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Nashville Dispatch, May 1863-February 1865

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NASHVILLE DISPATCH

May 1863 -- February 1865

NASHVILLE DISPATCH, May 21, 1863, p. 2, c. 3

There has been a pretty heavy emigration from Middle Tennessee during the past three or four months, mainly to the Western States. These people go to seek homes where they hope to be free from the annoyances inseparably connected with a state of war, like that of which Tennessee is made the theatre. A considerable number of the best citizens of Nashville have left here for the same reason. A portion of these have located in Louisville, while others have gone further North or West. An old citizen of Nashville, who has located in Louisville, remarked to us the other day that he met more Nashville men in Louisville than he did here. Another citizen, who returned to Nashville a few days ago, after an absence of five months, remarked that he could find comparatively few acquaintances in Nashville, and that in a stroll around three or four squares he met but one man he knew. This will give the reader an idea of the exodus that has taken place from our midst; and almost every day adds to the number of those leaving.[note: recent issues with lists of Confederate sympathizers being sent beyond the lines]

NASHVILLE DISPATCH, June 7, 1863, p. 1, c. 4-5

A Picture of Nashville.

The army correspondent of the New York Tribune seems to have visited Nashville recently, and the picture he draws of the place would set off the pages of Vanity Fair admirably. We make the following extract, that our city readers may see how Nashville looks through the columns of the New York Tribune:Fully one third of the old inhabitants--mostly representatives of the wealthier class--are in voluntary or compulsory exile in the loyal or rebellious States. The high costs and scarcity of every requisite of physical life renders the existence of the remaining population precarious. ...A more profound humiliation of the disloyal citizens than that imposed by the order referred to could not well be devised. All of them, rich and poor, old and young, male and female, were mercilessly required to report and be sworn before the Provost marshal in person. The sensations of the purse and blood-proud Southrons of both sexes, particularly of the venomously hostile women, while whiling sometimes for hours in the promiscuous crowds gathered during the day at the Provost headquarters and while going through the form of swearing, may well be imagined.Many of the families whose male heads and supports are identified with the rebellion, have been reduced to want, owing to the prohibition of all intercourse with the South. Even those who were but last year in affluent circumstances, are now upon the verge of complete destitution, and dependent upon the charity of neighbors.

NASHVILLE DISPATCH, August 21, 1863, p. 1, c. 4

A correspondent writing from Vicksburg on the 4th last says: "The ladies of Vicksburg, with that elasticity so honorable and peculiar to the female sex, by which they so quickly recover from the damaging effects of grief, (the loss of lovers and husbands, for instance,) are already resuming their smiles and equanimity, and making the streets rosy and the hearts of the Yankees sunny by their presence. For the first week or so they all refused to show themselves, but confined their efforts to turning their backs when a Fed. was passing, or making faces at our

soldiers from behind the closed shutters. Next the blinds began to open, and faces in pensive profile might be seen at the windows. They a few of the tougher virgins ventured on short scouting excursions on the streets, with a view to "feel" of the Vandals. Not being robbed, murdered, or ravished, as they probably expected, they daily grew in boldness and numbers, until today, when detachments from the reserves, in the shape of young and pretty women, have made their appearance around town in considerable force. Their dresses are somewhat old-fashioned--their head gear is multifarious as to kind and ancient as to date of construction--and they have, alas! no hoops; but in all those cardinal requisites, such as peach cheeks, red, kiss-inviting lips, and bewildering, dashing smiles, they lack in no single instance."

NASHVILLE DISPATCH, August 29, 1863, p. 1, c. 6

The Richmond Whig of the 19th inst. says: The hoop era is drawing to a close in the Confederate States, and we may already exclaim, "Good bye, farthingales; farewell, skirt expanders!" Fashion yields to the "force of circumstances" because hoop skirts can no longer be obtained at reasonable prices within the Confederate States. Our fair countrywomen are, therefore, making a virtue of necessity, and dispensing with the wiry skeletons, which for so long a period, have encircled their forms like the rings of Saturn. Numbers of ladies can now be seen any day in the streets, *unatired* in hoop skirts, and we suppose that ere long the "fashion" will become universal among the sex.

NASHVILLE DISPATCH, October 24, 1863, p. 2, c. 2

About Stockings.

