

WOMEN OF ENGLAND DOING THEIR SHARE TO HASTEN DAY OF PEACE

Found Taking Part in All Activities of The Country.

SOME WORKING IN AMMUNITION SHOPS

Unemployment problem which resulted from the outbreak of war has been overcome.

The New York Evening Post's London correspondent writes concerning the way the women of England have rallied to the help of the Empire.

London, April 6.—The agitation for women's franchise dropped suddenly into the background when the outbreak of the war stirred the nation with a new and greater excitement. Not only the women's associations attached to the two great political parties, but the suffrage societies themselves set aside their usual propaganda in order to meet their urgent needs. Even the "militants" turned their energies into other channels.

The change was typified in the spectacle of Dr. Flora Murray, one of the most ardent of Mrs. Fankhurst's followers, devoting herself to the organization of the Women's Hospital Corps for service in France. But the war, if it has quieted for the time the political side of the women's movement, has thrown into greater prominence the national importance of women's labor. It is too early yet to speak definitely of ultimate results, but it is already clear that the whole question of the professional and industrial occupation of women in England has entered upon a new stage.

At first there was serious unemployment. The market for women's labor was congested by the arrival of hundreds of women, governesses especially, who had lost their posts in Germany, France, Belgium, or Switzerland, and in some cases all their savings also.

Household Expenses Cut Down.

At home the general cutting down of household expenses meant in large numbers of families the dismissal of companions and governesses and the giving up of the music or singing or painting lessons that had provided outside teachers with a regular income. Typists were affected by the retrenchment of the staffs of business firms that had Continental connections. The "luxury trades" suffered an appalling slump. Not only artists and musicians, but women who catered for the demands of fashionable society became suddenly idle. In the Birmingham district alone, from 50,000 to 40,000 women employed in the jewelry trades were immediately thrown out of work. The books of the friendly societies soon showed a large increase in applications for sick pay, the illness in a majority of cases being the result of worry through loss of employment.

As time went on, the situation was eased in some degree through the new demands of the war itself. Trained or even half-trained nurses soon found their services at a premium. The call has been so loud that many ex-nurses who, on marriage or for other reasons, had ceased to practice, returned to their profession. Today, in spite of the relaxation of the normal requirements for army service, the shortage is still serious. In view of the prospect of a considerable enlargement of the casualty lists in the next few months, this deficiency is causing real anxiety.

Need of Women Doctors.

Women doctors find an unprecedented demand for their help. The stampede of surgeons and medical men to the front and the enlistment of students have given women doctors an unexampled opportunity. Hospitals and public bodies are appealing to women to fill posts that in peace time were jealously reserved for male doctors. Women dentists and druggists are also doing well.

In many other occupations qualified women have no difficulty in finding places as substitutes for men who have joined the colors. Women teachers, sometimes married, are filling the gaps not only in elementary but in secondary schools. In the post office and other branches of the government service there has been an influx of women clerks. The shortage of men has done much to break down the objections of banking houses, insurance companies, and shipping offices to the employment of women. Several women trained in accountancy and bookkeeping have taken excellent posts previously held by men.

There is reported a considerable transference of labor to allied trades, where the skill acquired in an occupation no longer wanted counts for something. Of the unemployed jewelry makers in Birmingham many have found work in the manufacture of medals, brooches and patriotic badges. A London dressmaker was able to keep on the one hundred women of her establishment by obtaining a contract for the provision of the Queen's gift of woolen belts for soldiers. Independent dressmakers and blouse-makers have found work under firms that are supplying garments for the troops. Cooks hitherto in domestic service are being employed in hotel kitchens. How the conservatism of the West End has been shaken may be inferred from the

PUTS ASIDE UNCLE SAM'S OFFER.



MARION LORD BUSHNELL. Because it might interfere with her riding at the head of the suffrage parade as the chief bugler, Miss Marion Lord Bushnell, of Brooklyn, New York, has declined the request of Uncle Sam that she act as sponsor for one of the new submarine tenders soon to be launched at the Navy Yard in Seattle, Wash.

Miss Bushnell is a direct descendant of David Bushnell, inventor of the first submarine.

amazing fact, that the Athenaeum Club has taken the desperate step of employing waitresses.

No Women Taxi-drivers.

