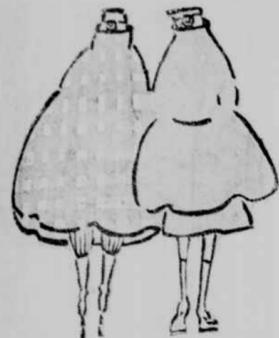


WAR, WOMEN AND WOOLLEN STOCKINGS

A Returning Voyager Observes the Effect of Each on the Other, with the Conclusion That the Great Conflict Is Perhaps as Good for the Women as It Is for the Stockings.



By Florence Barkley.

WAR is a good thing. This is something that even pacifists should admit, for they are somewhat in pocket—though rather out of countenance—in consequence of it. I know it is a good thing when I look down and see my woollen stockings so warm and comfy, and remember the silk ones I used to wear on a day's march around the shops, with all the anxious possibilities of having them go to pieces about 2 o'clock, so that I must go and spend \$2 for a new pair—no time for bargains—and waste twenty minutes in the ladies' parlor putting them on then and there.

I know it is a good thing because, like woollen stockings, lots of good old sterling qualities that had withered in the air of Piccadilly or the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne have dared to come out in the daylight again and take their old places by the fireside in some of our very best families.

No, I would not force woollen stockings or morning prayers on anybody. That would be a cause, not an effect, of war in New York and Harlem alike; but there is that in coming back to the States just now that makes me sigh and shake my head and feel middle aged and say a war is a good thing.

Not that English women have anything over us. We are as good smokers as they are any day, for all our "feminine little ways"; there is just as many of us driving our own motors, and driving them harder and faster, too; and men here are as much at the mercy of the cave women as the Englishmen are. Come to think of it, I have been blaming English women for a lot of things that I now observe to be native American traits. And if I had stayed in England I might have come to think the whole world had fallen under the influence of war and never brought to realize how independent we are over here and how free from the petty local influences of Europe.

But certain untoward circumstances have brought me home. Mine was not the usual academic homecoming from the war—beaming wife on one arm, aged parent on the other, and all that. I had a lifebelt of the usual cut and design on one arm and a simple but expensive passport on the other. With discretion I might say that all is not beer and skittles for the American in England.

When "The Westminster Gazette" comes out with an American note to Great Britain on the front page, conversation at dinner over the suet and treacle pudding is strained. No matter how enthusiastic you are about it, there will still be that lacking in your friends' and relatives' words that determines you to arise on the morrow and make an unobtrusive departure for the United States on anything flying the American flag. When British cousins stop throwing your country's faults in your teeth it is time to hurry home—or prepare.

I used often to think of James as I sat among them knitting and holding my tongue. James is the hero of an eighteenth century primer much prized by bibliomaniacs. James is seen hanging by the seat of his pants to the usual limb of a tree. Below, and showing the deepest interest in him, is a large and united family of alligators. The primer reads: "See



"Our smartest are seen at the rink."

James and his little friends. James loves his little friends. Soon James will feed his little friends."

I just mention these minor reasons for coming home lest some of you ask me why I don't go back to England, since I find the war so improving to character.

Even in a neutral country one may knit, thought I as I sat on deck and watched the war receding from view, getting fainter and fainter day by day.

"Do I look like a frump?" I asked when I saw the blessings of peace springing up around me in New York in white shoes and ballet skirts. Of course, I asked it of a friend close enough to be candid.

"Oh, I don't think it's as bad as all that," she said. "I should say rather you look very English."

"I bought this suit in Bond Street," said I. "It's a good suit; it will be good five years from now."

"That will be nice for whoever inherits it," she smiled. "How you have changed! But if you want people to think you've improved you might better have bought it at the Gallerie Lafayette."

"I have improved," I protested. "War is very improving. Take potato peeling. I used to look on potato peeling and dishwashing as vices, and now I know even a noble earl may be further ennobled by peeling potatoes."

"No doubt," said she. "But potato peeling as you understand it is war, and war is a big thing. It is the little things that count."

So I went sadly to a working friend for

got all the chance in the world to get rich. Go down with all the war stuff you can scrape together and see the editor that will give you the best price."

"I don't think I've got anything worth telling."

