

AS WOMEN SEE THE WAR

A Page of Comment

In War Time

AUGUST, the month of holiday engagement and lazy loitering by river and lake, has proved, during the last fortnight, a veritable month of Mars, and the "peace year," which was to have been celebrated so gladly, will end in the tumult of arms and the clash of contending hosts. The long-dreaded "great European war" is devastating the older lands, while Great Britain's self-governing Dominions, colonies and dependencies, "to the last, least lump of coral," are rallying to the aid of the plucky little Island Kingdom, which is prepared to fight to a finish in this titanic struggle.

Even those who have been disposed to criticize British policy in former conflicts are agreed that her action in the present war is inevitable. Sir Edward Grey has displayed the most admirable statesmanship in his long efforts towards conciliation, in his obvious desire to mediate between Russia and Austria. The Kaiser's attitude towards Belgium is that of an uncompromising belligerent, and the eldest grandson of Queen Victoria is evidently resolved on war against Great Britain and France. The assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne and his wife, afforded an excuse, did not constitute a cause, for the movement of Austrian forces against Belgrade. The storm has been lowering for years and now it has broken with the force of accumulated fury.

We have not realized yet just what the struggle means. Even when our Canadian forces have sailed and are in the midst of the fray, we shall not find this conflict "come home" to us, as it must to those in the British Isles. They, who have been carrying for so long the burden of war equipment and preparation, are deserving of our warmest loyalty and heartiest support, and it is comforting, amid all the foreboding, to see the united front which the British Empire presents to the world. Vanished is the strife in Ireland, for is there not a Callaghan looking after the navy, and are not Irishmen, north and south, "first-class fighting men," whenever need arises?

And where, in these days of storm and stress, is the work of Canadian women? It is being done, swiftly and effectively in the homes and organizations of the land, and the naval hospital which our women are to equip and start on its mission of mercy is but the outward and visible sign of the patriotic feeling animating us all. Our great-grandmothers were called to make sacrifices in the pioneer days, and whatever this war may mean of privation or suffering to the women of this Dominion, we believe that the modern spirit will prove equal to the test and that the women who came to this young country a century ago would have no need to blush for their descendants of 1914.

The Woman's Part

AS I wrote the words about the sacrifices of the past, my eyes fell upon a little mahogany table in this cottage on the shores of Annapolis Basin. It has an interesting story, that sturdy and much-coveted bit of furniture, for it came across from England to Massachusetts two hundred years ago. Then, in the days following the American War, its owner packed the little table and the old clock, to say nothing of certain old silver, and made his way with his household to Canada, where he still might be under the old flag. In these quaint and lovable rural homes of Nova Scotia, there is hardly a room without its well worn or its timeworn chair which has a story worth the telling. The East is showing a quiet devotion to the cause of the Mother Country which is characteristic of its people. The past is repeating itself at St. John, Annapolis Royal and Halifax. The West is showing its loyal spirit in unmistakable fashion, but here, on the Atlantic coast, the continuity of the service which Britain has known.

From the city which is Nova Scotia's seat of government, to the capital of our wide Pacific Province, the response of the women is the same. All differences are forgotten, all divisions merged, in the one aim of providing for the comfort of our Canadian contingents. In every great crisis, there is no talk of "rights" or of "place." Each is eager to do her part, and one touch of war's tragedy makes the whole nation one. If the thought of the stern service which awaits our men on the other side of the seas intrudes on the busiest gathering, it is subservient to the spirit which is ready to support and strengthen our soldiers. Such has been the immortal attitude in Anglo-Saxon nations, and we shall be a poorer and meaner people, if it ever changes. During the last ten years, much abuse has been showered on those who saw this danger on the horizon and believed firmly in the preparation

of all British countries to face it. "Alarmist" and "militarist" were the mildest terms used against those who were sure that Germany's military activity meant hostility to Great Britain, although both in Africa and the Orient it was manifest that the Kaiser had no friendly intentions towards the British possessions.

Canadians have not any hysterical tendencies in the matter of international conflict. We are not "spoiling for a war"—but neither are we ever disposed to shirk our military responsibilities. Now, the most serious crisis which Britain has faced for a century confronts us and neither men nor women are lacking in enthusiastic service. The Canadian woman has won especial recognition for her qualities as nurse. It has long been admitted in New York that for skill and endurance, the nurse from Canada is unexcelled. The demand for nurses is sure to be answered by our women, with a supply of trained and expert helpers, equal even to the terrible exactions of such a struggle as is now convulsing Europe. Already some hundreds of Cana-



MRS. JAMES D. MACGREGOR,

Wife of the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, who is pleased at the response by the women of the province to her letter inviting their interest in the Hospital Ship Fund. The contribution amounted to \$3,000.

dian nurses have volunteered for field work.

