

A WAR is being waged in London by ardent feminists against those restaurant proprietors who refuse to serve women unaccompanied by a male escort. On the face of it, it does appear ridiculous that a member of either sex, able to pay for a meal, should not be allowed to eat when hungry. The rule, however, is primarily formed for the purpose of sparing embarrassment to women customers.

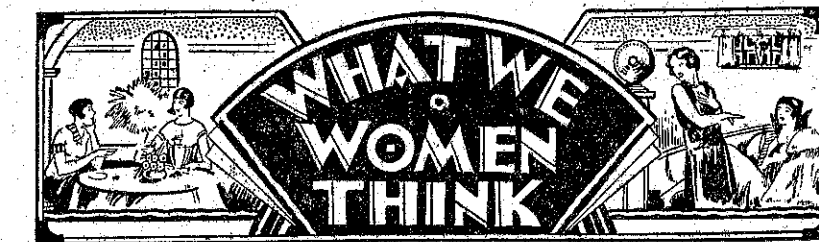
It reminds me of a remote, but select, restaurant in Cairo, where one dining-room is reserved for men. The proprietor, with a sad lack of punctuation, displays the misleading notice, "Not proper ladies to be admitted here."—E.T.C.

HOW little it takes to start a revolution! The Indian mutiny and the grained bullets were a case in point. The salt tax, of which we are hearing so much at the moment, bids fair to assume equal notoriety. It is not an impost new to India, but an ancient method of raising revenue, which the East India Company inherited from the Moghul Empire. Collected at first in Bengal, it was afterwards extended to other districts. The native peasants are great consumers of salt, as one of the condiments to correct the insipidity of their vegetable diet. The manufacture, which has diminished in some districts owing to the importation of foreign salt, is largely in the hands of private firms. Government agents are appointed, however, as the product is subject to duty.—Anglo-Indian.

WHILE listening to the Children's Hour at IYA recently, a little girl broadcast "Somebody's Mother." I think it is one of the most beautiful poems ever written. I admire the young lad so much as he pauses in the middle of his amusement to help the poor old lady over the crossing; then, rushing back to his comrades—some of whom very probably greeted him with jeers and laughter—he boldly declares: "She is somebody's mother, boys, you know. Although she is old and feeble and slow, And I hope some fellow will lend a hand To help my mother, you understand? If 'ere she be old and feeble and grey When her own dear boy is far away." It was a kind and noble action of which any parent would be proud; and I would ask nothing better than for a boy of mine to possess such a heart of gold.—Nada.

WHERE and among whom is loneliness most acute? It has long been a truism that one can be even more lonely in a crowded city than in a deserted village; but, first of all, loneliness must be defined. By it do we mean lack of human intercourse, or lack of intercourse with those to whom we are mentally and socially attuned? An overseas gathering has been discussing the question.

The case of a lighthouse-keeper was instanced. It was contended, however, that such a person was seldom lonely. There are duties to be performed, ships to be hailed as they pass, and the ever-changing sea for company. Another cited the case of a village priest, educated above his flock; and a third, that of a school teacher, in sole charge of some remote country school. In the last two instances, of course, a certain amount of ostracism is sometimes



suffered, because the lonely ones are felt to be "a cut above" their fellows, and not important enough for the society of the bigger people of the neighbourhood. Truly, it is a sorry thing to be "neither fish, flesh, nor fowl—nor good red herring." It would be interesting to know when some of us have felt at our loneliest.—(Inquirer.)

EXCUSES for non-attendance at school are often more ingenious than truthful. The following received at a Palmerston North school certainly bears the impress of truth.

"Please excuse Teddie being absent yesterday, as I wanted a little holiday at the races, and there would have been nobody at home to mind the kiddie."

Well, well, even open confession is good for the soul, and the truth will out sometimes, even in an affidavit.

The Two Cities

WHERE sweep the storms and where the surges beat,
In all its pride of veined stone and brick,
A city slumber-wrapped lay at my feet—
A city of the Quick.

Above the din where blows the violet,
Where feet tread light, and kinder thoughts are bred,
Another city lies and grows, and yet
A city of the Dead.

I dwell in one—the other holds my friend—
I toil, whilst he toward perfection grows.
When shall I see him, coming round the bend
Of all the years? God knows.

—John Storm.

