

Catholic Citizen

Organ of St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance (formerly Catholic Women's Suffrage Society),
55, Berners Street, London, W.1.

Vol. XXVIII. Nos. 7 & 8.

15th JULY-AUGUST, 1942.

Price Twopence.

Daughter of the ancient Eve,
We know the gifts ye gave and give;
Who knows the gifts which *you* shall give,
Daughter of the Newer Eve?

Francis Thompson.

THE SOCIAL QUESTION.

By CHRISTINE SPENDER.

It was once truly said to the author of this article that instead of reading *about* a given work it was better to read the work itself. So in writing about the recent Joint Pastoral Letter of the Hierarchy of England and Wales on the Social Question, the object is to encourage others to read the Pastoral in its entirety and ponder well its implications.

The Pastoral Letter starts by urging Catholics to lead the way in the building of a new national life on Christian lines. This "with the help of all those 'men of good will' whom our Holy Father welcomes to our side because they also 'love God and Our Lord.'"

After stating the need for a "renewal of Christian brotherhood" and the impossibility of a new world order without "spiritual health," the Pastoral goes on to lay down certain fundamental principles necessary for social justice and social order "here at home."

Briefly since each human being is "a person with rights and duties entitled to respect as a creature with an immortal destiny," and the family is the essential unit of society "it is the duty of the State to protect the rights of the individual person and the rights of the family, in the interests of the common good." A closely reasoned explanation of these principles is given which is worthy the study of all those who tend on the one hand to exalt the State at the expense of the individual and on the other to deny the individual's indebtedness to society and to the family in particular.

"Human welfare ought to rank higher than economic power." Therefore Christians ought not to tolerate an insecure social system which allows people "to suffer want through no fault

of their own." Christians should support "any measure which helps to preserve human life or family life" and oppose any attack on the dignity of man or on the family. Unemployment and the payment of less than a just wage attack the dignity of man. Family life is attacked by divorce, the practice of contraception, bad housing conditions, and when the parents cannot support as large a family as they would like to have or are unable to afford for any of their children an education suitable to the child's gifts.

Proposals made by the Pastoral as to the minimum conditions for a Christian way of life include the living wage "sufficient not only for a moderately comfortable life, but sufficient for saving as well"—less than this being unjust. "The payment of this wage should be the first charge on every industry" and the factors determining the amount of a man's wages are "an agreed standard of work, the capacity of the industry to pay and an agreed minimum average family, e.g., father, mother and three or four children. When an employer cannot pay this minimum living wage the difference should be made up." Indications as to how this may be done follow: the remark that "employers and employed should be regarded as partners, not as rivals," might well be marked, learned and inwardly digested with advantage to both.

Then: "A wife ought not to be obliged to go out to work in order to make up the wages of a family to a minimum living wage"—"the minimum living accommodation for a family should be such that no one has to sleep in the living room; that there be satisfactory sanitation; that there be a bathroom for each family. Slums should be abolished, there is no excuse for slums."

"There should be a ban on the manufacture and sale of birth-prevention appliances" and on obscene books. "Religious education, to meet the wishes of the parents, should be available to all schoolchildren," and the child's general education should not suffer from the parents' insistence on this right.

Finally, "the enormous inequality in the distribution of wealth," involving the control of the lives of the masses by a few rich people, is "against social justice." The war "has clearly shown that there is no practical difficulty in solving economic problems as long as all work together for a common purpose," and there is no reason why this "common purpose" should only be found in war and why the authority of the State should not continue to check crying evils in the national interest. "The same means, the same men and materials are available in peace no less than in war."

Concluding, the Pastoral declares: "There is only one way to recover social health, and that is to return as quickly as we may to the laws which God has laid down for the good of human society. . . . If God is indeed the Father of us all, our first duty is to pay homage and love to God, and our second duty following from the first is to love one another as brothers. In that love of God and of one another, let us close our ranks and stand together and welcome the help of any man who will stand with us."

St. Joan's Alliance in Australia.

Hon. Secretary, Miss M. M. Flynn, 65, Grange Road, Toorak, Melbourne, S.E.2.

A joint deputation of Women's Organisations, led by Mrs. Jessie Street, was received recently at Canberra by the Prime Minister and Minister for Air, concerning the position of women in the Services, more particularly of the W.A.A.Fs.

