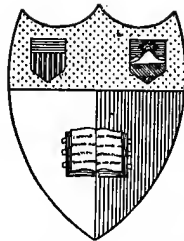


MADAME FRANCE



R. LOUISE FITCH

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Madame France

The design of this bronze relief by Mrs. Anna C. Ladd was suggested by Miss Mary McDowell, when in France for the Y. W. C. A.

MADAME FRANCE

BY
R. LOUISE FITCH

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NEW YORK
1919

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Dedicated
TO THE
WOMEN OF FRANCE

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WE ARE INTRODUCED TO MADAME FRANCE

THE purpose of this book is to show what the women of France have been doing to help win the war, and the conditions under which they have worked for four years. It in no way attempts to draw comparisons as to results of methods employed by France and other countries. This can not be done, for the conditions of France are peculiar to France. The desire is to portray very briefly the unusual situations and problems which the women of France have had to help settle and the ways in which they have done so. The reader must entirely forget his own country and feel France as she is and has been, in order to realize what has been accomplished.

All incidents in this book have been received first hand, except those regard-

ing the occupied section, and they were received directly from those who had come from that portion of France.

Through the great kindness and courtesy of officials in France under the Ministers of Armament, War, Public Health, Public Instruction, Labor and the Interior, it has been possible to secure many government reports and interviews. Each official suggested places of interest under his own department which would be advantageous to see, and gave necessary introductions. Especially is my gratitude tendered to M. Fontaine, Director of Labor of France, who took time, even during the anxious days of the advance on Chateau-Thierry, to make suggestions and to pave my way through France with telegrams and notes.

M. Fontaine also very kindly loaned to me for two months the companionship and assistance of Mlle. Bourat, Inspector of Industrial Work at Paris. Together we visited in Paris many different places and kinds of work connected with the war, Mlle. Bourat serving as guide and

French tongue. Then, armed with a handful of introductions and permissions, the allotted pound of sugar each, bread tickets, *sauf conduits*, passports, extra pictures, Young Women's Christian Association permit, the story of my life very carefully memorized, and the final injunction to Mlle. Bourat, "Don't let the French overcharge Miss Fitch because she is an American," we started for a month's tour of France.

We endured and enjoyed the trials of traveling in war time. We sat up all night because there were no sleepers; we argued with numerous police officers because rules had changed since we left Paris and we could not wait ten days or a month for new permissions; we even became hardened to the threats of prosecution for not having registered before we arrived. We heard with alarm at first and then with complacency that there was not an inch of room in any hotel in France, and that street corners would be our fate at the next place but we always secured at least one room.

We carried our own baggage, which grew heavier with each new collection of reports and pictures, but we spent a most interesting month, seeing everyone and everything possible. Everywhere we were shown great courtesy and given every permission desired, by the Maire, or the Préfet, by the Directors of Instruction and Agriculture and Placement, and by the directors of various institutions and organizations. They were all interested in the investigation and eager that every facility possible should be given to obtain the desired information.

A trip to the cities where the Young Women's Christian Association, the only organization in France working exclusively with women, is established, and another short trip into the eastern section of France where bombardment began on the first day of the war and continued at intervals during the four years, complete the journeys outside of Paris.

This book is the compilation of facts

and deductions based upon numerous interviews and conversations with men and women of the highest social and political rank in all parts of France, and with peasants, servants, shopkeepers, refugees, teachers, professors, musicians, artists, the aged, and children. It is also based upon personal observation of the following:

In Paris and vicinity

Hôpital Val de Grace, the largest hospital in France.

Hôpital St. Nicolas, where the special ambrine treatment for burns is given.

Ecole Edith Cavell, hospital training school for nurses, entirely managed and operated by women, patients only being men.

Pasteur Institute and Pasteur Laboratories, where serum is made.

La Compagnie Générale Electrique, where electric lights and supplies are made.

Citroën, probably the most completely modern munition factory in France.

Aeroplane factory, supplying some of America's needs as well as those of France.

Factory for making shells.

Camouflage factory for making landscape.

Grenelle Blanchisserie, largest laundry in France, which cleans quantities of army blankets, uniforms, etc.

La Serviette du Soldat, which provides towels for the army. Founded by Mme. Jules Siegfried.

Vêtement du Blessé, which provides clothing to soldiers who return to civilian life, some 16,000 having been supplied with one or more pieces of a wardrobe.

Vestiaire for refugees in 16th arrondissement, clothing supplied and work given out for refugees to make at home.

Entrepôt de Don, where supply stations for various French, American, Canadian and English organizations are mobilized.

St. Sulpice, where the refugees were temporarily cared for.

Armoire Lorraine, which supplies linens and clothing to the devastated districts of Lorraine.

Œuvre des Réfugiés du Nord, which supplies homes and work for refugees from the Département du Nord.

Cure d'Air, which secured homes in southern France for hundreds of Paris children during the period of the raids.

Ecole Technique, school for teaching trades to girls.

