

APRIL 24, 1947

EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES:
115 Lambton Quay, Wellington, C.1.
G.P.O. Box 1707.
Wellington, C.1.
Telephone 46-520.
Telegraphic Address: "Listener," Wellington.

Lost Generation

IT would have been a little depressing if the New Zealand delegates to the UNESCO Conference in Paris had returned with mouthfuls of fine phrases for the reconstruction of the world. It would have meant that time, labour, and money had been expended for nothing. But airy optimism is just about the last thought anyone will have after reading our interview with Dr. Beeby on page 6 of this issue. The picture of the world he has brought back from Paris is just about as dismal as anything we have ever asked our readers to look at and carry away to look at again. It is a picture of civilisation decapitated—schools gone, teachers missing, books burnt or lost, a whole generation with its eyes put out. Nothing so bad has been reported from Europe since the Dark Ages, and it would have been the last straw if the United Nations, after surveying all this devastation, had proposed to attack it with a slogan. We would all have known then, if we are more than infants, that Western civilisation was paralysed. But the impression Dr. Beeby leaves with us is that the Conference neither under-estimated the destruction nor wasted time restoring it rhetorically. It saw that the first job was to get the lights going again, that anyone can start a panic in the dark, and that the darkest spots in Europe to-day are the minds of its lost generation of young people. So it started to work at once organising education again in those countries from which it has almost disappeared—looking for teachers, searching for books and buildings and other educational material likely to be available in time. For it has to be a race against time—a case of catching up on illiteracy before mischief-makers and lunatics begin using it. Everything evil as well as everything good, it points out, begins in the minds of men. The task is to give the good a chance against the bad, peace a chance against war, order a chance against chaos.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

BROADCASTS IN MAORI

Sir,—I was greatly interested in the letter from my friend in spirit, Bishop Bennett, on the above subject. I think my friend has mislaid his steering paddle, and the canoe has drifted into the backwater of material broadcasts, instead of remaining on the greater waters of spiritual broadcasts. Some time ago I suggested through your columns that the Council of Churches try to increase religious broadcasts in Maori. I scan the weekly programmes, but find nothing done. All I find is a weekly broadcast on world affairs. What about the heavenly news? I contend that our Maori people need at least one religious period per week. To give them world news on a Sunday is quite wrong. Let them have it during the week, and a religious broadcast on Sundays. It is not unusual for two services a Sunday to be given by the same denomination. Chop one out, and give it to our Maori people. The neglect of the spiritual needs of the Maori is no credit to the Pakeha. Will the Bishop use his great mana towards this end?

A. P. GODBER (Silverstream).

Sir,—May I be allowed to congratulate Bishop Bennett on his recent letter "Broadcasts in Maori." I am sure he has voiced the views of the majority of our Maori people. From 9.20 to 9.30 is far too short a session for a weekly news transmission to the whole Maori race. We all look forward to hearing the session and I am sure were we allowed at least half an hour we would be very grateful. The Pakeha have their news sessions several times a day and every day of the week almost; why can't we Maoris also? As Bishop Bennett says, there are bound to be difficulties, but I feel that in the interests of the Maori listeners, and they are numerous, we should have a better news service.

W.B.C. (Kutarere).

Sir,—May I endorse the remarks of Bishop Bennett. We, the Pakeha race, talk about equality of the people, and yet we can only allow the Maori 20 minutes of all the time spent on broadcasting. Their singing is second to none, and a session of a few hours a week could be very instructive as well as entertaining. Let us give men like the Bishop and the Rev. Wi Huata some practical help. They are trying to hold the traditions of their race together under great difficulty and, speaking from experience, no Pakeha would go short of hospitality from these men. So what about more help and less criticism.

PAKEHA-MAORI (Rotorua).

Sir,—I would like to support Bishop Bennett's plea for more frequent broadcasts of news in Maori. The twenty minutes on Sunday night is hardly sufficient to cover strictly Maori news, apart from news of world interest. Maoris are very interested in world news, and there is still a large section of the Maori population that can better understand what is put in their own tongue: and there is still the minority that cannot understand English. Twenty minutes a week is a very small crumb from the rich man's table and hardly an adequate recognition that there are two races in New Zealand. I think it is a subject that merits discussion. Personally I feel

that in general there has been insufficient attempt to explain things to the Maori, whether with regard to Native Land Development, health politics or many of the other things that seriously concern him to-day. This failure to explain cannot but interfere with the smooth running of helpful schemes for improvement. Could not the radio be made use of to make up for this deficiency? Could not half an hour a day, at least, be allowed, for news and a short talk on some relevant topic?