The Deputation made the following demands: equal pay with single men in the Defence Forces; the same living allowance as single men (the W.A.A.Fs. whose living allowance was previously the same as the men's had recently had it reduced from 4/4 to 3/6 per day); abolition of minors' rates of pay; same repatriation benefits with same rights of compensation for injury; travelling allowances on the same basis as men; consideration of reinstatement in civil life.

St. Joan's Alliance gave full support, by letter and through the Victorian representative, the chairman of the Equality Committee of Victoria of which the Alliance is a member organisation.

INCOME TAX.

A Government regulation recently published (12th June) lays down that where a husband and wife each has an income, they can make an application to have the credit divided instead of being given wholly to the husband. If they agree upon their shares they will send an application signed by both to the inspector, telling him how to divide the credit.

If husband and wife disagree, the inspector will make the division according to rules laid down by last year's Finance Act.

He will divide the portion of the post-war credit arising from the reduction in the earned income allowance in proportion to the earned income of husband and wife. The remainder of the credit will be divided in proportion to the "assessable incomes" of each. There is a system for appeals.

Under the new Finance Bill which has been passed by the House of Commons, new concessions for married and single taxpayers were introduced. Sir Kingsley Wood stated that: In place of the existing limits of £1 17s. 6d. for a single taxpayer and £2 17s. 6d. for a married couple, it was proposed to introduce new limits, from August 1st, of £2 for a single taxpayer, £3 for a married couple without children, £4 for a married couple with one child, and £5 for a married couple with two or three children.

He had decided to apply the £3 limit not only to the married taxpayer without children but also to any taxpayer who had a child for whom she or he could claim the child allowance. Similarly, the £4 limit would apply not only to the married couple with one child but to the taxpayer with two children, and the £5 limit would apply not only to the married couple with two or more but to the taxpayer with three or more children.

It was not possible to provide with the same degree of precision for other cases where the taxpayer had dependents and where, in consequence, the £2 limit would be too low. Provision would be made to see that in these other cases, if the taxpayer notified the collector, the latter would instruct the employer to apply that limit which was appropriate having regard to the tax allowances which the taxpayer was entitled to in respect of dependent relatives.

Notes and Comments.

In Parliament.

Mr. G. Strauss asked the Home Secretary why the same facilities available for men serving in the armed Forces to vote at by-elections were not offered to women members of the Forces.

Mr. Peake, Under-Secretary, said that the question whether the procedure under which men in the Forces were entitled to vote as absent voters applied to members of the women's Services who were not serving abroad or afloat was a legal question on which he had no power to make an authoritative pronouncement. The position of such persons was receiving further consideration.

On June 4th, Dr. Edith Summerskill (for Mr. Douglas) asked the Minister of Health whether he will, in connection with any reorganisation of the hospital system, give consideration to securing the admission of women students into all medical training schools on equal terms with men?

Mr. E. Brown: I will bring my hon. Friend's suggestion to the notice of the Committee that I referred to in my reply on 26th March to my hon. Friend the Member for Great Yarmouth (Mr. Jewson) which is considering the organisation of medical schools.

On June 2nd Mr. Hannah asked the Secretary of State for War why official sanction has been given for the use of contraceptives in the Army, and will he reconsider his attitude in this matter?

Sir J. Grigg: In the British Army, as in other armies, facilities are provided whereby soldiers who wish to do so may obtain preventives against venereal disease. I do not propose to withdraw these facilities.

We print on our front page an article by Mrs. Forster on Compulsory Measures for the Treatment of V.D. We know that in theory, even those who would suggest compulsion, do not propose to return to the policy of the old C.D. Acts. Everyone, police, doctor and social worker regrets that blot on our administration. But the cruelty and injustice which was the lot of the women who suffered under them must not be forgotten. Nor must it be forgotten that every measure of partial compulsion, especially if applied to women only, carries in itself the same assurance of failure. The social and administrative difficulties connected with irregular and casual sex relations makes it almost inevitable that these measures will in the long run be applied only to "known prostitutes" and the "amateur."

Those who are interested in this subject should read "Compulsory Methods and the Treatment of Venereal Diseases" by E. M. Turner, published by the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene (1942), and procurable at their offices, Livingstone House, Broadway, for 1d.

