

THE ALL-IMPORTANT

An Urgent Appeal for Munitions

WRITTEN AT THE SIGN OF THE MAPLE BY ESTELLE M. KERR

Too Proud to Work

ARE we? So far the supply of women munition workers in Canada has exceeded the demand. Manufacturers have been slow to employ women, in spite of the statistics from Great Britain, which show such satisfactory results. And now we are criticized for not doing our share of this most necessary branch of war work! Even the American papers are doing it, for female labour is largely used in munition plants in the United States, where patriotism does not enter into the case. They say we are too proud to work. Are we? Thus far the answer has been emphatically "No." Women have been registering for munition work ever since last January and, if their services had been accepted, the Munitions Board would not have been obliged to make this alarming report: "THE DELIVERIES OF MUNITIONS FROM ONTARIO ARE RUNNING FAR BEHIND THE QUANTITIES PROMISED, AND WE ARE SERIOUSLY APPREHENSIVE IF EXISTING CONDITIONS CANNOT BE BETTERED."

And it rests with the women to better them!

MR. AUSTEN HUTCHINSON, of Toronto, head of the Central Registration Bureau of the Women's Emergency Corps, says:

"We have already fifteen hundred women on our books, and have furnished several hundreds to various manufacturers, while almost every hour in the day women are in here to make fresh application for munition work. It is now up to the manufacturers to demand the services of more women. I am sure we will not have the slightest difficulty in furnishing as many as the manufacturers need. For the large body of leisure women has hardly been touched. There are many of these who have not yet registered, but have signified their willingness to do so any time the call comes."

The Leisure Class

MUNITION making is but a temporary thing. It would seem that its women workers should be drawn from those whose taking up of the work will not interfere with the country's regular industries.

If it were the women of leisure who went into the munition factories the question of such workers overcrowding a labour market after the war would not arise. It is the daughters of the doctors, lawyers, ministers and business men who are wanted and who have not as yet come forward in any large numbers. Still they come, slowly but surely. Several university girls have registered, the daughter of a Cabinet Minister and many women who have never worked before. We object to the term "leisure class," there should be no such thing in war time, but it is the women of education who make the best workers, and they are quickly promoted to fill positions as forewomen, and posts of greater responsibility. The French Government even sent a woman to America to buy 50,000 tons of steel for war purposes.

THE Women's Emergency Corps, with its Branches all over Canada, have done splendid work in registering women for war work, and the Imperial Munitions Board has recognized their value in calling them to still greater effort. At a recent meeting of the Corps it was reported that in little Dundas alone thirty-five women have registered.

St. Catharines reported the register of forty-four classified women workers, and the men have asked for the assistance of the Women's Emergency Corps in a personal canvass of the eligible men. As St. Catharines women are suffering from the almost universal backwardness of employers to avail themselves of the women's aid, they are making a special plea that manufacturers open up their establishments to women. In Brantford forty-six women have registered for everything from chauffeurs to munition and farm work. Three branches, Paris, Burford and Cainsville, have also been formed. In Paris, out of

4,000 people, 500 have enlisted, and many women are now working in the winsey factory, which is making khaki cloth.

New branches of the corps—Acton, Sudbury, Cobalt and many other places; 333 registrations outside Toronto.

In Montreal soldiers' wives have offered to give up their Patriotic Fund allowances if they may be allowed to go into the munition plants.

In Welland, 95 women responded last week to the call of a factory there which needs 150 to 200 women. Fifty per cent. of those who answered the call had never been in regular employment before.

