

AT THE SIGN OF THE MAPLE

A NEWS DEPARTMENT MAINLY FOR WOMEN

As We See Others

Fashions and Fights

PERHAPS we have said before that many fashions and certain styles of garments could be traced to military influence over the caprice of Madame La Mode. All women have noticed—most of them with relief—the widening of the skirt—and now we fear that an extreme will be upon us again and the skirts will be billowing around the hem to the extent of five yards and more. "Crinoline" is whispered, and already queer, skeletony affairs are casting a shadow in the show-rooms of fashionable shops, while ladies of the old school murmur "hoops."

The wide skirts, so it is alleged, are the direct consequence of the war stringency. The merchants and manufacturers need to dispose of more material, and are not quite so bright as they were in the times when the Kaiser behaved like a semi-rational monarch; and so Fashion kindly turns her attention to making us buy yards and yards more than we need for our garments. The sleeves, also, are going to swell to balloon dimensions, and our arms will return to the puffy appearance of twenty years ago or thereabouts. There is method in the modistical madness, and we feel more kindly to the widening skirts and distending sleeves when we remember that they are intended to keep business as it used to be. During the panic of 1907, the French makers of the modes put their wise Gallic heads together and devised the Empire styles which demanded more yards and richer materials—partly, in order to help the merchants and factories. Those who decree our fashions are not entirely without regard to the needs and emergencies of political life, and there is a certain philosophy, even with regard to the many changes in modern days.

But is fashion going too far, in the present stern conditions, in assuming that the public will obey the wave of wideness which has swept over the costumes in the magazines devoted to frills and furbelows? There are a few who may resist its mandates, even at the risk of having last year's skirts described as "slinky," but most of us will buy or "charge" the needed material and have the very latest thing we can discover in a wide skirt and frilly sleeves.

An observer of matters sartorial has been noticing the "depth" of mourning worn in Paris. This seems out of harmony with the traditional gayety of France, but it is in keeping, no doubt, with an emotional tendency to symbolize elaborately the prevailing sentiment. But Paris is bravest in black array.

In the Course of the Conflict

THE recent anniversary of the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria and his wife reminds the world of the havoc which followed the attack by the Bosnian youth, Gavrio Princip, who is now serving a sentence in an Austrian prison. The swiftness with which ultimatum followed ultimatum, while ambassadors were given their passports before the month of August was well on its way, seems bewildering now to recall. We have had a new world and lived a whole lifetime since July, 1914, and yet we are looking forward with a certain confidence to the months to come, in spite of a lack of ammunition and a realization of how deep-seated is German hate and how thorough has been the preparation of the Teutons. Canada has amply proved the courage of her sons and the devotion of her daughters since the war declaration was made, and we cannot but believe that the voluntary service of a free people will triumph, in the end, over the machine efficiency of a hate-made campaign. We are not going to deny that we have many lessons to learn from the same efficiency and thoroughness of the German spirit. We realize now how little initiative we have shown in certain forms of scientific research, especially as it relates to the utilization of waste products.

We are not disposed to be too sanguine, as to when it will all be over; but we adopt the unfailing British policy of "sitting tight." One thing we should be wise enough to do—face the situation and endeavour to realize the need of year-long patience and toll. As an editorial remarked in this journal some time ago—we want no more "baby's jam," in the form of withheld information as to actual disaster. Those who are invalids or in special distress may well be shielded from all the facts, but most British subjects are willing, as Browning said in his "Prospice"—to "know the whole of it." This does not mean that we desire to magnify atrocities or dwell upon horrors—such a course is manifestly unwise. We do not wish to eat, sleep, drink and wear the most horrible details of war; but we do wish to know the facts and then go ahead. We want no useless dwelling on how this or that might have been done, no morbid lamenting over the inevitable. If, after the day's work, the twilight or the dark should bring bitter regret for the sacrifices made, there is only one thing

to turn to—the great belief that in some brighter world are those brave souls "who thank our God for that they served His world."

A Khaki Quarrel

THERE has been something resembling a tempest in a teapot over the khaki servant movement, started by several well-meaning but ill-advised English women. The new military garb of footmen, scullery boys and others has aroused a protest from Tommy Atkins, which has reached no less a personage than Lord Kitchener. Tommy is naturally anxious to preserve a certain dignity for his uniform and resents its "menial" use. The Countess of Powis and the Duchess of Marlborough are said to have cast oil on the troubled waters by a new domestic ruling. For



MRS. ALICE MEADOWS,
of St. Thomas, Ont., first Grand Worthy Matron of
the Grand Chapter of Ontario Order of the Eastern
Star.

some months, these two fair ladies have been keeping in their service only men who promise to enlist. Such servants are accordingly provided with regulation uniforms and given six hours daily drilling for the army. Their expenses during training are paid by their employers and when they are called for active service, they are provided with complete outfits.

The Duchess of Marlborough (who was Miss Consuelo Vanderbilt) has sent eight of her men to the front, and a second octette are in training under orders. Mrs. John Astor and Lady Cheylesmore have persuaded their men servants to enlist and go north, and in their places have engaged women whose husbands are at the front. All these measures meet with Tommy's approval—which is greatly to be desired.

