

WHAT DO THE WOMEN OF ENGLAND THINK?

There can be no denying the fact that our beloved country is passing through a most tremendous crisis—much more crippling to the future of our national life than the present fuel crisis ever could be.

In almost every profession and trade the rot is setting in and it is spreading fast, and unless a definite and bold policy is pursued and the rot arrested, our country will fall headlong into disaster. Indeed, many serious thinking people already believe that disaster and disruption of our Empire is upon us.

The main causes of our present deplorable conditions are the general distaste for work amongst the younger generation, and the lack of religious and moral leadership and teaching. We are pursuing policies already proved disastrous in foreign countries, and we are teaching our children foreign and pagan ideologies and abandoning our beautiful high-minded and Christian principles, which have brought such world-wide honour and glory to our peoples in the past. Not so very long ago a British subject could travel the wide world, with head held high and pride of race in his very blood, the envy of other nationals who always acknowledged our undoubted superiority; to-day, alas! this is not so. We are pitied by all other countries of the world for our sufferings and sad plight, and we are already reckoned as people of a "finished" Empire and of an impoverished and third-rate country.

What are the women of England going to do about present day humiliations and abominations? How long are they going to tolerate the craven and shameful conditions forced upon them? Are they going to queue for miserable rations in all weathers for ever? How long will they suffer their shabby clothes and the confiscations of their precious coupons for household bare necessities? Are we becoming less and less civilised, or are our spirits being broken and crushed by the constant ordering of the intimacies of our daily lives, by petty bureaucrats and ignorant civil servants?

Are we going to submit tamely to the education of English children along pagan and foreign lines? What is the new State "agreed" syllabus if it is not pagan? Our children are the most precious heritage of our country and Empire. They are the new sap rising to revivify the old tree. If the sap is to be poisoned, then the tree will die, and this we must prevent at all costs.

It is high time that the women of the country banded themselves into a strong protesting organisation, and determined that women shall be more consulted in national affairs, particularly those affairs affecting children and the homes.

Let us demand that good British common sense be used to more account, instead of the Russian type, which is not suitable to our mode of life.

Our workers—and Nurses are definitely workers—must realise once again that work is honourable, conducive to happiness and is dignified; and that work and service to one's fellowmen redounds to the honour, glory and prosperity of a country. Why do present day young women shun Nursing as a career? It is because their education was faulty. They were not taught the lovely virtues of charity and true pity for

suffering in their youth. They were not taught to control self, nor the beauty of service to others, nor the cultivation of strong character, nor—in many sad cases—were they taught how to suppress the bad traits appearing in themselves. Their *real* education was obtained from films and trashy books, and so to-day we witness the sad results of the lack of moral training of our youth.

Surely women, and Nurses, can help the crusade against these plague spots of our nation? By our steadfast and repeated demands to the Government we can insist on a right and proper education for our children; we must insist on an immediate and higher standard of living in our homes. We must not pull in our belts any more in order that foreign nations may loosen theirs! We want and need more and better foods, especially for the children; we want better and warmer clothes; we want warmth and the comforts of civilisation in our homes; and we definitely desire a less weighty and intolerable civil service.

We demand a more dignified position for our women, and the removal of the shame of perpetual queuing.

Have the women any ideas on the subject?

G. M. H.

BLINDNESS IN AFRICA.

DISEASE THAT HAS BLINDED A MILLION MIGHT SPREAD TO TEMPERATE LANDS.

Valuable information on the problems of blindness in British tropical Africa has been obtained by the joint mission of the Colonial Office and the National Institute for the Blind that has recently returned to this country. The report now being prepared by the members of the expedition will assemble a mass of hitherto unrecorded facts and make proposals for the welfare of those afflicted.

Although official opinion disclaimed the existence of a 'blindness problem,' the mission frequently found the position serious. In one area of Uganda—fortunately a small area—the rate of incidence of blindness among the population was 4,187 in 100,000 compared with a rate of 191 in the United Kingdom.

One cause of blindness in tropical Africa is a little-publicised disease, ocular onchocerciasis. According to the current N.I.B. journal this is believed to have blinded a million persons. Infection is carried by a small fly, the buffalo gnat. Major Harold Ridley, the ophthalmic surgeon, who investigated the trouble on the Gold Coast, is quoted as saying it is "not inconceivable" that the disease might spread to temperate lands.

Cut in Braille Books.

Owing to the paper shortage no new Braille books will be issued by the National Institute for the Blind during the next four months.

Only the blind reader himself can estimate just what the paper shortage means to him.

The National Institute for the Blind has put tremendous energy into publishing braille books which keep the blind population in touch with current affairs, thus enabling them to take their place in the body politic.

Works by John Masefield, Ramsay Muir, Margaret Irwin, Cecil Roberts, Daphne du Maurier and John Galsworthy were placed in the hands of the blind reader a year or two ago, and new music publications met the urgent needs of blind organists, pianists, vocalists, etc.

We hope this important work will be not long delayed, and supplies of the necessary paper forthcoming as soon as possible.

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