When employers agree to dismiss all eligible men,

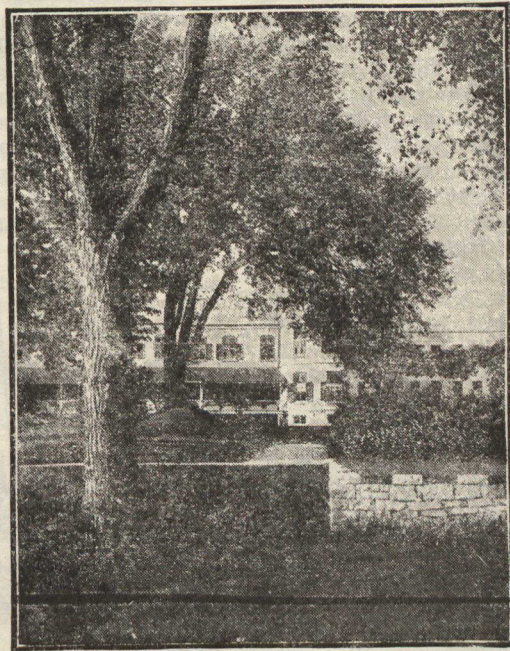
WELCOME THE COMING, SPEED THE PARTING—

The Duchess of Devonshire, the new hostess of Government House.



The Duchess of Connaught, from a hitherto unpublished portrait by Gertrude Des Clayes.

Government House, showing the verandah where Her Royal Highness likes to have tea.



there will be a call for women in all branches of labour. Shall we be ready to respond?

A Business Proposition

WAGES in munitions plants should be such as to attract a large number of workers. Four to seven, and even ten dollars a day is not uncommon for men employed on the piece-work basis. These high wages are depleting the ranks of women from other departments of female labour, and we are facing an acute stage in the labour shortage. There are fewer students at shorthand schools than formerly when they should be greatly increasing. Banks have taken many of the first class stenographers and others have left on account of the higher wages paid in factories. Book-keepers, telephone operators and bank clerks are in demand. Business

offers great inducements for women just now, and if women only realized it, they would be so much happier engaged in regular work than they are now, filling up their time in many little duties and pleasures. But the girl who enters business life must realize that she must hoard her strength if she hopes to make a success of her work and that she must not spend her free hours doing housework or making clothes. She should employ others to do those things as a business man does.

Munition Makers Abroad

BUT the unskilled munition workers in France and Britain are not highly paid. They have barely enough to live on and the Young Women's Christian Association in London is appealing for funds to maintain rest rooms, clubs, hostels, and canteens for women working on war materials of every kind. According to a recent report published by the Chief Inspector of Factories, there are at least 200,000 women employed in the munition plants of Britain, and soon there will be six women to one man. In

Germany female labour is largely utilized. Out of 68,972 workers in the Krupp works at Essen, 13,023 are women.

While the total number of employees nearly doubled from August 1, 1914, to April 1, 1916, the number of women workers increased more than tenfold during the same period, according to reports appearing in recent issues of German newspapers.

M. LOUIS RAEMAEEKERS, the great Dutch cartoonist, when asked what impressed him most in England, replied: "It is the women." He had been taken to see the munitions factories, whose activities are chronicled only by an occasional line in the newspapers, giving Mr. Lloyd George's estimate of the numbers of "controlled establishments." This is what he says: "Manufactory after manufactory all working at the highest pressure. Shells—shells—shells not for a year, but for fifty years. Manufactories, which were doing all sorts of other things a year ago, are now bursting with this new task. And the women and girls, their eyes burning! They make shells and fuses in a fury of enthusiasm, with strength and yet with delicacy. In the men it is not so evident; to them the task is more accustomed. But the women workers, they are splendid."

Compulsion for Women

NOW that the men are all under orders, it is necessary to utilize the women, and if they do not voluntarily do their part it is quite possible that there may be conscription. Every

woman who takes up munition work, farm labour, or other necessary employment, releases a man for the fighting line, and unless Canadian women come forward in large numbers, able-bodied men must be kept back for this work.

COMPULSORY service in the harvest fields has been introduced in West Prussia for all women and children who are not exempted by doctors' orders or by the provincial president. The general commanding the 20th Army Corps district has issued orders that this domestic mobilization is to be carried out strictly. Any refusal to work in the fields is to be punished by one year's imprisonment or a fine of \$375. The local mayors or presidents of local government boards are to effect the mobilization, and the work is to be paid for at the usual local rates. What if Canada should follow the example!