We note that the Colonial Research Advisory Committee foreshadowed in the Statement of Policy on Colonial Development and Welfare

(Cmd. 6175), published in 1940, has now been set up under the chairmanship of Lord Hailey, and consists of five eminent men.

We suggest that the Government should consider whether there is no equally eminent woman who could add her contribution to the work of the Committee and so, perhaps, avoid mistakes like that acknowledged by the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Marquess of Dufferin and Ava in the House on March 20th, 1940, when he said, "I am almost certain in my own mind that it was a great mistake when we started to educate Africa that we did not start with the women."

It was announced in April that the Colonial Labour Advisory Committee had been formed. This consists of persons with first-hand knowledge of labour questions selected from within and without the Colonial Office. As in the Committee mentioned above these eminent persons will all be men and again we ask why is there no woman on a Committee of such importance?

While reserving opinion on the relative value of boarding and day schools, "Public," "Private" and State schools, we welcome the statement made by Mr. R. A. Butler, President of the Board of Education, at Winchester recently, that both boys and girls should have whatever opportunities were made available in the post-war system of education, that the whole school population should get to know each other better, and that all children should receive, as individuals, the education for which they were most fitted.

We congratulate our member, Mme. Leroy, on the birth of her second son on July 7th.

We congratulate our members, Dr. Eileen Hickey, B.Sc., F.R.C.P.I., on her co-option as a member of Queen's University Senate, Belfast; also Miss Helen C. White, the distinguished American author on her award of the Sixtieth Laetare Medal.

We ask the prayers of our members for the repose of the soul of Mrs. Poundall, an early member of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society, of whose death last year we have only just learned.—R.I.P.

ST. JOAN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE

AND

Editorial Office of "Catholic Citizen"

55 BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W.I. Tel. Museum 4181

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Society.

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The Liberty of the Subject.

In almost every form of society, from the earliest times until now, there has persisted an idea that men require and must have more food for body and mind, more freedom and more happiness than women. Allied to this concept of masculinity is the belief that man has sex powers and needs which cannot and ought not, in any circumstances, to be restrained. Purity and chastity have been, perhaps universally, accepted as desirable for all and absolute for women, but promiscuity has been generally condoned as inevitable in men.

The acceptance of this inevitability theory has required the creation of a special class of women to minister to men's needs outside lawful marriage. It demands prostitutes. Yet society has consistently punished and penalised the women concerned and they alone have been controlled by law in the name of order and decency and to check venereal disease. Public conscience in this matter, in an attempt to calm itself and make a virtue of alleged necessity, has endeavoured to put this female sacrifice on a high plane of service—in the name of religion Grecian women were given to the Gods in the persons of the priests and worshippers at the temples, for financial profit; in remoter lands it was argued that it was not ignoble thus to barter a sister or daughter in order to secure payment for a father's debts or ensure the education of a brother; and in modern times it has been thought virtue in the State to restrict the lives and happiness of certain women on a hygienic pretext for the purpose of securing clean women for the benefit of lascivious men.

Nevertheless the opinion of disinterested and

informed investigators has remained immovably with Flexner—the great authority—that prostitution is everywhere mercenary, everywhere rapacious, everywhere perverse, diseased, sordid, vulgar, and almost always filthy.

Large scale public compulsory measures for the treatment of venereal diseases have in the main been directed only against the women partners in the act of prostitution and are thus in line with the acceptance of the belief in sex inequality, the source and foundation of all inequalities and injustice. Even in the U.S.A., Australia and Canada, where compulsory measures are supposed to apply equally to both men and women, in practice they apply only to women. Such measures have always meant denunciation, medical examination, and detention—of women.

There are in existence laws enforcing compulsory treatment for venereal diseases which ask that men suffering from the disease shall disclose the name of the woman from whom they have contracted it. These women are then required to attend for medical examination and if found diseased are compelled to undergo treatment until cured.

Any man given to the use of prostitutes must be uncertain as to which particular woman infected him. In any case it is only his word against that of the woman—but his word is enough. Yet how can it be proved that it was not the man who infected her? How can false denunciation for some private grudge be prevented? In England under the Contagious Diseases Acts, 1864-1886, and in 1918 under D.O.R.A. 40 d, even innocent girls were accused,

and on the word of someone who had "reason to believe" that they were given to promiscuity, they were handed over for examination.