"IT'S ill-living in a henhouse if you don't like fleas," said Mrs. Poyser in "Adam Bede." How many people stop to consider that to some it's ill-living in a modern house if you don't like radio. The generation that has grown up since the war has been reared on noise; sometimes music, sometimes not. It used to be: "Let's have a sing-song." Then followed, "For goodness sake put on a lively record." Now it is: "Twelve o'clock's struck. Turn on the wireless someone." Most owners of radio sets go through a stage when they turn the set on all the time for fear of missing something, and it is quite a surprise when one of the family who is trying to work out a bridge problem says despairingly, "I wish you'd turn off that infernal wireless." Like all good things, it is possible to have too much of it, and it is the older

generation who have not been reared on any cruder noise than the delicate tinkle of a piano, who feel it most.

Have you noticed the agonised expression of an elderly aunt who comes to tea and tries in vain to make her description of dear Dorothy's baby heard above the strains of the Kana-wha Singers, who urge her in no gentle manner to "keep in de middle of de road"? Radio is a priceless possession and it has brought endless interest and amusement into many lives, but do let

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us remember that there are times when it is kinder to "turn it off." More could be said on this subject, but the clock is striking three, and there is a football match in Christchurch to-day!—"Vane."

A SENSE of humour is invaluable at all times, but all the more so when a joke against oneself can be appreciated.

Rudyard Kipling tells the following story. During a stay in Wiltshire one summer he met little Dorothy Drew, Mr. Gladstone's granddaughter. As he was very fond of children, he took her for a long walk in the park and told her stories. After a time Mrs. Drew, who feared that Kipling must be tired of the child, called her and said: "I hope, Dorothy, you have not been wearying Mr. Kipling." "Oh, not a bit, mother," replied the child, "I have been letting him weary me."

And this from Bernard Shaw. The first production of his "Arms and the Man," as we all know, was a great success. When the curtain fell there were loud calls for the author. The audience were still cheering when Mr. Shaw appeared, but there was one man in the gallery who was booing all the time. Mr. Shaw looked up at the gallery and said: "Yes, sir, I quite agree with you, but what can we two do against a whole house?"—R.N.S.

SIR JAMES BARRIE has been lamenting the fact that, for some reason or other, his heroines never developed along the lines he intended. They insisted on remaining conventional and respectable, in spite of his desire to scandalise. Another eminent Scot, Robert Louis Stevenson, seems also to have had difficulty with the womenfolk of his imagination, for none of them are arresting or outstanding. To whose women, I wonder, should the palm be awarded. Some of Thackeray's

would be hard to beat, but surely those of George Meredith and Jeffery Farnol appeal strongly.—Bookworm.

THE year after Queen Victoria came to the throne, Sully, the painter, was commissioned to paint her Majesty's portrait. After three or four sittings, the painter told the Queen that he need not trouble her further if she would allow his daughter to sit in her Majesty's place. Being an experienced model, Miss Sully was accustomed to posing without moving for long periods at a time, all the more necessary when jewels are to be portrayed to avoid the play of light. The Queen readily consented.

Miss Sully was enchanted to hear that she was to accompany her father to the palace the next day, but, as most girls would have done in her place, bemoaned the fact that she had "nothing to wear"—only her black silk dress with green stripes. However, to sit in that she was obliged; moreover, on the Royal Throne and wearing the Royal Crown.

When the sitting had lasted some time, the double doors of the Throne Room were thrown open and the

AKAROA

"A Water-Colour"

ABOVE the sunny sea
A raincloud spreads her sail,
And hurries swiftly on
Before the coming gale,
Big golden drops splash down
Into the startled waves,
The sea-birds rise and fall
And seek their gloomy caves.
But from the sun's soft nest
Of gold-lined, cloudy down,
Reach warm-rayed, amber arms
To bless the red-roofed town.

—S.D.S.

Queen announced. Miss Sully relates that, on entering, the Queen gave her one glance, laughed, and dropped her the deepest of curtsies. Then the Queen laughed again and pointed to their dresses. The Queen's was also of black silk with green stripes, exactly like Miss Sully's own, except that the stripes were a little wider. Not pretty, but with a lovely complexion and bonny brown hair, parted in the middle and drawn into a large knot at the back, is Miss Sully's description of Queen Victoria in 1838.

The refreshments which the Queen ordered for Miss Sully consisted of wine, served in gilt crystal glasses with gold flagree holders, and cakes on gold plates. So many queen cakes were among the latter that Miss Sully asked her father if her Majesty were allowed to eat nothing but queen cakes.