The Empress Eugenie, having established crinoline, has allowed her imagination to take a lower flight, and aspire to set the feminine world its fashion in the matter of stockings. She has discarded white stockings, and wears blue and white striped, though she should have added a third color, namely, red, and then she should have the tri-color just where the legitimists would to have it like under her foot. Can her hostility to white stockings be based on the circumstances that white is the old Bourbon color, if white can be called a color? Certainly the change she has introduced cannot be held an improvement, white stockings being for woman the prettiest things in which they can put their pretty feet. "A white stocking is infinitely more effective than a black one," says Mr. Hawthorne, speaking with express reference to young women's feet, and so forth; and few will dissent from his opinion. It is better than any other kind of stocking. James II, when Duke of York, preferred to green stockings, on an interesting occasion, as readers of Grammont will recollect; but he was not a disinterested judge. Blue stockings are objects of prejudice, though Francis Jeffrey said that it mattered little how blue the stocking is, provided the petticoats be long enough to hide it; but long petticoats are a nuisance, and petticoats never can be tolerated long anywhere. Black stockings ought to be worn only under peculiar circumstances. Flesh-colored stockings are open to the charge of being delusive. The yellow stocking belongs properly only to English charity boys; and the red stocking should be confined to very young people, or to persons old enough to be in their second childhood, or to cardinals. Pink stockings are nice in their places, which are the feet of young women, but they do not show well on either middle-aged or large ladies, who are often very handsome, and therefore should have handsome footings. In fact, the pink stocking is fit for girls only. Grey stockings go well with grey hairs. Mixed, or speckled, or spotted, or ringed, or streaked stockings can be used for

show only by children, though some of them answer for a change. But none or all of these can displace the white stocking, which is an old favorite, and not to be put down, though occasionally it may be thrown into the back ground. Like the hoop, it is never long out of fashion. The French Empress will find that she has "put her foot into it" by taking it out of the white stocking, which is to women what to the garden is the white rose.

NASHVILLE DISPATCH, May 13, 1864, p. 4, c. 1

The Employment of Women as Affected by the War.

The social condition of women in the Northern States is being influenced by our civil war to a larger extent than is generally supposed, and perhaps this remark is equally applicable to those of the Southern States. Silently and imperceptibly, and also rapidly and surely, remarks a contemporary, a revolution is being effected which seems destined to accomplish the work of years in a few months, and produce an important and lasting change in all the relations of society. The withdrawal during the last three years of a million and a half of men from industrial pursuits, has produced a deficiency in the labor market which for some time past has been gradually supplied by women. By this means new channels of business and industry have been opened to them, which have been hitherto closed. The change is also hastened by the various trades combinations and the increase of wages, which make it the interest of employers to seek other sources to supply the demand for laborers. In New York women and girls are now employed at trades which two years, or even six months ago, did not number a single female operative. It is certain that there is a large increase in the employment in that city, and a growing disposition on the part of manufacturers to employ them. It is the same all through the North. In Chicago, Cincinnati, Pittsburg, and other large cities, the change is quite remarkable. In Cincinnati, especially, several of the largest daily newspapers now employ women as compositors, and it is stated that several of the largest book and job printers in New York employ women. If the change now in progress in the printing trade should continue, it is probably that in a few years the majority of compositors will be females. Type setting is so peculiarly suitable for women, that we naturally find a greater proportionate influx of females in this business than any other.

There are, however, very few of the less laborious trades that have not felt the influence of the times. In Washington hundreds of women are employed in the Government Departments. In the West meetings have been held, at which women volunteered to take the places of the "one hundred day minute men," enlisted under the recent call, and pay them over their wages during their absence, minus the actual cost of board. This generous patriotism has been seconded by the merchants and manufacturers, and women are now seen in stores, factories and counting houses, where a woman was never before seen, except as a visitor or purchaser.

But this enlargement of the sphere of female industry is far from being confined to the arts and lighter manufactures. All through the West, and even in the New England States the wives, daughters and sisters of those who have volunteered or been drafted into the army, are engaged in cultivating the farms of their male relatives to a large extent. It is now no uncommon thing to see an American woman, who has been delicately reared, employed at outdoor work. This, alas! is no new thing in the history of war. But there are few who will not admire the energy and spirit of the women in thus breaking the bonds of conventionality, although they may lament the cause that has developed these qualities.

All these events must necessarily exercise a vast permanent influence on the social and moral condition of American women, and dispel forever the silly prejudices that have hitherto prevented their employment at remunerative trades, which they are capable of filling. The necessities of the times are evidently opening to women all the avenues of industry which they are not physically disqualified from filling.

NASHVILLE DISPATCH, August 9, 1864, p. 4, c. 2

Extension of Employment for Women.

Our comparatively brief period of civil war seems to have accomplished more towards extending and opening new channels of occupation for women than could be effected by years of peace. They are now employed at many trades and professions that were formerly closed to them, and in nearly all cases to the improvement of their own condition and the profit and satisfaction of employers. The New York Sun states that at present the only limit to a more general employment of women is their want of practical knowledge of the various occupations for which they are otherwise as well adapted as men, and the trouble attending their training or instruction. But when these obstacles have been overcome, it is found that women learn with a smartness and docility amounting almost to intuition, and in a much shorter period than persons of the opposite sex. When we consider the long apprenticeship or period of instruction, amounting to from three to five years, received by boys and young men, at many trades, the only wonder is that women who have never experienced such advantages should be able so soon to qualify themselves to fill those positions; and the conclusion is irresistible that if women received the same degree of industrial training as men, they would be no less efficient at any calling not too laborious for their strength. Few of the women who have recently entered new occupations, received instructions for as many months, as the men did years, and yet their progress is so satisfactory, that there is no reason to anticipate that they will not be able to compete with men when the cessation of the war restores labor to something like its former channels. At present, the principal obstacle to the almost unlimited extension of employment for women, is the want of industrial education. If training schools for girls and women could be established, or if employers generally would devote a special department for instruction of female help, for which they could reimburse themselves by a small weekly deduction from their earnings until the original cost was defrayed, the entire community would be benefited by the increased production. It is by no means desirable that women should be withdrawn to any considerable extent from domestic duties and sphere. They should be at liberty to enter any employment or profession for which they can qualify themselves, and facilities should be afforded them for that purpose. At present, the printing business seems to have received the largest accession of female help. Many country newspapers in the Northern and Eastern States are exclusively "set up" by women, and there are few provincial printing offices in which they are not employed. In the city of New York in the offices of several weekly papers, the compositors are exclusively women, and in many large book and job printing offices there is an increasing per centage of feminine "typos". Other trades have also undergone a sanitary change in this respect, and the old prejudices of working men against the employment and competition of the other sex are rapidly disappearing.