Examination for venereal disease in men is a superficial matter and even so has been resisted as an affront to man's person. But in women, enforced examination is an intrusion upon the sanctity of the body, an outrage which constitutes a surgical rape. And such examinations have universally been offensive, painful and dangerous in their cursorness. Under the C.D. Acts the victims' sense of shame was often drowned in drink on the morning of the examinations and they resulted in a hardening and coarsening of the character. The women sought successfully, in certain stages of their disease, to hide their symptoms. The examinations gave men a false sense of security from disease, for venereal disease is not easily detected in a quick examination and immunity one hour, is no guarantee of immunity the next in a practising prostitute. Of necessity the freedom of the women was restricted to certain areas and even in England it was not unknown for a woman to give up the life, and move to another town into decent work or marriage, only to be dragged back because once a prostitute the law demanded regular attendance at the examinations.

The prostitutes, if found to be diseased, were obliged to go into hospital—once there, in England they were jailed like criminals; even their letters were withheld and first read by the Chaplains. And when they were released they often found their homes sold up to pay arrears of rent and their children in the workhouse.* In America some twenty years ago an attempt was made to idealise the conditions in one such hospital and it was noteworthy that the grounds were surrounded by a high fence along the top of which was stretched barbed wire.

War disturbs sex relationships, and increased promiscuity brings increased venereal disease. And to-day, again, there is a movement in favour of a return to compulsory measures. Their

* This of course is a description (not exaggerated as anyone will know who has read "A State Iniquity" by Benjamin Scott, F.R.A.S., Chamberlain of the City of London, published by Kegan Paul Trench Trubner & Co. in 1890) of the Contagious Diseases Acts in force in England from 1864 to 1886. Probably most, if not all, members of the medical profession to-day realise their mistake with regard to these Acts and are as ashamed of them as we are. Yet it is well to remember that all schemes of partial compulsion, especially if applied to women only, are doomed to failure. When the failure becomes apparent, severer and more stringent compulsion may be called for. This can only too easily become a fact if the principle has been conceded.—Ed. C.C.

advocates tell us that the law will apply equally to men and women and that the old evils of all former systems of regulation will be avoided while publicly they speak of the woman alone as "the hardened prostitute," "the vicious amateur," "the recalcitrant contact."

We claim that prevention is far better than cure and that an enlivened moral sense, born of self-respect and happiness, possible only in a community where Christian fellowship reigns, is a first essential in dealing with problems of venereal disease. And equality of treatment and justice apart, common sense as well as experience teaches us that in the case of this disease, which has so strong a social relevance, men and women will desire and respond intelligently and profitably only to adequate facilities for free, voluntary, and confidential treatment.

G. H. FORSTER.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

*Leonora de Alberti in the "Catholic Suffragist,"
June 15th, 1917.*

"For our part we agree with Lord Henry Cavendish Bentinck, who in his speech on the Franchise Bill said: "I do not base the claims for women in the work which they have done during the war. I base the claims for women on higher grounds than that. It seems to me that the claims of women are as old as Christianity itself. If our religion has not taught us the equal value of men and women in the eyes of the Maker, then our religion has taught us very little indeed. If that is granted, then women have a right equally with men to co-operate in the framing of society so that it will express the image of a better time. . . . But the question being in the main political, the Church takes no official part."—Notes and Comments.

*Leonora de Alberti in the "Catholic Suffragist,"
August 15th, 1917.*

"By all means let us face the evils by which we are surrounded, but let us face them fairly and squarely. We do not ask that the sins of women be condoned, but we do demand that the time-dishonoured custom of laying all evil on the shoulders of women, be once and for all abandoned. Eve is no longer willing to be made a scapegoat for the sins of men. Let preachers and moralists take note of the change."—A Sermon with Omissions.