"Oh, that doesn't make any difference. They're wild for stuff from over there. Why, you know B.? He was out for only a month on an ambulance, and he's been writing himself rich ever since. Once you've seen the lay of the land you can do the rest. Now you just go down and give them your most expensive."

"I don't think much of B.'s war stories."

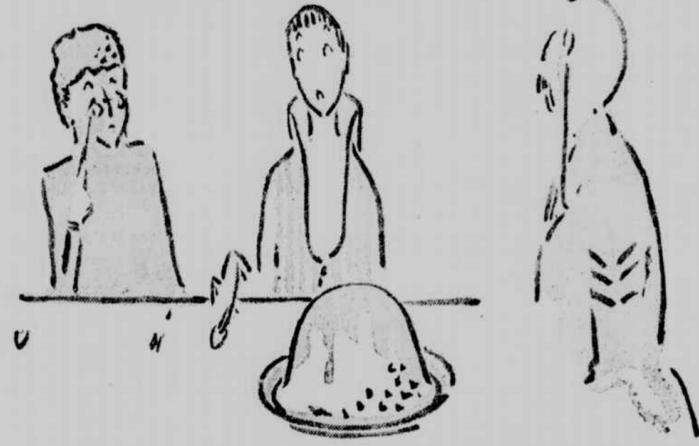
"Of course, you don't. Anybody could write stuff like that if they'd never seen a trench in their lives. But all you people that rush to the front, sacrificing your lives for the look of it, might as well make a little out of it. Look at B. sacrificing himself for 10 cents a word."

"Yes, but you must have shaken hands with no end of generalissimos and things before you can command 10 cents a word."

"There is nothing for you then but to go out in the world 'as is'—she was that disgusted—"and when you come to, mind you ask a good round price for your stuff."

So I went out into the world—a world of teas and things—and sat, a marked woman, among the ballet skirts and the white boots.

It is a great satisfaction to hear how enthusiastically your own chosen circle inquires about the war. The slight feeling of superiority it gives you over the common herd of just women is so short-lived that no one could take offence at it. And, as they gather around,



"Conversation at dinner over the suet and treacle pudding is strained."

more practical advice. She is a journalist and knows the tricks of the trade.

"What shall I do to be saved?" I asked. "It seems that to be really patriotic I must do my little bit to uphold the appearance of prosperity, without which no peace can flourish. But it is a fearful expense."

"You must not worry," she answered. "You represent the moneyed classes row. You've

what a feeling of thankfulness comes over you at the realization that it is you that is with them and not just unpleasant newspaper details of your age and appearance in the lists of the torpedoed.

"I will talk about the war to them," thought I, "and the brilliance of my conversation will distract from what they consider the eccentricities rather than the decencies of my dress."

"I would like to talk to you about war, my dear," said one. Oh, joy! Just what I wanted! "But as you are from a belligerent country I know what your attitude will be. And I have noticed that same argument with this attitude is futile, so we will not speak of it. War is wrong. War is wicked. But it is, and for the present we must allow it to remain. However, I know your attitude, and so we will say no more. Have you seen the Russian ballet?"

"They aren't wearing them in Europe this year," said I with some little feeling.

"I see what you mean; but, anyway, we won't say any more about it. It is better so. Are you interested in the jungle art?"

"But why not speak about it? I like it. It's all I know anything about."

"Don't," said a gay voice in my ear. "You'll get into a fight in a minute. It's pacifism."

"Oh," said I, greatly relieved not to have lost so old a friend to Christian Science. "And you," to the last comer, "you are for war?"

"I? No, indeed! But I'm not one of those pacifists. I'm for preparedness. You know, the women at least in America are going to be prepared. We don't believe in all these perfectly good husbands killing each other. It's much better to be prepared. Have a cigarette? Now, do sit down and tell us all about it. Did you succeed in getting into the trenches? Oh, haven't you learned to talk and smoke at the same time? Well, never mind talking then. I dare say you're bored to death with the war, anyway. I never want to hear the word again. After all, it isn't our war, is it? And there are such dreadful things

right around us that demand our sympathy. I just give every penny to the Red Cross.

