

ALL THE WOMAN'S WORLD'S A-KNITTING NOW

Click, Click, Go the Needles at Opera, Theatre, House Party, In 'Bus, Subway, Office or Automobile.

By DORIS E. FLEISCHMAN.
KNIT, knit, knit! On and on flash the needles, steadily and relentlessly unwinds the yarn, and row by row grows the work. Fingers twine and grasp, fingers that are young and smooth, firm and athletic, old and rheumatic.

Do you sit in motor car, omnibus, streetcar or subway? Do you frequent the theatre, the opera, the concert? Do you hunt or shop, do you dance or attend lectures? If so, you will always find people with you who are taking feverish or mechanical stock of the fleeting moment. True, these have a different complexion from the "knitting women" who counted heads into their stitches, in the shadow of the pulpit, but they pursue their work as unremittingly, if less sardonically. And the stuff they put into their woollen bands is not gloating revenge, but a kindly thought for the poor wretches who will wear what they make.

New Stitches Displace New Dance Steps.

A queer kind of sport for the fashionable woman, is it not? One sees the most frivolous of women at afternoon tea with this old-fashioned work beside her, waiting to recommence as soon as her hands are freed. Click, click, go the needles, and women pause in their gossip to pick up a dropped stitch. There is less impromptu dancing at these teas, for there is more serious business at hand. Instead of hearing, as formerly, "Mary, that step you do is a perfect dear. You must show me at once." "Angela, be a love and play that new fox-trot thing for me." One now hears, in quite as much excitement, and with just as much eager interest infused into the voice, "Who can show me how to knit those ducky little caps? I am so sick of this band, it is almost finished. I think I'll begin on the tassel? Oh, dear, don't they wear tassels? Well, I think I won't make a cap, then. I'll make wristbands, all in beautiful colors, even if we aren't allowed. You've finished yours! How funny and woolly it looks! Imagine having to wear that! But the poor angels will find it warm, and maybe it will be lucky for them. I know I think something nice into mine at about every tenth stitch—you see, I can't remember to wish any cleaner than that. Wasn't Pussy Ware looking gorgeous last evening?"

Professors Lecture While Classes Knit.

Imagine a staid old professor, or more remarkably, a dignified young one, allowing his disciples to knit in class, to punctuate the solemn numbers of his discourse with rapid, uneven clicks. Knitting clubs in the girls' colleges include practically the entire undergraduate body. One sees the girls, lounging on forbidden stairs, perched on tables, sitting at desks, reading and knitting at the same time. Latin and knitting, knitting and Shakespeare, committee meetings for athletics and the needles—no combination seems impossible or incongruous. At rehearsals the prompter sews and the chorus

stands out in the dark wings plying its shining tools. The weeping heroine dries her tears and drops into a chair in the orchestra, hugging her gray muffler ecstatically, and works off her feelings in a fury of knitting.

The Motor Dog Is Neglected Nowadays.

Have you ever noticed what the women are doing in the endless procession of motors that jerks slowly down the avenue? The motor dog, if there is one, is covering in disgrace in the corner, while his richly gowned mistress makes the queer gray animal which she pats now and then, softly and lingeringly, grow longer, little by little. The motor starts, and she stops tick-ticking and smiles at her poor little dog, or scrawls a just-remembered name on her list, and looks at the people and the shop windows passing her. The motor stops at the next crossing, and in fly the needles again, and some soldier is approaching a little more warmly.

But she doesn't leave her work in her motor. Oh, dear, no! For, no matter where you are going or what you do, a minute of time will present itself, and perhaps a whole row may be knitted. She stuffs her gray ball into her beautiful workbag and goes into the shop. While waiting for change she pulls it out and completes a bit more, blandly unconscious of the amused glances. But be sure that she has created at least half a dozen followers in this little minute, for she looked terribly smart and appealingly attractive as her mouth pursed together in earnest effort over her very feminine labor.

Rhythm of the Needles Soothing to Jaded Nerves.

After her shopping expedition she goes on to a luncheon, and it is not at all surprising to find that almost every woman there has brought her needles and wool. It is fairly contagious, this enthusiasm. There is a wonderful joy in working, working, working, in feeling your fingers moving in and out through the soft lengths of the yarn, whether you are conscious of actual effort or not. Sitting quietly, moving rhythmically, counting subconsciously—what a wonderful panacea for jaded nerves! What an anchor for the hard worked debutante! After luncheon to a concert, and one finds now and again a woman who is so enraptured with her new industry that even music will not destroy her ardor.

