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WOMEN'S CLUB BUREAU

Helen M. Bramble, Director

The following suggestions for papers, together with brief bibliographies suitable for the preparation of each, are designed to meet the needs of women's clubs. Each month we will present such programs, varying in subject matter. Additional references, if necessary, can also be secured upon application to the Bureau. If any club or any member of a club desires advice in forming programs other than these given, in finding sources for material, in securing speakers, or in raising funds, we shall gladly cooperate without expense to the club. We suggest that you give as much information as possible regarding your club, i.e. type of program usually used, number in club, length of meeting, etc.

I

THE MOST challenging notice to club women, this month, is the contest now running in THE FORUM. In the September, October, and November issues Hendrik Willem van Loon, Will Durant, and H. G. Wells will state what are, in their opinions, the most important dates in history. Read the rules on page 143 and prepare your paper. In addition to the rules given, if you are a member of a woman's club please state the fact when you submit your manuscript. Should a club woman win any of the prizes offered, this page will make a special feature of it.

II

IN THE March club section several suggestions for papers on the present crime wave were offered. Harry Hirschman in the September FORUM has a most amusing discussion anent animals as criminals. But ridiculous as the old laws were, ours seem equally absurd. In spite of alienists, psychologists, psychiatrists on all sides, stupidities regarding the mentally unfit are still evident. Together with Mr. Hirschman's article are other references giving varying phases of a most fascinating subject. In addition to this, a shorter paper reviewing some recent articles on pathological psychology is proposed.

A. THE CRIMINAL MIND

When Animals Were Criminals — Harry Hirschman — FORUM, September 1930

Insanity: Another Legal Fiction — Milton MacKaye — Outlook, February 6, 1929

Insanity and the Law — Anthony M. Turano — American Mercury, April 1930

Demobilizing the Alienists — Malcolm Logan — North American Review, January 1929

What Makes a Criminal? — Joseph Lilly — Outlook, January 29, 1930

Cerberus on Trial — Commonweal, January 1, 1930

B. THE PATHOLOGY OF CRIME

Our Wanting Machine — G. V. Hamilton — FORUM, April 1930

D.D. Versus M.D. — J. H. Preston — Scribner's, May 1930

Doctor White: Healer of Sick Minds — James Hay, Jr. and F. K. Buschmann — World's Work, May 1930

III

IN THE last few months the unemployment situation has again strengthened the voices of those who are opposed to women's working, particularly those women who do not work primarily through economic necessity. In order that you may debate the question for yourselves, articles on both sides have been selected. In addition to those suggested, we recommend a symposium on the subject "Women's Right to Work," which appeared in the Woman's Journal for May 1930.

RESOLVED: THAT WOMEN SHOULD WORK ONLY BECAUSE OF ECONOMIC NECESSITY

1. Affirmative:

Careers for Women — V. F. Calverton — Current History, January 1929

Women Who Work — H. McCadden — Commonweal, March 26, 1930

Should Women Take Men's Jobs? — F. Perkins — Woman's Journal, April 1930

The Part-time Job — L. Pruette — Woman's Journal, June 1930

2. Negative:

Pin-money Slaves — P. Cannon — FORUM, August 1930

Once There Was a Princess — G. J. Nathan — American Mercury, February 1930

Give Us Our Privileges — E. Onativia — Scribner's, June 1930

The Decline of Women — D. Ward — FORUM, November 1929

IV

IN MAY of this year certain members of the book publishing world made

Women's Club Bureau

such radical changes in their prices that nearly every metropolitan paper in the country carried a front page story of their experiment. Because these changes influence, to a greater or lesser degree, everyone who writes, makes, or reads a book, this subject is worth discussing.

A. THE PUBLISHERS' PRICE WAR

Dollar Books — Walter B. Pitkin vs. Malcolm Cowley — *FORUM*, September 1930.