Women have found their way at last into many other occupations too diverse to classify. Some are tracing plans in engineering works. If women taxidrivers are not yet seen in the streets, it is due solely to the refusal of the police to grant licenses to women to drive motor vehicles plying for hire. Many women, of course, have shown themselves perfectly competent to handle their own private automobiles, but the authorities think that the strain of continuous driving through London traffic involves too great risks to the public as well as to the passenger. Several of the leading department stores in London are now placing their elevators in the charge of girls. Women may be seen serving behind the counter in provision and grocery stores. As the Shop Assistants' Union has sent 30 per cent. of its 81,000 members to the front, there are obviously many vacancies of this kind to be filled. The great firm of newspaper distributors, W. H. Smith & Son, is trying the experiment of employing girl clerks at its news-stands at the railway stations. There is a movement towards the greater employment of women in the upholstery trade.

Hitherto the laws of that trade have prohibited women from work that requires hammer or chisel, allowing them to attempt only what can be done with the scissors. Toy-making is a new calling in which women have been particularly successful. The course of instruction is not long and difficult, and girls previously employed as clerks or typists have shown a surprising aptitude for the work.

Seek Work in Ammunition Factories.

Lord Kitchener's speech on the urgent necessity of immediate supplies of ammunition has led to a rush of applications from women for employment in ammunition factories. The motive in most instances was a spirit of patriotism rather than any need of a job. One inquiry came from a mistress whose maid was anxious to fill cartridges of shrapnel shells. "If you think she is really needed," said the mistress anxiously, "I'll let her go, but she is the only maid I have." Before the war, the well-known Armstrong firm at Newcastle was employing from 600 to 700 women in its small shell shops. By the beginning of February the number had been increased to 2,500. Reference was made in a previous letter to the question of women's labor in agriculture. Trained women gardeners are relieved for the time from all anxiety about a livelihood.

In this general readjustment of women's labor, valuable help has been given by such organizations as the Women's Emergency Corps, which, within the first fortnight after war was declared, had registered the names of 10,000 women anxious for voluntary or paid work, and had classified their qualifications. The Government itself appointed a committee—the first British Government committee composed entirely of women—under the title of "The Central Committee for England and Wales on Women's Employment."

It has been occupied with the threefold task of (1) distributing existing work, so as to cause the least unemployment; (2) starting new work, and (3) providing relief. Under the first head it secured orders, for instance, for 2,000,000 pairs of army socks. In giving out such work, it has carefully observed trade-union rates and conditions. Under the second head, the committee has started new or neglected trades, like toy-making, which are likely to persist after the war. As regards relief, it has found that the main difficulty in numerous instances is due to the lack of training for any definite occupation. It has therefore given relief largely in the most useful way of all by establishing experimental work-rooms where girls are taught trades, by running needlework classes, hygiene lectures, domestic-economy training centres, etc., that will make those whom the war has threatened with privation permanently competent to provide for themselves.

A Government Register.

The recent institution of an official government register is likely to carry out the co-ordination and mobilization of women's work to a still further degree. One difficult problem is that of keeping up the proper standard of wages. That a woman should accept less pay than a man is such a general-

ly accepted industrial principle that there is a serious risk of the exploitation of women's labor in the present emergency. In some cases employers are able to justify themselves for offering less to women substitutes on the ground that they are still paying part salaries to the men who have enlisted. And what will happen when the war is over and the new armies have to be re-absorbed into the industrial life of the nation? "The problem of the moment," as Miss Violet Markham well puts it, "consists in providing for abnormal requirements without prejudice to those permanent industrial interests which sooner or later will have to resume their normal place." Unless great care is taken, "we may create a new body of semi-skilled supplementary wage-earners presenting dangerous opportunities for exploitation at the hands of the less worthy type of employer." In that event one of the consequences of the war would be "an extension of cheap labor sapping the foundations of the industrial position so laboriously built up by the wage-earning classes." There will be some obvious mitigations of this risk. After the war, many of the men who have enlisted will prefer to emigrate rather than resume the monotonous employment they left for the excitement of the trenches. Some, too, of the employments which women have now entered—toymaking, for instance—will be still carried on, and even extended without affecting the industrial opportunities of men. But there can be no doubt that, however difficult the work of readjustment has already been, the complications that will attend the return of peace will present even more harassing problems.

FIRST BOY TO TELEPHONE ACROSS CONTINENT

The first boy to telephone across the American continent was Melville Bell Grosvenor, of Washington, D. C., a grandson of Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of telephony. At the formal opening of the transcontinental telephone line in New York, Melville conversed with distinguished men at the other end of the line in San Francisco, 3,400 miles away.