Clicking Needles Disturb Concert-Goers.

This is a nuisance—at least, the people who sit in the vicinity of the worker think so, for needles are not tuned and the beats are out of rhythm. The fierce music-lover rises in dire wrath, looks at the offender and emits a strident "Sh!" but she continues in her work. Letters have been written to the papers about it, and nothing has as yet been done.

In the theatre toilers are more considerate, or perhaps a bit more interested, for they watch and listen undividedly. But as soon as the click for the curtain breaks the finale of each act, and before the applause has climbed to its fortissimo, the still little sound sends forth its almost telegraphic message.



At the opera one has already found a diminution of promenading. Workers in the pit, in the parterre and in the balcony prefer to make their knitted strand a little longer. They remain in their seats and discuss the performance, never desisting from their work. Even the enthusiasts who stand at the back of the orchestra—the true lovers of the art—after their last gasp at the sublime glory of what they have just heard, drop carefully and gradually to the floor, fish around under the seats in front of them, and pull out their bundle and yarn, and, knitting, live over the beauty of what has just gone until the lights dim, when work is hurriedly thrust back under the seat, sprawlers help each other laboriously to their feet, and the first down stroke of the conductor's baton dispels all illusions of drear, gray soldiery.

Almost no places are sacred to this all-involving, insatiable desire for more knitting. Even the short-skirted and daintily trousered huntress whose rifle leans on her shoulder is betrayed by the bulging pocket. A minute's wait, and the gray ball emerges and springs into life under the proddings of the long sticks. Before a shot, waiting for the luncheon to be spread on the ground or improvised table, during any of the many unexpected pauses that occur in the course of such an expedition—at any of these times a bit of valuable work may be accomplished. Diana has turned housewife; the huntress, with supple, unaccustomed fingers, takes up the needle. The combination is doubly irresistible, for, leaning against a tree, squatting on a stump, shining cheeks and sparkling eyes, gun in readiness, she softens momentarily.

A late autumn house party has into its briskness and cheerful, untiring activity infused this new element of quiet and selflessness. Perhaps that last motif is the reason of this fad's widespread popularity, for it brings in the welcome idea of unpersonal labor and the opportunity of doing something for some cause, even if the work is not disagreeable. At these house parties, in wooded country, near Lakewood, or wherever else these most enjoyable of all events are held, girls come prepared with sewing. If not, they are soon converted and become quite as enthusiastic as the dear lady of eighty who has always been pained at the lack of reverence in new generations for this venerable pursuit. Truly she is overjoyed at this sudden rejuvenation of the phoenix.

Evidences of what is to transpire at the house party are seen on the train before the destination has been reached, for even there, in spite of jolting and passing scenery, the knitting is still carried on. Young girls and dowagers all are engrossed in their work. Others who have motored to the scene of the affair have been quite as industrious, for it mattered little to them that roads were uneven, that sharp corners tossed them to the outside, that lighting was wretched, and even that hands were stiff and cold, for the work must relentlessly go forward.

Once arrived, not much time is lost in returning to the serious labor of knitting again, for while they chat, in reminiscent or introductory talks, they are not greatly deterred from carrying on their purpose of usefulness. Between long walks, instead of reading in

No Matter How Varied Their Tastes and Pursuits All Femininity Unites in Making Things for Soldiers.

spare moments and during part of their resting time, click! click! go the needles.
Knitters Maintain Neutral Spirit.
Neutrality? Of course! Do you suppose that hard feeling is evoked during the war discussions that must of necessity be provoked by this martial labor? Whom are you working for? And don't you just wish the war would stop! And, good heavens! won't this make anybody look enormous? And then there are endless discussions as to the relative merits of Shaw's and Bennett's attitudes, and all the rest of it; but it doesn't matter so much to which line-up the particular article on which she is working goes, for winter is cold and the soldiers will all need things.
Of course, some bitterness is aroused; rather, one should say, some protesting partisanship. Women belonging to one nation or another wish to send their work to that nation exclusively, naturally enough.
One curious phase of the knitting question was brought out by an English woman, who protests against the universal practice of using gray wool. Gray is the color advocated by the Red Cross, and "nobody has thought of it in just this way before, but gray is the color of the German army uniform. Khaki is the English and blue the French and Belgian. The colors really ought to match the uniforms, for it renders them less conspicuous. I wanted khaki wool, but three of the stores did not have that particular color. People should be careful to choose the color which they really want."
It must indeed be uncomfortable for an Englishwoman to see these everlasting grays. Perhaps after this reminder other colors will be seen and vary the luncheon scheme, brighten the buses and add effectiveness to the schoolroom color scheme.

