it is life and nurture and beauty and austerity, just as war is
death and waste and filth and corruption. Peace has nothing
to do with surrender, submission, concessions and the secular
exploitation of the poor, with shabby dwellings and huge divi-
dends and a world divided into the idle and the overworked.
Peace is full of risks, but they are the risks of giving, not of
taking. Of helping the land and every bud but they are the
bracing necessary hardships that we can cheerfully bear
together in the brotherhood of man.

We have a long way to go." But we shall get there some
day if we never lose our courage or die of despair.

H. M. SWANK.

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BACH'S CHRISTMAS MUSIC IN ENGLAND AND IN GERMANY.

I was at the Temple on Christmas Eve for Bach's music.
The shimmering, reliable church was full of old and elderly men,
of women of all ages, with a sprinkling of soldier-lads, brought
along, on what may be their last Christmas in this world, by
their mothers and sisters and sweethearts. Everyone—but it
was perhaps that my own eyes and heart were opened—every-
one seemed so altered from other perfunctory times, grave,
sincere, aware of all it meant.

With the first rapping notes of the organ, tearing the veil of silence
somewhere before my mind, as when a cloud—suddenly shows depths of solemn moonlit sky, the fact that There
also, There beyond the sea and the war chasm, in hundreds of
churches of Bach's own country (I can see the Thomas-Kirche
here, where he was Cantor, and the church of his birthplace, Eisenach), There, at this very moment, were crowds like
this one at the Temple, listening to this self-same Christmas
Music. There also elderly men, stay-behinds, and many, many
women, old and young, and a sprinkling of soldier-lads
brought for that, maybe, last Christmas at home and on
Earth. Praying like these silently kneeling around me, and
praying for the same mercies. Give us, O God, strength to
live to our last lines, if it be, to die at some purpose;
suffer not, O Lord, who seest our hearts, that we be crushed in
this war not of our making; teach us to forgive the cruel folk
who hate us; give us such peace as will never be broken.
Forgive us, deliver us; remember, O Father, the peace and
goodwill which were promised with Thy Son.

Something like that, articulate or not, is swelling up with
unshed tears and silent sobs in those kneeling crowds, behind
those screening hands, both on this side and on yonder, of
the shallow seas and the unfathomable ocean of horror and hatred.
They are united, these English and those German crowds,
in the silence, in the tears and prayers, even as, unsuspecting,
they are united in the same sequences of melody, the same words
of harmonies wherewith, across two hundred years, that long
death but enduring organists of Leipzig enmeshes, draws together,
noises and notes our soul to the death and unification, may consubstantial,
into the presence of the new born, the
eternally reborn, Hope of the World.

They are thinking and feeling the same, those German and
these English crowds. They are played into unanimity
only by Bach with his tunes and counterparts, but by the
ruthless hands of our common calamity. The same heroic, or
resigned, or despairing mood; saddest of all, perhaps, the
brief smatches of would-be cheerfulness, and beneath all
individual, all articulate differences, the unanalyzable
harmonies of collective sorrow.

They have come, those German women like these English
ones, to seek rest in this church and this music after their
day in hospitals and relief offices and committee rooms. They also
have brought along with them their soldiers, their boys or their
lovers, home perhaps, their health or, because one can feel nearer together, without
the unnerving fear of words and glances, here in this church,
side by side, embracing in the music and in God. And, the
service over, they will many of them, German women like
English, go back to their homes, light up the Christmas tree,
pull the paper caps and the favours out of the crackers, and
laugh and play, so that the children at least may forget the
wars, and go on loving and hugging. Child has last
once more. German and English, the same burdens have
been brought to the church, been laid down in the prayer and the
music; the same burdens have been shouldered again. Never
have we and they been closer together, more alike and akin
than at this moment when War's cruelties and recompensations,
War's monstrous iron curtain, cut us of so utterly from one
another.

United, moreover, in the common feeling of Christmases.
For a symbol turns the simple fact we are all in it together.
And the Child Christ, whom orthodox or unorthodox, we are all celebrating,
was not born once, but is born always, over and over again.
He lies in every cradle, the incarnate, unblessed sufferer, the deliverer
of our Hope from our Despair. Eternity dies and is forgotten,
being accidental, changeable, sterile, and against the grain of life.
But peace and goodwill on earth is born for ever anew,
because it is born of the unyielding needs of our common humanity.

That is the message of Bach's Christmas music, his cosmic
thunders hushed into pastoral lullabies; the message of the long-
dreaded German organism to us English who listen, the
message of us listening English back to Bach's fellow-countrymen
united with us in listening and in sorrowing and hoping.

VERNON LEE.

--

WOMEN'S PREROGATIVE.

It has been said by a leading American feminist that "In warfare, per se, we find maleness in its absurd extent.*
Here, we are told, is to be studied the whole gamut of basic
masculinity, from the initial instinct of combat, through every
form of glorious orientation, with all the strength and without
abatement of noise. War shows us that men are very far from
the civilization they profess, certainly; but if that were all
there would be good reason for surprise that with the advent
of more rational habits of thought and action, making
settling disputes have not long ago passed into oblivion.
But that is not all, and it is precisely on our understanding this
fact that the hopes of the future are based.

War is the prerogative of man in a special sense, and it is
because he feels this so strongly that the difficulty of gaining
a hearing for views which tend fundamentally to disparage
the value of war is so great. For to men war involves that element
of sacrifice, of giving up one's life for others in the interests
that have made argument with the martyr an impossibility in
all ages. To a man it is the basest treachery that anyone should
be in no position to the cause he has taken to defend.
To do so would be to minimise the chances of
success, to weaken the something which gives him driving
power, and to encourage the warriors against whom he is
pitted. Hence it is that as far as men are concerned it is
impossible to conceive the hypotheses, so long as war lasta, that
one's own side may not be entirely in the right; and hence it is
that the realisation of the true position of one's adversary
which might so often lead to an early cessation of hostilities is
inconceivable to each and all of the nations concerned in
any struggle.

But the spirit of sacrifice involves more than the unflinching
course from which the martyr must look neither to charity
and nor to the left. It involves an enthusiasm which is
amount of argument can overcome: a denial of self which it
would be unjust to depreciate. To obey the call of King
and country is a duty as sacred as the holiest that a man should
lay down his life for a friend: it is superior in reason: it can
break no counter considerations. In a word, as far as men is
concerned the outbreak of war implies the immediate closing
of every opening through which the possibility of a rapproche-
ment might contrive to enter, and the war is left to pursue
its horrible course unless some powerful neutral intervenes to
separate the embittered combatants—an improbable and
dangerous proceeding. All war works the accretion of
fatalism, and any suggestion of a possible alternative is
regarded as the highest treason.

Meanwhile the millions of non-combatants look on aghast.
Some cheer—and these form a public opinion"; all hope
their own side will win, for in case of victory they will at least
come in for the minimum of personal misfortunes and share in
the honour and glory—and in the pickings. It would be high
treason, as it were, to do otherwise. Child has lost
once more. "And in war time men matter*."

Such, at any rate, has been the view hitherto: and to a large
extent such is the view to-day. It is true that in primitive
times warfare frequently had as its immediate cause
of females, but, for all that, women in war time are a negligible
factor. They just lapsed, except for camp problems, and in
so far as something must be found for them of some to do.
Men must preserve a discreet silence: what women say or think