Our colleagues of the Women's Freedom League held their 35th Annual Conference at the Minerva Club on June 13th. A general resolution was passed on the aims of the League enumerating all the reforms necessary to give women equal status before the law. The afternoon session took the form of a feminist Brains Trust.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

We have welcome news from Miss M. H. Lisboa, Founder of the Brazilian Section of St. Joan's Alliance, who sends a note for the paper as follows:—

Dr. Carlota Pereira de Queros has been elected Honorary Member of the Brazilian National Academy of Medicine, the highest scientific corporation in the country and the highest degree that can be conferred on any member. She is the first Brazilian woman and, after Mme. Durocher and Mme. Curie, the third woman in the world thus distinguished. Dr. Queros is from San Paulo and in 1930, when Brazilian women obtained political rights, she was chosen M.P. for San Paulo by the Single Front Party of that State. As M.P. she devoted her influence to the organisation of Charity Social Service on European lines. The seed was sown even if, owing to the closure of the House of Commons, she could not fulfill her programme. The movement for the increase of this kind of social work has since advanced each year.

In the agreement which has been made between the French National Committee in London and the National Front for French Independence, we are glad to note that the statement of General de Gaulle declares that in post-war France "all French men and women will elect a National Assembly."

French women must see to it that their voting rights do not elude them as was the case after the French Revolution in spite of the cry of Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité.

* * *

The "League of Coloured Peoples Newsletter" quotes the "Race Relation News" (South Africa) in a protest against the very low wages paid to the African teacher in the Transvaal. We note that low as the salaries often are for the men, the women get £1 less per month than their male colleagues (respectively £5 10s. and £4 10s. is quoted for the trained teacher). Quite apart from the scandalousness of this low wage it is a shame that when virgin soil is being tilled, the less good customs of Britishers should be introduced.

* * *

By the death of Miss Alice Jenner, South Africa has lost a noted feminist and educationist. For twenty years she was Principal of the Oortshoorn Girls' High School, during which time she made many visits to Europe to keep in touch with the education schemes of the day. "I go to get, to give back to my girls," she used to say. Miss Jenner was an ardent supporter of Woman Suffrage and worked in close collaboration with our member, Miss A. L. P. Dorman, when she was editing the suffrage organ, "The Woman's Outlook." Latterly she attended several of the Congresses of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, where we met her for the last time at Istanbul. May she rest in peace.

I.L.O. Conference.

The following resolution on unequal wage rates based on sex, was submitted to the International Labour Conference held in New York last autumn, by Mr. Monk, Workers' Delegate from Australia.

Whereas the existing practice of employing women in industry and services at less than the prevailing male rates of pay for the same or similar work or work of equal value to the employer is inimical alike to the economic well-being of men and women workers and detrimental to the social interest of the whole community;

Whereas such unequal wage standards involving sex discrimination, firstly ignores the recognised principle of equality of men and women; secondly, denies the woman worker full payment for her work, and thirdly, exposes male workers to the unfair competition of underpaid female workers;

Whereas the present world-wide replacement of male labour by female labour has intensified the problems arising from sex differentials in wage standards;

Whereas the whole incidence of female labour has changed since the beginning of this war in consequence of the universal use of women workers in industry, commerce, and the public services, including the armed forces in many countries:

(1) The Conference considers that the male occupational standard rates or the rates for the job irrespective of the sex of the worker should be recognised as the basic principle of war and post-war industry and is of the opinion that steps should be taken immediately to secure the elimination of sex differentials in wage standards:

(2) The Conference requests the International Labour Office to resume its investigation of women's work, and, through the Governing Body, to formulate plans to combat the exploitation of this pool, of efficient and underpaid labour, and that all available information on this problem be circulated and the governments of all countries be requested to eliminate sex differentials in wage standards by legislative and administrative action.

For lack of time, this resolution together with others was referred to the Emergency Committee which met in London in April, 1942. In its turn, the Emergency Committee referred the resolution to the International Labour Office for special consideration. The I.L.O. plans to continue to study this question with the aid of a reconstituted "Women's Work Service."

During the session of the London Women's Parliament held on June 14th, the demand was reiterated for the rate for the job and instances of lower pay being given to women for equal work were produced. Speakers urged that women should be trained and up-graded so that their services should be used to the best advantage.

The office will be closed all August, correspondence attended to as usual.

REVIEWS.

The Institute of the Assumption, by Mrs. Virginia Crawford. (Catholic Truth Society, 3d.)