The New Publishing Proposals — *Publishers' Weekly*, May 31, 1930

The Publishers' Price War — *New Republic*, June 4, 1930

The Book Trade — *Saturday Review of Literature*, May 24, 1930

Books at New Lows — *Outlook*, June 4, 1930

B. IMPORTANT NOVELS RECENTLY PUBLISHED

The Woman of Andros — Thornton Wilder — *A. and C. Boni* — \$2.50

Bystander — Maxim Gorky — *Cape and Smith* — \$3.00

Gallows Orchard — Claire Spencer — *Cape and Smith* — \$2.50

Coronet — Manuel Komroff — *Coward-McCann* — \$3.00

Cimarron — Edna Ferber — *Double-day, Doran* — \$2.50

Rogue Herries — Hugh Walpole — *Doubleday, Doran* — \$2.50

The Selbys — Anne Green — *Dutton* — \$2.50

The Door — Mary Roberts Rinehart — *Farrar and Rinehart* — \$1.00

All Our Yesterdays — H. M. Tomlinson — *Harper's* — \$2.50

V

WHAT HAS caused the present craze for detective stories? Why do college professors, bankers, athletes, and salesmen all join in vehement praise of the mystery thriller? John Farrar says the "fantastic pursuit" story is his favorite. Philip Guedalla calls the detective story "the normal reaction of noble minds." Marjorie Nicolson says that scholars are only the detectives of thought. To make an interesting day's program for your club, read:

IS THERE A DETECTIVE IN THE HOUSE?

The Professor and the Detective — Marjorie Nicolson — *Atlantic Monthly*, April 1929

About These Mystery Stories — P. G. Wodehouse — *Saturday Evening Post*, May 25, 1929

The Lawyer Looks at Detective Fiction — J. B. Waite and M. W. Kimball — *Bookman*, August 1929

A Sport of Noble Minds — Dorothy L. Sayers — *Saturday Review of Literature*, August 3, 1929

Have You a Detective in Your Home? — John Farrar — *Century*, May 1929

The Editor Reviews His Magazine

DESPITE the effort of those who dislike it to credit it with this or that sinister programme, *THE AMERICAN MERCURY* is, in reality, quite devoid of propagandist aim. It belongs to no school, and proposes no new and thrilling remedy for all the sorrows of the world. Its pages are open to writers of all shades of belief, provided only they believe in something not revolting to an enlightened man and are able to argue for it in a good-humored and amusing manner. It naturally gives no space to such imbecilities as astrology, Christian Science, communism, spiritualism, and the New Humanism, but otherwise it is very tolerant, and has been hospitable, *inter alia*, to both the most implacable defenders of capitalism and its most enterprising and pertinacious critics. In the field of beautiful letters it is likewise very catholic. It has made room for both decorous sonneteers and the contrivers of the most advanced varieties of free verse, and for writers of fiction of all schools, from the Victorian to the post-Joycean. The one thing it insists upon is decent writing. However its contributors may differ otherwise, they are all indubitably literate.

The magazine makes its appeal to the more skeptical and unimpassioned class of Americans; naturally enough, they tend to be somewhat well-to-do. It does not try to convert them to anything; it simply tries to give them civilized entertainment. Those persons who chance to have been born with a firm faith in the incredible do not often read it, for they find it disturbing and uncomfortable. Thus it cannot hope to interest Methodists, or the ladies of the D. A. R., or the professional heroes of the American Legion, or Ku Kluxers, or believers in the Noble Experiment, or anyone else of that general sort. But it offers a steady supply of pleasant (and sometimes instructive) reading to those who view the world more blandly and more accurately, and there are enough of them in the United States, by God's inscrutable will, to keep up its circulation and warm its advertisers.

All the principal American authors, at one time or another, have contributed to its contents, but it is written mainly by writers who are not professionals. Among them have been men ranging from a United States Senator to a cotton-mill worker, from a college president to a trained nurse, and from a judge on the bench to a learned hobo. One of its most memorable articles, a truly magnificent piece of writing, was done by a man who, before it got into type, went to the electric chair for murder. Another came from a laborer in a lumber-mill, since turned author. It has always been very hospitable to such novelties, and it has printed far more of them than any other American magazine. They are presented because they help Americans to understand one another, and because they tend to be extraordinarily interesting. Many more of the same sort are in prospect.

THE AMERICAN MERCURY, with its first appearance, set a new standard in printing. It has been widely imitated ever since, but no other magazine has been able to keep up with its constant improvements. It is addressed to readers who want the best, both in contents and in investiture. It has been a substantial success, and is in a sound and secure position today.

Lincoln Chen

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