The hardest part of all in this or any other war is to be played by the women whose husbands and sons go forth to the war, for the passive lot of the one who waits for tidings from the army or the fleet is infinitely more heart-breaking than that of the fighter who is in the midst of the onset. Century after century, British women have watched their sons sail away for conflict, with the fear in their hearts that they had said a last "good-bye" to the eager young warriors. In France and Russia and throughout the British Empire to-day, we are thoroughly convinced that a terrible cost must be reckoned before the autocratic aggression of one ruler is to be held in effectual check. We have met this reckoning in the past. As Kipling says:

"If blood be the price of Admiralty,
Lord God, we ha' paid it in full."

The women of the land prove worthy of the bravery of their boys, and once again it is shown that "the woman's cause is man's," for such readiness of service could not be displayed by Canadian men to-day, were it not for the mothers who, in the past, inculcated the lessons of promptness and fortitude.

ON all sides, we hear conjecture as to the outcome of the struggle, and one opinion is voiced again and again: "It will be the last great war." The definition of war, given in one brief syllable by General Sherman, is its sordid truth, and it is, perhaps, through proving the horrible effectiveness of modern engines of warfare, that the civilized world will be led to a conviction of its supreme desolation. The struggle of 1870 meant a loss of an

imperial crown, and the recognition that the folly of one vain man was largely to be blamed. After the smoke has cleared from the combat of 1914, it is to be hoped that the spirit of Hohenzollernism will be chastened and subdued. This is, we believe, a struggle between sane democracy and purblind ambition. It is not England, but Germany, which has been exalting militarism as the ideal of citizen service—and it has not been the best of Germany. There is so much that is of the finest in modern scientific, industrial and musical achievement, in the Land of the Rhine, that one of the saddest features of the present strife is the bitterness which may be engendered towards everything Teutonic for years to come. However deplorable certain aspects may be, the fight is on, and we have but one duty as Canadians in the present juncture. We are at this time a united Empire—

"One heart, one flag, one fleet, one throne,
Britons, hold your own."

ERIN.

The Price of Liberty

A Satire on War

COUNCIL had been taken in the three dominions celestial, terrestrial and infernal—the date being in the second of these, which alone counts time, the year 1914.

God had gathered his Councillors together, among them Earth's Ambassador, his Off-spring, in whose frame are the cicatrices, seals of the earthly mission, yet remaining.

"Earth troubles me"—thus the Almighty; and all over the jasper chamber hands hushed the murmur of the harp-strings. "Once did I visit the star with vengeance. I sent deluge. But after it the rainbow. Once did I pour my compassion upon it, my Son's heart the sacrificial vessel! Once have I given Him, He consenting. Shall God twice ordain the Crucifixion? Or, say, my Councillors—for wrath consumes me—shall I drop this planet into the sun, which vexes me with its armaments and navies, which treats the Prince of Peace with contumely?"

Then stepped the Earth's Ambassador forward, the wounds white on his palms and on his insteps. "Patience were better, O my Lord. Many there be on the Earth who grieve because 'the new commandment' is broken. For the sake of whom let it be remembered that Thou who gavest to man to choose hadst planted the forbidden thing beside him; to the end that obedience should glorify Thee and that default should magnify Thy grace. Wherefore, permit that the Holy Ghost be sent to men ere yet Thy wrath be kindled. Send forth Thy Dove upon the Earth."

The kings of the planet sat in conclave. Aggrandizement was the name of one, Fanaticism the title of a second, Liberty a third's—there were many present. They had met to consider terms of peace, a war-cloud impending, but each tested the edge of his sword, covertly, while framing compromises. The roof under which they had met was lofty—the Dome of St. Peter's, more than likely; for was not the cause of their coming consecrated? So the shock was less than one had imagined when down from the frescoed height a voice dropped. "Remember," it said, "the Prince of Peace, my beloved Son, in whom I am thoroughly pleased." A Dove poised, like snow in sunlight, blinding the eyes which blinked to see it vanish.

Aggrandizement scoffed at the apparition. Fanaticism perverted its message. Liberty had a bandage over his eyes. As the kings withdrew from the Council, war having been hatched in deliberation, only one paused on the threshold, vainly, looking into the dome where God had spoken. His name was Defence.

The Prince of Darkness consulted his advisers. But he was ill at ease.

"What troubles me," quoth he, "is not that the nations are at war. War is hell. But out of that war, I fear me somehow, will come the truth to mankind. We stand for despotism. The war is for liberty. Our only hope is that the price of liberty will stagger the world."

M. J. T.

The Ship Fund and Its Use

THE imperial gift of a hospital ship, which was suggested in Toronto through the Daughters of the Empire as the contribution of Canadian women to the British war equipment and toward the realization of which responses have poured in to the central committee with the expected generosity and promptness, has been changed by request of the British Admiralty to a gift intact of the funds raised to date, September 1st, for a supplementary naval hospital at Haslar, near Portsmouth, England.

Which change in the appropriation of the ship fund is strictly in accordance with the original resolution which was made at the meeting of the