Daddy Long-Legs Habit Spreading

Jean Webster's Play Gives Impetus to the Orphan Placing Work of Children's Committee.

NOW it's the orphan's turn. She who has been left to mechanical and irksome routine of institutional life is now the object of a movement which will bring her—or him—a "daddy." And it all started when Miss Jean Webster dramatized her "Daddy Long-Legs." Vassar has already organized a "Daddy Long-Legs" Society, and the fever is spreading to other colleges and communities. Those interested say that this play will become the "Uncle Tom's Cabin" of the orphan.
Play Starts Adoption Craze.
The incident forming the plot of the play might well have had its source in the lives of some of the two thousand children who have been placed in homes under the supervision of Miss Mary Vida Clark, secretary of the children's committee of the State Charities Aid Association. Daddy Long-Legs, whimsical and kind, and his sweetly natural ward, Judy Abbott, have literally started a furor for the adoption of orphans. The pity of their condition has been brought with tremendous vividness to the eyes of sympathetic people, and already, after a short existence, numbers of Daddy Long-Legs clubs have sprung up.
To Mrs. William R. Rice belongs the honor of being the initiator of this movement twenty years ago.

Mrs. Rice Founder of Movement.
Mrs. Rice is the first vice-president of the State Charities Aid Association, and, with Miss Louisa Lee Schuyler and Mrs. Finley J. (Helen Gould) Shepard, one of the women trustees of the Russell Sage Foundation.
Mrs. Rice was asked what she thought of the plan suggested for having Daddy Long-Legs clubs.
"I think it is a very good idea," she answered. "It seems to me that there are clubs and classes and organizations of various sorts which might well undertake the financial responsibility for the care of such children. Take, for instance, the men's and women's clubs, which spend so much money on their own entertainment and in providing for their own comforts and luxuries, if each such club had one ward, how small would be the drain on the purse of each individual member."
Class Baby for Fraternities.
"Then there are the college fraternities and sororities which spend so much in making their members comfortable," she said. "If they could be persuaded to educate a boy, what an added pleasure and interest they would find! The various college classes have what they call a

Bachelor and Spinster Should Help.
"I think," concluded Mrs. Rice, "that every childless couple and every bachelor and spinster in the country should take some responsibility for the next generation. For those who cannot take friendless children into their homes, the State Charities Aid Association offers its services to whomsoever has the money or the time to help."
Vassar undergraduates will honor two of their alumnae, Miss Webster and Miss Clark, as well as another worker in the movement, Miss Chatterton, by being present at the performance of "Daddy Long-Legs" next Wednesday evening. A number of other prominent alumnae, Miss Katharine Davis, Commissioner of Correction; Miss Elizabeth Cutting, editor of "The North American Review"; Mrs. Anne Crawford Flexner, Dean Ella McCaleb—all Vassar graduates—will act as patronesses for the reception that will follow.
Vassar Girls Replace Parents.
"The Daddy Long-Legs clubs, then, of which the first has been founded at Miss Webster's and my alma mater, Vassar, will endeavor to be to these children, everything that parents would have been to them had they lived. At Vassar a fund is being started, and a child that is at present in an institution will be taken out in a family, where it can be supervised by members of the society, or the organization may decide to have this done through the agency of our committee."

Department of Dramaturgy Only One in Country.
That makes her self-reliant.
"One of the most important results is seen on the side of a student's morals. I have seen girls who were slovenly in their gait and their manner and in their dress, as well as in their speech, absolutely changed in their ways. The broadening of a girl's mind is effected in two ways—by the constant familiarity of the thoughts expressed in the dramatic works. Then she is constantly imbuing the spirit of generosity through the methods of our teaching.
Teaches Unselfishness.
"The most important of all the moral advantages is the lesson in unselfishness. Every girl subordinates herself to her part and her part to the play. Always we teach that 'the play's the thing.' There are no stars on our stage and there are no minor parts at Hunter. The girl who plays Hamlet is no more important than the one who plays the gravedigger's part. When we play 'Prunella' in January, the girl who plays the part of a gardener will be just as important in our eyes as the one who plays the title role.
"Of course we violate all the theatrical canons as practised by the professionals. There is no playing to the gallery; no resort to cheap stage tricks. The traditions are all cast to the winds. We don't even have a prompter. If on the night of the performance a play should be on the point of going to pieces because some one had forgotten to play her lines, why it would have to go to pieces, that's all. So far we have never had a play go to pieces."
"Prunella" Acted for Red Cross Fund.
The rehearsals are about to start for "Prunella" (if the study of the various parts of a play on a stage that is a classroom can be called a rehearsal.) There will be no difference in the preparation of this play, to be given for the benefit of the Red Cross on January 25 and 26, Mrs. Sargent said, than that of any other of the scores of plays which have been studied in the past.

