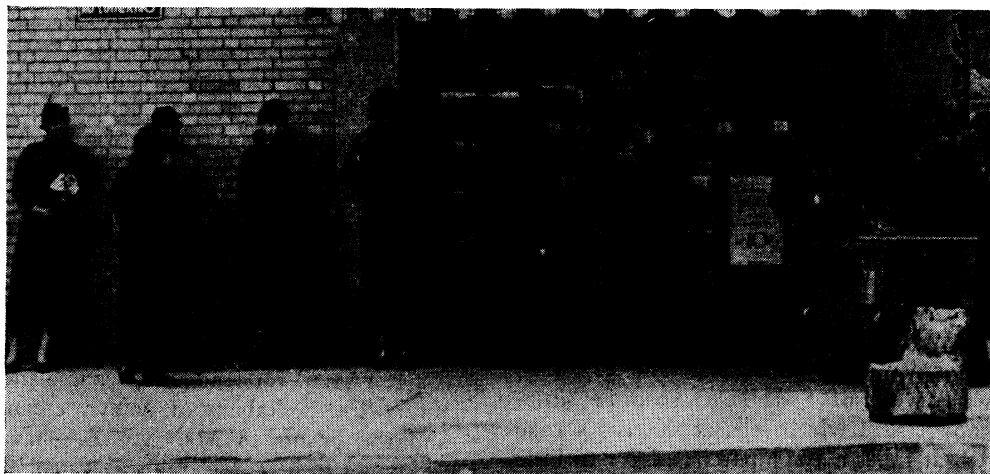
Miss Woodward suggests one-fifth of an ounce of alum to half a glass of water.

Watch the next issue for interesting advice on Beauty.

TOWARD A BRIGHTER DAWN

(Continued from page 14)

her city by both Negro and white women against the high cost of living. Thyra Edwards, social worker of Chicago, and chairman of the Women's Committee for the National Negro Congress, emphasized the need for consumers' co-operatives. Rositas Talioferro, student at the University of Wisconsin, urged the mothers to begin early in their children's lives to educate them upon the pressing problems under discussion. Herbert Wheeldin, from Westchester County, New York, one of the several men delegates who listened attentively, spoke of the severe exploitation of women workers by the rich families of Westchester.



A part of the Bronx "slave market!" Women waiting to be hired as domestic workers for as little as 10 or 15 cents an hour

The session ended all too soon, with many delegates yet to be heard from. The facts they related told sad stories, but there was no sadness in these women delegates, many of whom were attending a congress for the first time in their lives. There was a ring of confidence in each report—a confidence, born in many instances right at the congress, that it was possible to change these unbearable conditions. Negro women from all walks of life, unskilled and professional, Negro and white women found themselves drawn together, found that they liked being together, found that there was hope for change in coming together.

Organization and unity were the keynote of the resolution on women passed by the Congress. The resolution embodied a three-point program: (1) Organization of women domestic workers into trade unions of the American Federation of Labor;

(2) organization of housewives into housewives' leagues to combat the high cost of living, to win better housing, recreational, and educational facilities for their families, and (3) organization of professional women. All three to be joined together to work for adequate social legislation, for better relief, and against war and fascism. This resolution was presented to the general session of the Congress by Mrs. Nellie Hazell, representing the Negro Democratic League of Philadelphia, and was unanimously adopted.

The delegates have returned to their homes, but not as they came. These women now have a program around which they will rally their sisters at work and in the home. They have a year in which to carry through the declarations of their resolution, so that by May, 1937, when the National Negro Congress again convenes—this time in Philadelphia—they will come together once more in greater numbers and

with a different story to tell, of accomplishment, of a struggle nearer the goal of the liberation of Negro women from bitter exploitation and oppression.

Have you ever heard of the Bronx "slave market"? Most papers wouldn't print such a story. Many such stories, crying to be told, never see the light of day. We want to print such stories—*your* stories. Write us about things your local paper won't print.

—The Editors.

BOOKS

(Continued from page 2)

He considers only the leisure class women—and he may be justified in some of his accusations against them—but entirely neglects the larger question of the majority of women. He maintains that women teachers should be allowed to teach only girl pupils. He condemns women for the collapse of religion. And his main thesis is that women in groups have only one desire—to enslave men.

If Mr. Erskine had given any thought to the women who are really accomplishing things, if some one had told him about the League of Women Shoppers or if he'd looked into the trade unions where women play a leading role, he might have written a highly useful book on the past and present influence of women—and the possible direction of their influence in the future.

It is interesting to note that the only comments on the jacket are quotations from "The Author's Declaration of Intention" and from "The Author's Summary." Perhaps the publishers themselves didn't know if Mr. Erskine was only kidding or really meant it.

MOVIES

(Continued from page 2)

Of course William Wyler's excellent direction, and a competent job of cutting, are responsible too for the splendid results in transferring "The Children's Hour" to the talking screen.

* * *

Pictures you ought to see: "Story of Louis Pasteur," with Paul Muni (Warner Brothers); "Prisoner of Shark Island," with Warner Baxter (20th Century-Fox); "Mr. Cohen Takes a Walk," with Paul Graetz (Warner Brothers); "The Petrified Forest," with Leslie Howard-Bette Davis (Warner Brothers); "Rose Marie," with Jeanette MacDonald—Nelson Eddy (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer); and, of course, Charlie Chaplin's "Modern Times" (United Artists).

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March 25, 1936

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Dear Mrs. Norman:

We thank you for your very encouraging letter. Nearly all the mail that has been pouring into this office has brought messages that make the staff of THE WOMAN TODAY proud and hopeful. We will quote from three because they are typical.

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"At last we have a magazine that we workers can say is ours! Your story about the glove strike shows how interested you are in our struggles. All the stories are good. The women in my section all sat down around me at lunchtime and I read the magazine to them. They all promised to subscribe."

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