

## A War-Time Journal : Germany, 1914

Their "*nouveau art*" is repulsive; their dressing outrageously ugly, and their cooking atrocious. I have watched them here year after year tramping up and down the shady walks stolidly drinking, wearing garments of ingeniously devised ugliness and blind to "*l'inutile beauté*." There is no variety of type nor individuality of person in either men or women. These worthy *Hausfrauen* have no grace of dainty frills, diaphanous lace or rustling petticoats. They are obviously and incontestably of the class described by a witty writer to whom "a lace petticoat is as much a badge of infamy as a cigarette on the stage." The German proletariat cannot be susceptible to externals, else the universal sad-coloured skirt, the ill-fitting blouse and the ugly hat worn by his women-folk could not find favour in his eyes.

Life in Altheim has changed under war conditions. The Kur Haus is closed, there are no teas on the Terrace or promenadings to the strains of Grieg or Strauss, or theatrical performances. The German Kur-Gäste have left, and only the Russian, English and a few Belgian prisoners of war remain. Russians here are chiefly of a very low class. Most of the women go about bare-