WOULD YOUR DAUGHTER BE A LEADING LADY?

Hunter College Satisfies Her Aspirations Safely.

THE young woman who yearns to be a "leading lady" may gratify her ambition without shocking the members of her family. She may have grease paint and plumage and play the role of a tragedy queen to her soul's content without fear of her parents' disapproval. The girl with dramatic aspirations has a department of her own at Hunter College.

"Department of dramaturgy," the faculty calls it, and it is the only course of its kind in the country. It was started six years ago by Mrs. George L. Sargent, associate professor in the English department, with the idea of studying the drama by acting it on the stage. Students receive academic credits for work done in this course, and it is regarded as one of the most important in the college. One aim of the department of dramaturgy is to discourage the stage-struck girl from going on the stage. By giving her a chance to act she is shown her limitations and she learns that a professional career means very hard work. Amateurism Barred in This Drama Class.

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Mrs. George L. Sargent, Directing the Class in Dramaturgy.

set of principles pertaining to dramatic art. The old conception of amateur and professional as applied to dramatic performance is swept aside, and a new standard is set for college dramas. Mrs. Sargent, in outlining the scope of the work to a Tribune reporter, said:
"Detestation of the amateur, I believe, is 'the ruling passion of my life. That idea that dramatic work in the classroom is something entirely different from the work that the ordinary amateur in colleges does is borne in on every girl the moment she begins her work in the department. How can it be otherwise? Of course, the idea that college theatricals are of a necessity amateur in their character is a natural one. We are not concerned with performances; we just go on playing as a part of the college work. A performance now and then is an incident. Meanwhile what is taking

speech. From this there follow a tendency to self-expression and an appreciation of perfect English speech as exemplified in the drama. These results do not, cannot, follow from the sort of training that is given to amateurs. The amateur never thinks. When the amateur player has finished speaking she goes out like a candle—there is nothing left. The girl here is taught to think. Every moment she is on the stage she thinks. The amateur says words; the air here thinks thoughts.
Act Several Hours Each Day.
"I suppose it will sound a little hackneyed to say that I emphasize the principle lying back of the phrase 'holding the mirror up to Nature.' But that is just what we do. Month in and month out we are on the stage several hours a day, living in the thoughts of the dramatist. We are not concerned with performances; we just go on playing as a part of the college work. A performance now and then is an incident. Meanwhile what is taking

place? First an unconscious appreciation of the beauties of English speech, and following that a host of educational advantages."
Not a Dramatic School.
Mrs. Sargent made it very clear that the Department of Dramaturgy at Hunter is not in any respect a dramatic school. The idea, which at first glance seems paradoxical, is not to teach girls to become players, but to teach them, through their ability to enter into the personalities they portray, to appreciate the best in the drama. "First, we want these girls when they have completed their college course to appreciate a good play; second, we want them to appreciate good acting. And the only way to study plays is to study them as we do, on the stage."
"One of our efforts is to discourage the stage-struck girl. All the attraction which the stage has to the girl, who sees only the glamour, the bright lights and the grease paint, is re-

moved by the hard work on our own stage, and an emphasis on the hard work that goes with a professional career. It is only rarely that a girl is not entirely disillusioned by the time that she has completed her graduation day. However, the girl that does take up dramatic work is the better prepared for it when she leaves Hunter."
Mrs. Sargent believes that this work, besides developing good taste in plays on the part of the girls who graduate from Hunter College, acts as a leaven in raising the standard of our American drama, and that from the training follow many other advantages to students in the sphere of mind and morals.
"The mental friction resulting from the serious work in which these girls go at their work results in a sharpening of their mental faculties. 'What shall I do?' a girl asks me. 'Think, I answer. That's a byword on our stage—think, think, think. Thus a girl is always thrown on her own resources, and

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