J.D. (Okato).

PRISON WITHOUT BARS

Sir,—I congratulate Caroline Webb for her excellent article on "Home Life for the Married Woman." One sentence from it ("No cow could be expected to function that did as much running about as a housewife") puts all the dragging misery of overtired motherhood into a nutshell, and the suggestion for alleviating that misery by introducing commercial cleaning companies is good.

The solution given for the solving of the domestic help scarcity problem needs further thought. Mrs. Webb suggests "making all girls serve a period of domestic service equivalent to a period of military or national service called for from boys." The word "make" conjures up an unfortunate picture which Mrs. Webb has perhaps overlooked. Imagine a potential Lili Kraus giving up the year or two necessary for domestic training at a time when every day is important to her future career. Imagine the effect of enforced domestic training on youth eager to follow its desired goal. I would most certainly object to this for my children.

The only rational way to overcome prejudice against domestic work is through the type of education which encourages girls with a natural aptitude for it to understand the blind ignorance of both employers and employees of the past, and which encourages them to look on such a life as an important science. It is, in fact, a conglomeration of sciences. "Mother" needs to be a psychologist, dietician, philosopher—combining the knowledge of a Geisha girl with the qualities of the aforementioned bovine. Our generation of housewives is paying the penalty of shortage of domestic help because of the mistakes made by previous generations who were responsible for the stigma which is still attached to the word "servant." Until we are educated to the standard of equality of housewife and help there must be a time-lag. To bring force to bear would interrupt the natural process of social evolution, and deprive our girls of their most valuable freedom—their freedom of choice.

L.L.H. (Heriot).

Sir,—In regard to the bondage of married women, we were warned in the *Nineteenth Century* magazine of 1878. I have just read an article by a Mrs. A. Sutherland Orr entitled "The Future of Englishwomen." I found the following extract intriguing:

"In what way the leaven (Female Franchise) will work may be exemplified by the experiences of three women, whom we may imagine to be living thirty, forty or fifty years hence, whose actual and relative position will show how irrelevant to the nature of the proposed change are the immediate tests of good and evil, of failure and success,

by which it is sought to measure it. These three women will be sisters, educated alike under the progressive conception of female capacities and female rights, without expectations, or with very slight ones, but all qualified to exercise some profession. One of these may love and marry, and be fairly prosperous in her marriage. She will have a kind, if not always devoted husband; averagely good and healthy children; an average proportion of domestic pains and pleasures, disappointments and success—a life, in short, which will stand for happiness in the gradual self-effacement which will prevent her ever entirely realising whether or not it is so. She will never wish to die. She may sometimes feel the kind of weariness which only death cures.

"Of the two who will not marry, one, being devoid of sentiment, will pass through life without experiencing an attachment or inspiring one. The other will inspire one, and will return it, but in such a manner as to leave her professional interest and her social liberties untouched. She will be a wife just so far as is consistent with remaining free. Her conduct will create no scandal because the increasing equality of the sexes will naturally, if not logically, have modified the prevailing view of the moralities of female life. The position will be accepted by a large section of society and she will proceed with just so much caution that the more orthodox members of her acquaintance will be either ignorant of its facts, or their eyes not forcibly opened if they determine not to see. She will love rather less than she is loved, whilst the circumstances of their relation will be such as to stimulate his constancy and to remove all sense of anxiety from hers. Both these women will have professional success, social prestige, mental and bodily health which proceeds from the unshackled exercise of natural powers. They will at no time envy the lot of their more feminine sister; they will often see cause to pity it. Their lives will be no more wanting in dignity than in enjoyment. Their intercourse with women will be naturally free from littleness; their manner towards men from ungraceful extremes of reserve or freedom. They will have done some good in the world; they will not consciously or intentionally have done any great harm.

"No one can deny that the elements of this new order are already among us. No one can deny that as the self-sustaining single woman is an existing fact, the self-sustaining free woman is the natural outcome of an existing tendency—a woman whose conduct may or may not be immoral in the accepted meaning of the word, but who will be so far below the tenderness as above the weakness imputed to her sex, that she will refuse to render, whilst she will often abstain from claiming, any sacrifice or the name of love. No one can truly affirm that such a character and the life which corresponds to it, will not in its own way be good. But it will scarcely be considered by those who demand new spheres for female activity in order that the traditional female virtues may have a larger field of expansion."

W.H.P. (Dunedin).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

George Haydn (Takapuna): Interesting coincidence, but nothing else.

F. H. Cooper (Orewa): Have given the subject all the space we can spare in the meantime.

Bert Wood (Y.M.C.A., Wellington): Not possible.