In her pamphlet Mrs. Crawford has succeeded in giving, in an original form, a complete story of the Institute of the Assumption, its beginnings in France and its foundation in England.

From the biographies of the Foundress and the first Novice Mistress, a French and an Irish nun respectively, Mrs. Crawford has been able, in a vivid account, to set forth the original spirit, at once monastic and educational, of this congregation. It has indeed a very special vocation, and establishes a new form of religious life, for without sacrificing anything of a contemplative community, it devotes itself entirely to the highest type of education possible for girls: a very superior standard of intellectual knowledge with a really deep Christian education.

This characteristic harmony explains the great success of this congregation which rapidly became known not only in France and England, where it possesses several houses, but also all over Europe, and even in America and the Philippines.

M.L.

The Art of Story-Writing and the Author's Guide, by Les Preston. (Stone Publishing Agency, Redcar, Yorks. 5s.)

This racy little guide gives some very sound advice to the would-be author and can be recommended without hesitation. A much needed exhortation is "perseverance" without which comes certain failure. How many writers "blush unseen" for lack of this initial quality. Then there are frank instructions on style—no echoism, no sloppiness allowed. Models must be carefully studied, facts well authenticated by first-hand knowledge and application to the reference book. The story must have that sudden twist which holds the reader's interest, the dialogue must not drag. And so on. If the course of study given is well and truly followed, though fame is not assured there seems no reason why it should not eventually come, given a certain minimum of talent and a capacity to face discouragement. Even in these busy days this book (which includes examples of the short story written by Les Preston himself) should afford a real "refresher course" for the worker's spare time.

C.S.

THE SUFFRAGETTES.

The Suffragette Fellowship has now secured temporary headquarters at 43, Black Lion Lane, Hammersmith, W.6 (behind the Commodore Cinema). Owing to war conditions only a portion of the relics and other exhibits of the Suffragette Museum can be shown. We feel sure that our feminist friends from other countries will be interested to see these records of the militant section of the Suffrage Movement. The Fellowship meets on the afternoon of the first Monday of each month up to September 28th, by kind permission of Mrs. Sparrow, with Miss Helen Atkinson as hostess. Those wishing to view the records at other times must write first to the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Gye, Adsett, The Ridgway, Mill Hill, N.W.7.

On July 14th Mrs. Pankhurst's birthday, at 2.30, the Old Suffragettes and representatives of other women's organisations, including St. Joan's Alliance, met as usual to pay a tribute to the great militant leader, by laying flowers around her statue in Victoria Gardens, under the shadow of the House of Lords.

Liverpool and District Branch. Hon. Secretary, Miss A. McNeish, 61, Rosedale Avenue, Crosby, Liverpool 23.

We are looking forward with pleasure to the Garden Meeting to be held on Saturday afternoon, August 22nd, at Birkenhead, by kind invitation of the Misses Barry. Our members and friends are invited and we hope to increase the membership of the Branch.

We were delighted to read in the press that Mrs. Tate, M.P., presented in the House of Commons the Petition signed by 40,000 citizens of Merseyside, pointing out that civilian women, who faced the same dangers and were liable to the same injuries from enemy action as civilian men, suffered great hardship through unequal rates of compensation for war injuries.

St. Joan's Alliance prays and hopes that the work for justice of the women's organisations under the leadership of Mrs. Tate will come to fruition at an early date.

We ask the prayers of our members for the repose of the soul of our member, Mrs. Clandillon, of Crosby, who died on June 24th.—R.I.P.

HON. TREASURER'S NOTE

Quite a goodly (or "badly") number of members have not yet paid their subscriptions for 1942. We feel sure that if they realised the amount of trouble this gives, not to speak of time and material involved, they would hasten to pay. We beg all those who owe their subscriptions to fill in the slip enclosed in the "Catholic Citizen" and send their cheque, postal order, or even stamps, at once, but in no case later than July 28th, when we want to make up our accounts for the half year.

Thanks to all who helped at the "Bring and Buy" Sale, with the addition of one or two donations—from our good friend the Bishop of Pella and another from a feminist from one of the stricken countries, who asked us to accept "a little help for a vast idea," we have been able to pay the June quarter's rent. We hope to have a repeat performance in September to raise that quarter's rent.

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