

too short. Then the wind goes round and round the house looking for the leaves—for the wind is a bit of a nursemaid—and wherever it finds them it tucks them in, under fences and up against cellar windows where they will be safe until morning. Then it goes off on other business, for there are

other streets in town and a great many leaves to be attended to.

But the fellow with the periscopic nose above the covers lies on his back beneath the stars, and contemplation journeys to him from the wide spaces of the night. CHARLES S. BROOKS.

The Prosperous War

WHEN I was last in England in the late winter of 1911, the country was full of wretched unemployed. Piccadilly and Regent Street, Belgravia and Whitechapel, swarmed with tattered men and bedraggled women. Everywhere were white, pinched faces. Hundreds of old men—not quite old enough to receive the belated and grudging pensions paid by the government—stood, broom in hand, at street corners, and swept crossings already clean. Other men sat on the cold pavements and painted ships and kings and lovers, and thanked you for the pennies you flung to them. You could not take a cab from a railway station without starting some emaciated wretch on the run, and you did not arrive at your lodgings before the panting man came up to offer unnecessary help in opening your cab door or carrying your baggage. Women in ludicrous sailor hats and sagging filthy skirts, young women beneath the notice even of those who recruit for sailors' dives, passed inconsequently from street to street, with no seeming purpose or destination, unconscious witnesses to the brutality and senselessness of the civilization which produces them. I had never before in any industrial community seen so many unconsidered and superfluous individuals.

To-day when England is engaged upon a great war, testing her strength and her courage, this economic distress seems largely to have passed. There is of course suffering in the horrible little pig-pens called houses that one comes upon in all sorts of unexpected quarters, for there are cold rooms and empty stomachs to-day as there were four years ago. But the general impression is one of relative prosperity, of high wages and steady employment. England has made the transition from a peace to a war footing with a minimum of suffering. Of course prices are high—inordinately high. The Russian wheat carriers are bottled up in the Black Sea, and wheat is dearer than at any time in fifty years. Coal is also expensive, as are meat and eggs and milk. The cost of living has risen fifteen or twenty per cent, and the burden is heavy upon those who are on fixed

In many cases, however, wages have been raised, and in all cases employment has become more steady. In August when the great dislocation came, when for the moment shipping, markets, raw material and credit seemed all swept away, unemployment spread rapidly, but month by month this unemployment diminished, until now (in February) it is lower than for many years. In fact the British workman since September has been chronically over-employed, so much so that the nervous tension under which he has worked is beginning to show here and there in growing distaste for a war which drags itself out interminably.

The better employment of men is due to the enormous requirements of the recruiting office and the commissary department. Two million men taken from industry at a time when the demand for boots, clothes, guns and ships is at a maximum, means that all with any industrial capacity—even the semi-unemployables—can get jobs if they want them. The proprietor of the little hotel in which I live complains bitterly that his chef, who has never earned more than £2 a week, now audaciously demands £3. As for porters, it is impossible to get or keep one. Everywhere I go I run into the same signals of distress. The farmers are in urgent need of farm laborers, and to get them are willing to do anything—except pay high wages. The sign, "Boy Wanted," is almost as conspicuous in London as that other sign, "England expects that every man will do his duty." In the newspapers the columns devoted to "Situations Required" are scant, while the "Situations Vacant" spread all over the page. London needs junior clerks and mantle-makers and packers and photographers and stewards and tailors, and smart lads, respectful and with hair plastered flat upon the head, "for office work."

When two employers compete for the services of a workman it is good for the workman. There is a truce between the great unions and employers' associations, for England feels that her industries dare not be interrupted if her armies are to keep the field. In certain of the great trades the gov-

that, strike or no strike, wages will rise, and that an increase in the amount of employment will be accompanied by higher wages per hour. It is only fair that this should be so, for high prices must be met by high wages. There is no other way.

The situation of working women is much worse. There is no need for them in the trenches, and the industries benefited by the war have not always been those in which women are predominant. There is still much unemployment among women, and work-shops have been started in London where girls are paid ten shillings a week and the product is given to the poor. But even here conditions are improving. You cannot raise the level of demand at one end of industry without raising it everywhere. In many places women are taking the places of men, though this is being done to a less extent than I believe is the case in France and Germany.

The other day I met a woman to whom this war has been an unmitigated blessing. Long ago her husband deserted her and for ten years she has kept herself and her four little children by working at a bag factory and earning ten shillings. Two dollars and a half a week is not much for an adult and four growing children in London. "If I had to live my life over again," she told me—"well, I simply wouldn't do it." But with the war her chance came. A man cook, who earned I do not know what fabulous wage, enlisted to fight the "Huns" and the "pirates," and his job was offered to the woman at three shillings a day, at eighteen shillings a week. She had never cooked before, but five weeks have passed and there have been no complaints. May the fatal conflict continue forever!

I should not be at all surprised if the situation of the working women would gradually improve through the removal of many married women from the factory. The employment of married women is enormously greater in England than in the United States, just as the wages of women are much lower. But the wives of soldiers are now receiving an allowance from the government which in not a few cases is higher than was the entire family wage before the war. As the wife of a private receives 12/6 per week for herself and 2/6 for each child in moderation, a woman with five children may receive twenty-five shillings a week. Her husband may be killed at any moment by shrapnel or bayonet, but he does not drink up his earnings, and she is therefore released from certain purely economic worries. The benevolent government is in fact

judgment and waste all this wealth in the "pub" and in dissipation? Grave ministers of state have seriously considered the question of keeping all these affluent women under the "discreet and tactful supervision of the police."

