

VANITY FAIR

AUGUST, 1916

French Women and the War

Sketches by RABAJOI

IN the June number of Vanity Fair we published a page of Rabajoi's sketches, made during a brief visit to Paris from the firing line. Here is another page, made at a little later period, giving his impressions of the work being done for the help and comfort of the soldiers by the French women. One of the most characteristic developments of the great struggle has been the *marraine* or god-mother. Every French soldier has one. Or, to put it another way, every French woman has constituted herself god-mother of some soldier at the front. The duty of a *marraine* is to write to her soldier regularly and to supply him with such little luxuries as she can afford. Some of these *marraines* are young and beautiful. Others are not. She who is not young and pretty generally avoids sending her photograph to her godson in the trenches, and he may therefore keep on dreaming that he is corresponding with young and beautiful heiress.



The poor are fed at "La Soupe Populaire," of which there are many throughout Paris. At these stations women of all ranks—some of them daughters of high officials or millionaires—not only prepare the food, but serve it to the destitute



The French women who await their husbands, sons, and sweethearts at home, go regularly to the many churches to pray for the loved ones' welfare and place lighted candles before their favorite saint

French Women and the War



Flag day is even more frequent on the Boulevards than it is on Fifth Avenue, and no loyal Frenchman ever refuses to give up a few pennies for a flag or a button, peddled by the young women of Paris



The same spirit of feminine devotion is shown throughout the hospitals and ambulances, where young women of the best families do all sorts of menial work which they would have spurned before the great crisis



Every French soldier at the front has a marraine. Some of these marraines are young and beautiful, while others may have neither of these qualities, but their letters are just as cheering and their gifts just as welcome