ERIN.

WHAT IS A COUNTESS?

London, June 23rd.

IN British military hospitals one hears the volunteer worker referred to as a V. A. D. (Voluntary Aid Detachment). In an American hospital in France, therefore, the introduction.

"This is Miss Smith, my countess," was anything but self-explanatory.

In time, however, the explanation came. In the first flush of enthusiasm the American Ambulance at Neuilly, just outside of Paris, was deluged with volunteer effort, both masculine and feminine, and often a gentleman of ancient lineage devoted himself to the humble duties of stretcher-bearer, while his patrician sister agreed to fetch and carry for the plain American hospital nurse. Apparently the noble ladies—and others—sometimes dreamt that they dwelt in marble halls and their duties suffered by their mental absences.

To the patients it sometimes seemed that the hospital was peopled with personages of rank. It was an English Tommy who voiced a complaint. Beckoning an attendant to his side, he pointed to the ward's voluntary assistant, who, looking very smart in her pretty uniform, was gazing idly out of the window.

"Say," he begged, "I wish you'd tell that there countess that I want my soup. Should have had it an hour ago."

The story went the rounds and was picked up by the staff of Mrs. Harvey Payne Whitney's hospital,

who were helping in the bandage room until their place at Juilly should be ready for them. And, though the nurses at Juilly each vied with the other in praise of her particular "Countess," the name stuck. Every vestige of irony had been extracted and the term had grown to be one of affectionate banter. Hence the introduction.

"This is my countess!" MONA CLEAVER.

Supreme Head, Ontario Order

DURING the spring of this year, the third Canadian Grand Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star was organized in Ontario, the first having come into existence in Alberta in 1912, and being closely followed by British Columbia in the same year. The Grand Chapter of Ontario, which was granted supreme jurisdiction in its province, starts off with the promise of a very bright future and every prospect of growth and success. The first officers placed in charge of affairs show wise and careful selection. The supreme head of the Order in this jurisdiction is Mrs. Alice S. Meadows, of St. Thomas, who was elected Grand Worthy Matron of the Grand Chapter of Ontario. Mrs. Meadows is a woman of charming personality, with a fine, dignified presence, and possessing to a marked degree a talent for leadership. A thorough Canadian, born at Rice Lake and educated at Port Hope, moving to St. Thomas in 1881, she became the bride of David Meadows, Assistant Master Mechanic and full inspector of the Michigan Central Railway in that division. Mrs. Meadows has always been keenly interested in all movements having for their object the uplift of womanhood, and has been a leading figure in St. Thomas in all philanthropic work, holding important offices in the W. C. T. U., the Elgin Humane Society, and the Y. M. C. A. Auxiliary. Mrs. Meadows is a prominent worker in the Presbyterian Church and an active worker in all its branches of Christian endeavour.

Western Economising

Saskatoon, June 20th.

HOW do people live in the West now, since times are so hard, and how do the poor girls manage when they are out of work? Serious questions truly to have hurled at one's head, "sudden, and frequent, and hard," but while the West is hard hit, it is not so generally disabled as its Eastern sympathizers fear.

One aid in the solution of the unemployment problem was the going back to the farms of many families who had moved to the towns for a little gamble in lots. When the fairy tales of frenzied finance ceased to be true, paterfamilias was glad to hie him back to the broad acres that had not been inflated, and were consequently less liable to collapse. Frequently there were daughters in the family who held positions in offices and stores, and when it was necessary they also could return. The wives of unemployed labouring men were obliged to leave their children to go out to try to get any kind of work. The employment agencies were thronged with these women before daylight of the short days of fall and winter, and many of them walked miles to be there first. Sometimes there was work for all! When their husbands enlisted, they exchanged the anxiety of whether he had found work, for the fear that he had found a soldier's grave. Always the anxiety or the fear, but with the latter the soldiers' pay and the guardianship of the patriotic society, as well as the chance of staying at home to care for the children. It is far easier to raise funds for the bread-winner who is far away, "bleeding and dying" to uphold the standard of the Empire, than for one who is frayed and worn holding up the wall of the nearest building or looking for a invisible job.

Experienced housekeepers, cooks and general servants had to accept \$10 to \$15 a month less, as employers could not afford expensive help. When business quieted down rather suddenly, it looked serious for the many girls employed in real estate offices and businesses of that sort, but fortunately they did not all go out of business at once. Last in first out, was the rule, and many reliable firms are still in it. Considerate employers advised their assistants to try to get permanent positions, and kept them on, though often at reduced wages, until they could secure other positions. Some went home to the East, some to the country, some back to school to get a better education, some into domestic service, and some into the hospitals to train as nurses. The women of the churches, the Y. W. C. A., the Travelers' Aid, the W. C. T. U., and other philanthropic organizations, tried to keep in touch with the unemployed girls who had not homes of their own to go to. They arranged with responsible women in city and country, to give such girls a home and some wages at least, in return for help with the work of the household, until they could secure more profitable employment. One factory worker who offered

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