

see that they are grievously overburdened and ill, that red murder enters the men's hearts. But the primitive instinct that usually makes a man protect his own, forbids him, in most cases, from murdering the poor woman; he goes about with murder in his heart against society.

"Again, the cloistered state of the married woman is a very perilous thing for her and for the community. We hear much about the damnable effects of prison life on the individual. But the married woman's life, in her little home, is worse than a convict's because, while the convict is always thinking of the time when he will get out, she does not think it likely she will ever see anything different. She has nothing, literally nothing, on which to feed spiritually. The country woman has the green trees, the flowers, the song of birds, and the wind on the heath. The town woman has nothing . . . and her brain, quite a fine machine really, is unused and untrained.

"I don't pretend to go into deep questions in this book. I merely want to be the voice of thousands of inarticulate women, because I lived in the little house I describe here for five years, and know all the misery of it. . . . In that house I discovered the depths of discomfort, ugliness, irritations of flesh and spirit, weariness and indignity that are inseparable from the herding together of human beings in ugly, inconvenient surroundings.

"Remembering how spiritless and unhappy I got in my little house . . . how neurotic, narrow and touchy I got in spite of an always outcropping sense of humour, I have written this little book with two ends in view. I want wise men and women—and especially the women who will put up for Parliament in the near future—to see just how wasteful of human energy is the life lived by my friends in the 'Little House'; I want these wise people to hold out a helping hand to women in time to prevent them from getting so neurotic, so unhappy that they are unfitted to be wives or mothers or members of a community at all. Secondly, I want the women themselves to feel that they are not forsaken, that there is a great movement on foot to help them, but that they must take a little friendly criticism, not in a carping spirit, but realising that helpers and helped must meet each other halfway.

"If people are herded on top of each other, soul and body alike will grow stunted. The Public Health authorities provide for so many cubic feet of air space per person; public common-sense authorities will some day provide so many cubic feet of solitude for every person. Man is a solitary animal at times; gregariousness has only come about with civilisation, and human beings need quiet and space to keep in good nervous and spiritual health. . . .

"For five years of my life I was never alone for one single instant: in bed, in the kitchen, shopping, gardening, always was someone very near to me, touching me most of the time. I felt sometimes as though I could come to hate these crowding people who were really so dear to me. Is

it in one of these momentary spasms of impatient desire to get alone for a few minutes that murders are sometimes done?"

Mrs. Eyles deals successively with the Economic Problem, Shopping and Food, Amusements and Routine, the Sex Problem, and Motherhood.

"Do you know," said one woman of her husband, "I'm downright glad if he's rolling drunk when he comes home, because some of his pals put him on the kitchen sofa, and then I have the bed to myself. It do seem rotten, somehow, never able to call your body and soul your own! I don't mind being a man's beast of burden all day, but I do think a woman might get her nights to herself."

Read the book, and if you are a person of even average sensibility you will sympathise with "The Woman in the Little House," and realise your obligations to do something to make the conditions of life more tolerable for her.

M. B.

THE MONTHS.

JANUARY.

Whatever change your hours may ring,
Whatever they may lack,
We know they hold one gracious thing,
You'll bring the daylight back.

FEBRUARY.

"Fill Dyke" Spring gives you welcome when the
rain
Assembles your "fair maids" in white again
To waken her, and when
A mandate that no other months call theirs
Brings Valentine, the Saint of lovers' prayers
And Leap-years now and then!

C. B. M.

COMING EVENTS.

February 3rd.—Meeting Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Council, 431, Oxford Street, London, W., 4.30 p.m.

February 7th.—Royal British Nurses' Association Club. Lecture by Mrs. Kennedy Fraser on old Scottish National Songs, 194, Queen's Gate, S.W., 5 p.m. Admission free. Tea 1s.

February 20th and 21st.—Central Poor Law Conference, Guildhall, London, E.C.

WORD FOR THE WEEK.

"There are big tasks lying before women—tasks that call for such wisdom as we get by combined study; tasks that need the altruism we get in working together; tasks that need the energy we get from combination of effort. We want homes where the big things are made big and the little things unimportant. We want communities that are extensions of the home, where we shall be friends, we people of all races and creeds. We must have the vision to stand together nation-wide."

—Alice Ames Winter.

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