"My dear, you have been interesting. It pays to go through it all, doesn't it? I'm sure nobody cares how you look when you've seen so much. Did you see any white boots in Paris? Our smartest are seen at the rink."

Boots I had left behind me in Paris and London came marching sadly and softly by at the suggestion—brograms for the new woman gardeners and farmhands, goloshes for women taking up the postman's round, high boots for nurses in the field; low, soft ones for hospital wear. I mentioned them.

"Ah, you dear thing! Now you're making fun of us. Why, don't you know, child, that the United States has given millions, simply millions? Where would Belgium be without us? Tell me that—or Poland?"

"Well, where are they, anyway?" one wants to scream when one hears that some ten times a day.

Before deciding definitely that I could be a better American in England than here I thought I ought to seek out more serious minded women. Representative women—suffrage leaders, whatever you want to call them—are hard to find nowadays. They are not so easily distinguished in their dress from the debutantes as they used to be before we got so bent on peace at any price. Anyway, I thought I should be happy with them, for they would want to hear me tell about the war and how the English militants had improved. But they dashed me back to earth with this: "Of course, you don't really know as much about the war as we do, not being allowed any reading matter on the subject in England."

"Reading matter?" repeated I. "Why, what do you think they fill the newspapers with in war times?"

"Ah, yes, you think you are getting the news,



"The American woman has a more feminine charm than the English woman."



of course; but the real facts, the unbiased viewpoints—of them nothing. Everybody knows that if the English people knew the truth they'd get up and do something."

"They're dying so fast perhaps it interferes with getting up and doing anything," I ventured, not without a timid attempt at sarcasm.

"Yes, but dying is so ineffective in a twentieth century world. The day of dying for your country has passed. Do you suppose I would let my son grow up to die for any country on earth when I can vote against it?"

"Perhaps you think the French people had rather be killed than vote?"

"Now, my dear, you're biased. You've been

out there where you could see only one side of the question. You'll find when you've been home for a while that we are much better informed here about the situation than any one in Europe. And when you do get settled I want you to help me in my suffrage campaign. You must really do some serious work."

I know a business woman who goes to Paris every season. "I will go to see her," I thought. "She knows. We can weep together."

"You have seen it all," I said with a break in my voice. "Do you think they want any of us in France?"

"Why on earth do you want to go back?"

"These people," I sighed; "they don't seem to understand."

"Oh, these New Yorkers," she said; "they don't wear their hearts on their sleeves. We are reserved, you know."

"Yes?"

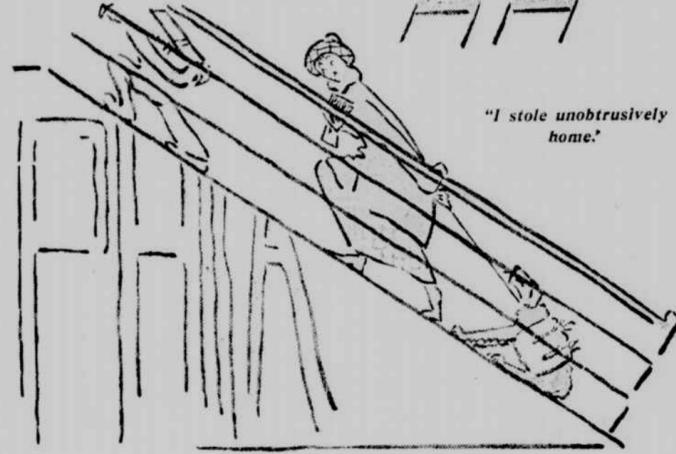
"Why, it's terrible," she said with genuine feeling. "The last time I went through Calais I just said to the passport official: 'Look here! You can't detain me here any longer if you want my trade. I buy hundreds of dollars' worth of goods every year in France, and my countrymen spend millions just for touring around looking at you. If you want us to come in here with our money you'll have to make it a little easier for us.'"

"And what did they say?" I was breathless. "Say? They said nothing. They can't afford to antagonize a great country like ours. What was there to say?"

What, indeed?

Of course, there are other women in the United States and plenty of them; but one fears to investigate further.

As I invest in the thinnest stockings and the most meagre evening gown I shake my head and say: "A war is a good thing."