With all limitations, however, it is undoubtedly true that on the whole the masses of the British people feel the war but slightly. It is a prosperous war. The tobacconist around the corner, from whom I buy cigarettes, tells me that business was never better, and the grocer and the butcher and others of my neighbors tell me much the same story. The situation is in some respects like that in the North during our own Civil War, except that England is an industrial and not an agricultural community, and is on a gold basis, whereas in the Civil War the United States was on a paper basis. But in both countries there was a great impulse to industry, with resulting high wages, steady employment and increased prices.

The real burden of the war will come later—after peace has been declared. It is easier to go from a peace to a war footing than from a war to a peace footing. What is to become of the two million, or it may be three million men, who are to be honorably discharged at the conclusion of peace? What is to become of the working women who have replaced the men at the front? May not wages in many cases have been reduced to the level at which women are willing to work? The capital of Great Britain and indeed of the whole world will have been impaired; the foreign demand for British goods will have been seriously lessened. Taxation being higher and falling largely upon the wealthier classes, there will probably follow a retrenchment of expenditure, which will have a serious effect upon employment. Everywhere in England employers have promised to keep open the places vacated by their enlisting employees. Can these promises be kept? Where there is no job, the most deserving employee loses his rights.

And still another evil threatens. The cost to England of this war will be enormous. Already the expenditure is at the rate of seven millions of dollars a day, and when to this is added the advances which must be made to Russia and other allies, and the capitalized value of pensions that must be paid, the cost will be not much less than ten millions a day. If the war lasts a year or a year and a half, the cost will be four or five billions of dollars. Upon this vast sum interest must be paid, and what is spent in interest cannot be spent on education and other works of social reform.

perous war." Things go well enough while the nation lives on its accumulated capital and spends its anticipated income. It is a more serious problem on the morning after the debauch, when the nation seeks to go back to its normal life.

WALTER E. WEYL.

London, February.

Historic Impressionism

IMPRESSIONIST painting cannot be belittled as a succession of "gossipy notes" that "no longer appeal because 'impressionist' statesman, churchman and play producer" can be plausibly characterized as goodly gossips catering to our new-found interest in the ephemeral. Essential form and line have never been lost in impressionistic painting as easily as essential characteristics can be lost in current impressionistic criticism the formula of which insistently blurs together every activity of an epoch into a vibrating atmosphere of unrest.

Painting the ephemeral is one matter, painting it in an ephemeral manner another; and Monet's insistence on atmosphere is no more ephemeral than Turner's or Whistler's. For they knew as well as he that nature is much less respectful of her precise forms and contours than the well-trained painter, and swallows them on all occasions as impiously as Chronos did his children. Turner caught her at it at sunrise and sunset, and created the first scandal of modern art; Whistler another when he discovered that "the evening mist clothes the riverside with poetry as with a veil," and produced his nocturnes. But Monet's landscapes seemed even more preposterously vague because he was the first to see that poplars and hills could be poetically lost in veils of atmosphere at ten o'clock of a glittering snowy morning or three o'clock of a glaring summer afternoon. An incredulous public gaped at them for ten years before it decided that anyone could see a landscape impressionistically, by half closing his eyes. Since then impressionist landscapes have been very current indeed.

Degas' laundresses, his jockeys and his ballet-dancers are "gossipy" in exactly the sense that Daudier's lawyers and washwomen are gossipy; that is, they do not represent Arcadian goddesses standing firmly planted on both feet and holding golden apples presumably through all eternity. They are drawn "with sensitive feeling for the fluid pose of the body" which is the common quality of all great draughtsmanship, from the Chinese masters in the Sung dynasty of the eleventh century to Ingres of

characteristic attitudes of apes, wriggling babies, leaping acrobats, birds, fishes and flying kites—all ephemeral moments in experience—permanent moments in art.

To be sure, the faces of Degas' laundresses are "free from sentiment," and we can now find traces of sentiment in the blurred features of Millet's "Gleaners" and "Sower." But Degas, like Millet, being primarily an artist interested in arousing emotion by a synthetic rendering of form, and not an illustrator achieving an effect by reproducing the pantomime of emotions themselves, was concerned primarily "with the hitherto unobserved interest of a characteristic attitude." So Millet's contemporaries before the "Man with the Hoe" complained, "Once again you recognize the same idiot," and found his three gleaners "three scarecrows of poverty planted in a field, and like scarecrows, they have no faces." But after having been an artistic tradition for twenty years, Millet's peasants in due course became a literary tradition and it is plausible now to find them statuesque. The laundresses will presently undergo the same process of literary beatification, and it will then seem plausible to think of them leaning heavily on their irons as on a hoe, brutalized by contact with the ironing board as inevitably if not as majestically as peasants by contact with the soil.

The impressionists were modern precisely as all other creative artists have been modern in their epoch, that is to say, they took their material as a matter of course from almost any and every aspect of the life of their time. They have painted women and children on the seashore like Utamaro, *demi-mondaines* in cafés as Carpaccio did his "Courtisans on a Balcony," the frills of the ballerina instead of the hoops of the Infanta, smart *Parisiennes* instead of smart *Venetiennes*, and occasionally, like Veronese, they are as interested in their puppies as he was in the dog, heels in air, among the wine jars of the "Marriage at Cana."

The fundamental passions are usually to be found in second-rate painters, great ones having an obstinate preoccupation, like the impressionists, with such ephemeral matters as characteristic attitudes, pitch and color of shadows, vibration of light, atmosphere, and the fluid pose of body. The faces of Meissonier's cuirassiers at "Friedland 1807" are puffed with the passions of loyalty, enthusiasm, victory, and courage, but not Dürer's and Ucello's warriors or the Attic boys who still ride their ponies on the metopes of the Parthenon. Constant's harem writhes on a marble floor a prey to the fundamental passions of love, hate, revenge and lust, but not Manet's Olympia on her couch