NASHVILLE DISPATCH, December 27, 1864, p. 2, c. 1

INTERESTING EVENT.--Some interesting ceremonies took place yesterday, at the Episcopal church, of which the Rev. Mr. Harlow is the pastor. About one hundred and fifty children, members of the Sunday School, and fifteen teachers, met in the church yesterday afternoon for the purpose of receiving their Christmas presents. The church was handsomely decorated, a Christmas tree being in the center of the church, ornamented with flowers, and illuminated with wax candles. Dr. Harlow addressed the children, and after singing a Christmas hymn and chorus, Mr. George Hazlewood, the Superintendent, called out the names and distributed the premiums, consisting of toys, book marks, candies, etc., the eyes of the dear little ones sparkling with joy, and betraying a gratitude springing from their very hearts.

NASHVILLE DISPATCH, December 29, 1864, p. 2, c. 2

JUVENILE HEROES.--Since the battle before Nashville, some of our boys have been practicing war in their own way. A few days ago, about a dozen of them agreed for a fight in Edgefield. After deciding who should represent the Federals and who the Rebels, the former took possession of the hill, and the latter went below. After waiting sometime for Hood to attack the Federals, Thomas ordered a charge upon the Rebel forces. Down the hill they rushed at full speed, each armed with a stick, when the Johnnies dropped, and the Feds, being unable to stop their headlong career, dashed into the Rebel lines, and by the time they had recovered themselves, three of them were taken prisoners, but the army being then too small to cope with the Rebel army, they were allowed to fight again. Thus the fight went on, with success to one or the other, until we were too far off to distinguish the position of the contending forces. Yesterday some juveniles dug entrenchments near the Capitol, sent out scouts, reconnoitered the neighborhood, were driven back, fired their arrows into the advancing foe, rushed out again to rescue their lost ammunition, back again to their breastworks, and thus continued, working like Trojans, for an hour or more, until their mammas called them in.

NASHVILLE DAILY UNION, February 7, 1864, p. 4, c. 1 (odd issues on microfilm)

A poetical feminine, who found the cords of Hymen no so silky as she expected, gives vent to her feelings in the following regretful stanzas. The penultimate line is peculiarly comprehensive and expansive:

When I was young I used to earn
My living without trouble,
Had clothes and pocket money, too,
And hours of pleasure double.

I never dreamed of such a fate,
When I, *a lass*, was courted--
Wife, mother, nurse, seamstress, cook, housekeeper, chambermaid,
laundress, dairy-worker, and scrub generally, doing the work of six,
For the sake of being supported.

NASHVILLE DAILY UNION, February 16, 1865, p. 4, c. 1

How the Sexes go to Bed.

....Having ascertained that she is really alone, she leisurely proceeds to divest her form of "the silk and linen conventionalities of society." First she relieves her glossy hair of the pins and combs which enthrall it and "does it up" more completely. Then off comes the little collar, and light vapory cloud of lace she calls undersleeves, which all the day have been clasped around her white plump arms, by a couple of india rubber straps. Next the love of a spring silk dress is unfastened in front. Then sundry waist strings and button straps are loosed, and lo! what a collapse like Lowe's big balloon. She stands like Saturn, the centre of rings. There they lie upon the soft carpet, partly covered by the linen underfixings and overfixings, with no more expression in them than there is in the bare floor beneath the carpet. Sits she upon the bed, and begins the unlacing of gaiters, and the disrobing of those fair swelling limbs of the stockings. The pretty little foot is carefully perched upon the knee--down drops the gaiter, off comes the elastic, and her thumb inserted at the top of the prunella. So with the other foot, only involving a slight change of position. There is a smile that peeps out from behind the blushes of her sweet face, now, as standing before the glass, she places upon her head the night cap, and with a quick twist of her fingers ties the bewitching bow. Then the night gown is thrown over the frilled chemise, concealing the heaving bosom, and the shoulders in the linen folds. Then the counterpane and sheets are thrown back, the gas is turned down--very, very low--and the little form presses the yielding couch, and the angel goes off into the world of dreams.
[then description of her brother going to bed upstairs]