"I stole unobtrusively home."

∴ Are Women People? ∴

By ALICE DUER MILLER.

THE HAPPY HOME.

"She (his wife) loyally supported my views, even when she did not share them, and we were of one mind."—Dr. Lyman Abbott's Reminiscences.

My home is happy as can be,
Is happy as the day is long,
Because my wife agrees with me,
Even when she knows I'm wrong.

If she should wait till I were right
We might not know this sweet accord;
For should she contradict, I might
At times be rather bored.

It's true she sometimes says to me:
"Your facts are slight, your logic less."
I answer: "Yet you quite agree?"
And she replies: "Oh, yes."

Why should two people have two minds,
When one is quite enough for two?
Or so I think, unless she finds
That one like mine won't do.

DO YOU KNOW

- About the Massachusetts anti-suffrage campaign fund—
- That the greater part of it came from personal contributions?
- That 80 per cent of these personal contributions came from men?
- That men contributed \$39,324 and women only \$9,585?
- That three-fifths of this sum came from a small group of only 135 men?
- About the Massachusetts suffrage campaign fund—
- That the larger part of it came from the efforts of women in getting up fairs, sales, etc.?
- That of the personal contributions more than 80 per cent came from women?
- That women contributed \$32,965 and men only \$7,017?

—Condensed from "Woman's Journal," January 15, 1916.

NEAR THEIR HEARTS.

We are glad to lend our column to the announcement that the anti-suffragists are going to have a parade at last. A fashion parade.

A BRAND NEW ARGUMENT.

"When the franchise need no longer be sought for," says a writer in "The Unpopular Review," "when any one can vote who wants to, it ceases to be a privilege, and many individual voters begin to feel it is not worth the effort to go to the polls."

But, as long as half the adult population is disfranchised, there is some fun in sauntering in and casting your ballot under their envious noses.

This reminds us of the petition of the Harvard medical students against opening the medical school to women, on the ground that "whenever a woman should prove herself capable of an intellectual achievement, this latter would cease to constitute an honor to the men who had previously prized it."

In the same way, children's nurses sometimes induce their pampered charges to eat their dinner by threatening to give it away to some little poor child if they don't.

Vote, go vote, my little man.
Do it quickly while you can.
If you show no zest or skill,
A great big bogey woman will.

Preparedness for Women

MISS ELIZABETH E. POE, general secretary of the Woman's Navy League of America, is a very busy woman always, but especially so these days. In her office in the Munsey Building, Washington, plans are being perfected for the National Service School, which is to open in May.

"Do you wish to register for the school?" is her brisk question when eligible appearing women enter, and forth comes a large book.

To this National Service School every section of the Navy League is entitled to send delegates, since its purpose is to instruct women who may return and teach others what they have learned. All delegates will be under governmental instruction. The Red Cross will assign doctors and nurses to teach the principles of first aid, as well as bandage making, along lines that would be accepted by the government in time of trouble. Officers from the army, navy and the marine corps will instruct in methods of protecting homes and children in the possible event of war in America. There will be an army diet kitchen set up where practical lessons will be given. Earnestly these women hope that their preparedness may help to maintain peace.

Senator Newlands has lent land in Chevy

Chase, a suburb of Washington, for a camp. It is hoped that the school will number not less than five hundred members, though the league is prepared to accommodate 1,000. One dollar initiation fee will be charged, but aside from that there will be no charge for instruction. Delegates from out of the city who wish to occupy a tent in the camp may board at \$1 a day. It is expected that Washington women will return home at night.

"What shall be the costume?" is among the first questions asked by those who register. That cannot yet be answered, as the tailor who has the matter under consideration has not submitted the designs. A short skirt and stout shoes, somewhat on the order of the Camp Fire Girls' costume, is the plan. Representatives from the Philadelphia and Baltimore leagues have enrolled already, as these leagues expect to hold camps later in the season. The board of governors of the league, elected last November, includes a governor from each state and territory in the Union. Mrs. John Hays Hammond, governor from New York, has enrolled for the school, as have Mrs. James Thompson, daughter of Speaker Clark, and Mrs. William Cumming Story, president general of the Daughters of the American Revolution.