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## WE CAN'T GO OUT AT NIGHT

The Problem Of Baby-Minders

(By K.S.)

great modern problem for young parents is getting someone a baby and a pram! If the decay of the to look after the children while old home entertainments forces young they get out for an evening to- married couples to enjoy their pleasures gether. Take last week for example: we thought it would be nice to have Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell along for the evening, partly to meet our old friends the Freemans and partly because we had not yet invited these relatively new acquaintances to our home. When I broached the idea to Mr. Mitchell he said he would have to consult his wife about a suitable date, and later said they could get someone in to look after their family on Friday (in other words Friday was chosen because it suited someone else). That night I rang the Freemans. Mrs. F. said she would be delighted to come but it depended on her father, as he was the one who looked after the house for them. That was duly fixed for Friday, when Mr. F. found he had an E.P.S. meeting that night, so it's all off now until the following Friday, God willing and weather and baby-minders permitting.

WE have the same bother when we want to go anywhere. We know a woman who, for 2/6 a night, will come in and look after the house and the children (who are always asleep long before she comes), but other people know about her too, so she is not always available. It is easy money for her, because she brings her knitting, and we leave the radio, a good fire, and supper on a tray. For us, it introduces a most important point-every entertainment is weighed in terms of: is it worth the extra half crown? To go to the pictures in the city costs my wife and me: 2 seats at 1/6, 3/-; tram fare each way at 5d each, 1/8; plus the woman, 2/6; total 7/2. The result is that we don't go to the pictures together, as it costs too much. For a particularly good and specially recommended picture such as Mr. Chips I go one night and my wife another. We have other vices of course. We belong to an amateur dramatic society and one or two church organisations and to all of these we go on separate nights, always one of us remaining at home to look after the children, except in the case of something important such as an annual meeting.

NOW this may be a humble point beneath the dignity of sociologists, but it is really a serious modern problem. Nowadays almost everyone is restless. Thousands of people won't just sit at home at nights, but feel they must go to the pictures, to a dance, to a friend's house, for a walk-go out somewhere. (I think this chasing about is more pronounced since the war started.) Married people are as unsettled as younger ones, but those who are married with no children have a much fuller and freer life. The State needs children, but the penalties for having children (readily shouldered by us and the "People in the Programmes" section.

\*

Y wife and I agree on one thousands of others) seem to be becompoint, anyway — that the ing stiffer. Just look at the reception a woman gets if she boards a tram at a busy time and has to upset people with separately, the whole thing is bad.

Now, don't misunderstand me-my wife and I are as fond of our children as our grandparents were. We are not dancers, we never gamble on cards, nor are we picture fans, and we wouldn't dream of shirking our responsibility to the children one jot, but there is a restless urge sweeping through the twentieth century, and we're caught in the vortex of it.

When we were living in Auckland two or three years ago I advertised for "Woman to let young parents escape for one night a week. 2/6 a night. Ring 'phone ——." Our phone rang from 3 o'clock in the afternoon when the paper came out and for the next couple of days. We found someone we liked and could depend on, so we had every Thursday night off right through the winter.

But that was a bit of luck. Not everyone is so dependable. And anyway where is that extra half-crown these days?

## HE TOOK PART IN A "BLITZTOUR"

FRANCIS BATE, who with Gladys Vincent and Ernest Jenner will be heard from station 3YA playing Chausson's Trio in G Minor on Monday, April 21, will remember all his life the tour of New Zealand which he made last year as a member of the Centennial String Quartet.

With Isobel Baillie, Gladys Ripley, Heddle Nash, and Oscar Natzke, the quartet visited nearly every important provincial town in New Zealand. They started at Nelson, played in West Coast towns, then worked up from Invercargill to Whangarei, travelling 2,500 miles in just over three weeks. The party lived in suitcases, travelled most of the day, played at night and spent their spare time rehearsing.

"Blitztour" was how Clifford Huntsman, the English pianist, described it.

Francis Bate studied the 'cello at the Birmingham Conservatorium under Johan Hock of the Leipzig Conservatorium, and was a member of the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in the time of Appleby Matthews. Guest conductors he played under included such famous men as Adrian Boult and Landon Ronald.

In Christchurch, Mr. Bate has been heard regularly from 3YA as a member of the trio which will broadcast from 2YA on Monday. Gladys Vincent, who in private life is Mrs. Bate, is leader of the 3YA orchestra.

Mr. Bate returned to England for a visit in 1928, and toured the country with the Paul Belinfante String Quartet.

A photograph of Mr. Bate appears in

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