

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

The death of King Alexander of Yugoslavia at the hand of an assassin, and with him of M. Barthou, the French Foreign Minister, has shocked the world, and the deep sympathy felt for Queen Marie, so cruelly widowed, and her schoolboy son, called from a happy and care-free life to ascend the throne of his father, as King Peter II, has found wide expression. For the second time this year a European Queen has been bereft of her husband with tragic suddenness. First, Queen Elisabeth, consort of the heroic Albert King of the Belgians, and now Queen Marie of Yugoslavia, whose husband was slain when on a journey undertaken to promote peace in the world, and in the interests of the Kingdom he loved so truly. It is well that, under the terms of King Alexander's will, until King Peter attains the age of 18, its Government will be in the hands of a Regency, and that he will continue his education in this country.

To the French nation also, in its sorrow, the warm sympathy of Great Britain is assured.

The Conference of the National Council of Women was held this year at Edinburgh amid romantic surroundings. The city is at all times famed for its beauty, and its ancient Castle, illuminated by the floodlight, was a vision of delight impossible to forget.

The opening service in St. Giles' Cathedral was dignified and impressive, and the reception by the Lord Provost at the Scottish Academy was a delightful function.

The scarlet robes of the Bailies and Councillors (several of them women) and the picturesque costumes of the attendants provided a gay note of colour, while the pipers in their kilts furnished the true Scottish atmosphere.

The attendance of delegates was said to be the largest on record, and many subjects of International and National interest were discussed.

The resolutions of particular interest to nurses were those on Voluntary Sterilisation, Nursery Schools, Ascertainment of Mental Defectives, and Maternal Mortality. All of which were passed with large majorities.

The first, on Voluntary Sterilisation, provoked the most discussion, and several good speeches were made both for and against the resolution. After an exhaustive debate it was carried by a majority of 4 to 1.

The discussion on the Ascertainment of Mental Defectives brought out some startling facts as to the amount of accommodation provided by some authorities. The resolution on Maternal Mortality stressed the advisability of longer training for students of Midwifery, especially Medical students, and the need for Post-Graduate courses, both for Doctors and Midwives.

Some of the delegates took advantage of a four days' tour in the Highlands, either before or after the Conference. The glens, mountains and lochs of this romantic country could never have looked more beautiful.

Autumn tints were beginning to colour the woods, the moors were carpeted with golden bracken, and those who were able to enjoy the tour must have carried away a renewed sense of beauty as well as the stimulus of a most interesting Conference.

The contributor of an article in the *Church Times*, over the signature "W. A. W.," gives the following most interesting account of the "provenance and connexions in the mind of the Orthodox" of the name Marina, soon to be added to the list of those used by British Royalty. He writes:—

"The Saint of that name in the Orthodox Church was, according to the tradition of her own land, a maiden of great wealth and beauty, born early in the sixth century. The vocation to the contemplative life came to her as an

imperious call; but her family would not hear of her obeying it. Hence, no Sisterhood in the neighbourhood would consent to receive her, and Marina, like St. Thecla, solved the problem by running away, putting on boy's clothes, and becoming a novice in a monastery of monks! Here, devotion and obedience soon won a reputation for the young monk 'Marinus,' but unfortunately the beauty of the youth won also the passion of an evil woman of the district. Her temptations to sin being rejected, the 'woman scorned' soon came to hate the youth, and finally accused 'him' before the Brotherhood of being the father of her child.

"Poor 'Marinus' had now a hard choice before him—either he must be held guilty, or must disprove the accusation by giving away his secret. Choosing the former, he was expelled the house with ignominy, and retired into a solitary's cell in the neighbourhood, where his ascetic life won such fame that the evil woman herself confessed her lie, and the Brotherhood could only express their own sorrow for injustice by asking the holy hermit to return to the house as Abbot. This, however, 'he' refused, living out a long life as hermit, and keeping his secret till the preparation of his corpse for burial made the truth known. . . .

"Churches in her honour are numerous in Greece, and that in Athens is of interest, as showing how a cult of relatively late date may assume observances and objects of a type that would be surprising to the original central figure.

"St. Marina's Church stands on a slope of bare rock below the craggy 'Hill of the Nymphs,' and here she has taken the place of a 'fertility god,' who is un-named, and is probably far older than any of the Olympian pantheon. Thus, it has come to pass that Marina, most ascetic of nuns, is now applied to by those women who desire large families, and the rite that secures her favour is as weird and primitive as can be imagined.

"After due prayer to the Saint, the applicant sits her down at the top of that slope of rock referred to, and slides to the bottom of it! The exercise keeps the particular rock used in a high state of polish, and when authority sought to check the ancient custom by fixing barbed wire at the place, public opinion demanded, and obtained, its removal!

"Ardent human wishes and faith combined will 'focus themselves' thus, here and elsewhere; even though the method be usually less quaint than this pre-historic survival. Thus, women who come here to gain a normal woman's greatest wish, do not uncommonly attain what they seek."

Dean Inge speaking at a meeting of the Clergy Fellowship at the Church House, Westminster, for the last time as Dean of St. Paul's, on "the Work of the Clergy in the New Age," said that their churches were suffering very much from the superstition that the clergy had failed unless they could get the majority of people, or a very large number of people, to go to hear them. He doubted whether many of the clergy had quite realized how very strong were the warnings all through the New Testament against expecting anything like popularity or outward success. There was not a word in the New Testament to lead them to think that there was ever likely to be an inconvenient crowd gathered at the narrow gate.

If they realized that, a great deal of their discouragement would disappear. The Gospel was a message of spiritual redemption, not primarily of social reform.

As to what ought to be the most important part of the clergyman's work in the new age, he would say his work as a physician of the soul. Further the clergy ought to know a good deal about certain branches of mental science, and in many parishes they might learn a good deal by talking frankly to the parish doctor, who saw the same troubles from a different angle.

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