There are some very interesting things connected with this telephone achievement, says Boys' Life, which most boys probably have not heard about.

Suppose a boy in New York were able to speak loud enough for his voice to carry to San Francisco. How long do you think it would take the sound to travel across the continent? Sound travels at the rate of 1,160 feet per second. The distance from New York to San Francisco is 3,400 miles. So it would take a boy's voice about four hours to travel from New York to the Golden Gate.

How, then, is it possible for your voice to be transmitted almost instantaneously over the telephone? As a matter of fact, transmission of sound by telephone is not instantaneous, although for short distances the length

of time consumed is too brief to be measured. When Melville Grosvenor spoke into the telephone in New York it was only one-fiftieth of a second before his voice was heard at the other end of the wire, 3,400 miles away.

The explanation of this wonderful feat of sending the sound of a voice across the continent in one-fiftieth of a second is found in the fact that it is not sound, or air, waves which are transmitted, but electrical waves. Electrical waves have a speed of 56,000 miles per second. When you speak into a telephone transmitter the sound waves of your voice are converted into electrical waves. These waves travel over the wire to the telephone receiver at the rate of 56,000 miles per second, and the receiver picks up these electrical waves and transforms them into air waves so that the sound of the voice is accurately reproduced although the actual sound of the voice of the speaker goes on farther than the transmitter into which he speaks.

This seems simple, but it is really a most complex problem. These waves, having been faithfully converted from air waves into electrical waves and sent out on their journey over the line, must not interfere with each other; they must be sent out, nearly 56,000 of them, every minute. Some of them have one shape and some another. They are just as different from each other as the waves of the sea. The differences in shape, the distance between them, the time between them, must be faithfully preserved and conserved, so that at no point in their journey will they be changed sufficiently to be noticed. It is not the problem of sending one simple current, but as many as 120,000 a minute. All of these minute currents, millions of them—millions and millions in a conversation—must be carried electrically over the line to San Francisco and then converted back again into sound waves which agitate the air of the room and affect the ear as air waves.

Now, as to the material required on building this transcontinental telephone line. From New York to San Francisco there are 3,400 miles of hard-

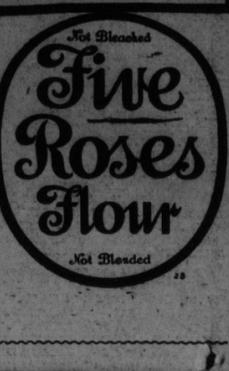
drawn copper wire of No. 8 B. W. G. gauge. There are four such wires from which are derived two physical circuits, and on phantom circuit. The diameter of each wire is .165 inch. The weight is 370 pounds per circuit mile; that is 430 pounds per mile of each wire, two wires being required for a circuit. The total weight of one circuit of two such wires is 2,600,000 pounds, or 1,450 tons. In the line itself there are 130,000 poles. In addition to this there is the wire used in the Pupin coils. The wire is used in these coils in 604 of an inch in diameter. For each physical circuit of the line, in addition to the 6,800 miles of copper wire, 13,600 miles of this half-like wire is used.

More remarkable is the almost complete absorption of the national reserve into the new armies and various auxiliary forces. At the outbreak of the war they numbered more than 250,000. Their periods of service were over, they had passed out of the reserve, they were under no further obligation of duty; but when the National Reserves was founded in Surrey by Mr. St. Leo Strachey, and spread throughout the country under the care of the Territorial Associations, these old soldiers voluntarily declared themselves willing to respond, if called on, in a national emergency. Men under forty-two undertook in the event of war to serve as soldiers abroad, and men between forty-two and fifty to discharge military duties at home.

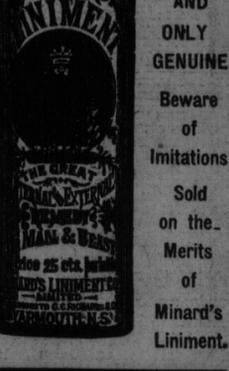
The disappearance of the old soldier as commissionaire from many of his posts of civil duty is one of the changes made in London by the war. Nearly 2,000 members of the Corps of Commissionaires—the well-known agency for providing army pensioners and reservists with employment—more than two-thirds of their number have returned to their regiments. Such as are left are all the more in demand by those who have had proof of their trustworthiness. Among the varied occasional duties they are now engaged to discharge are the care of children passing through London to or from school, and the guiding of Belgian refugees.



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