Mlle. de Marle's little settlement home, in

We are Introduced to Madame France 15

operation for seventeen years, now used in war interests.

Petits Ménages, a home for old people, used in part for a hospital.

Foyer for factory women, where they may secure good food cheaply and have rest and recreation during the noon hour.

Ecole Rachel, where five different trades are taught to war widows. Organized by Mme. Cruppi.

Meeting of the Société Amicale de Bienfaisance, which has existed for twenty-six years but is now adding to its regular work assistance to war victims.

Meeting of one section of the Conseil National des Femmes.

Bureau de Renseignement aux familles dispersées, which located families of refugees, rapatriés etc.

Home for Wayward Girls, founded by Mme. Avril de Ste. Croix.

Trade School for Children, founded by Mme. Viviani.

Maison Claire, founded by Mme. Brisson, who has been granted the Légion d'Honneur. This organization placed Paris children in southern France until the raids ended. Twenty such homes existed throughout France.

Maison des Réfugiés, founded by Mme. Brun-

schwig. Secured apartments for refugees in families, where they could pay for furniture by instalments and finally obtain ownership preparatory to returning home. Œuvre à travailler à domicile, founded by Mme. Koechlin, from which women received work to complete at home. Artist Cantine, operated by Mme. Neumon for artists in need.

Outside of Paris, the observations included:

Work for refugees at Angers.

Work with the rapatriés at Evian.

Huge glove factories at Grenoble.

Placement Bureau at Marseilles.

Orphans' homes and school at Nice, also homes for Paris children in the same city.

School for Mutilés at Montpellier.

Three factories at Toulouse, a large placement bureau and a school where boys and women are taught mechanical trades. Also work of one organization for the blind.

School, hospitals and lodging for refugees at Lourdes.

A canteen at Chateauroux.

A factory and employment bureau at Montluçon.

Work for Paris children and refugees at Cahors.

Y. W. C. A. hostels and foyers.

Two weeks were spent at Lyons, the second city of France, and there the opportunities included visits to the following:

Three factories.

A technical school for girls founded by M. Harriot, the Maire.

Ecole Primaire, Ecole Supérieure, Ecole Normale.

The largest lycée for girls.

Several *ouvroirs* and cooperative societies.

Two large canteens.

Département Natalie, which is trying to lower the death rate of children by care of both children and mothers.

The institution founded by Mme. Gillet for abandoned children of rapatriés and desolate children too ill for ordinary life.

An orphans' home at Charbonnière, also founded by Mme. Gillet.

Special work and farm management by women, near Lyons.

Other cities visited, the work of which cannot be specified, were Tours, Bordeaux, Neufchateau, Vittel, Contrexéville, Mirecourt, Epinal, Nancy, Bazeilles, Chambéry.

The factories visited include all kinds

of munitions works which manufacture bullets, guns, shells (75's, 150's, 220's), powder, tanks, bombs, aeroplanes and camouflage, at all of which women were working.

Opportunities for seeing French daily life came through luncheons, dinners, and tea invitations or calls.

The sum of all these observations, plus those which come to one whose special mission it is to observe, form the contents of the book. It has been written in France at the beginning of the fifth year of the war. Some of it has been written in Paris, some in the interior of France and some within a few miles of the enemy line, but wherever I write the god of war shakes his fist in my face.

In the middle of a page I stop a moment as an aeroplane flies low over my head. Friend? Foe? It has the markings of an ally, but that does not answer the question in this part of France.

On another page a sentence is left

until later to be finished, for Big Bertha almost takes the liberty of sharpening my pencil for me. She has landed in a near-by hotel. "There were few victims," the paper says the next day.

There is talk of evacuation in Paris on a certain day, as the line bends and bends. I stop writing a few moments and consider. *If* such a thing should happen what would I want to take besides my note-book? . . . But the line *won't* break — and I go on with my work.

Sometimes when I sit writing in the lovely hills overlooking a little village, three slowly spaced shots tell me that one more of "our boys" has given his all for his country and is being received into the land on which he fought.

Again, as I write in the frontier country in the evening stillness, with the darkness pressing close from without, the siren warns that enemy planes are coming. I take my manuscript and go to the cellar and continue to write about the work of the women of France, while

one of them, less fortunate than I, spends the rest of the night with what was once her loved one, amid the ruins of her home, for the enemy plane does not always miss.

I go away from the zone of advance and write, and the calmness of the night is broken by the snorting camions which rush by hour after hour on their journey to the front, bearing men and supplies. Again, as I gaze off toward the hills, thinking how best to express this story of France, a long line of white dust catches my eye—ambulances, carrying their resistance to Kultur.

On I go, farther yet, into the heart of France. The trains speed by shrieking and whistling, carrying the day's output from the factories farther north to make a metal wall against a barbaric horde. I walk in the country, and I pass women pitching hay in the fields. A little farther on the rumble of a wagon disturbs my thoughts. I step aside to let it pass. A man with an artificial arm is driving. Alas, there is no place in France where

I can get away from war long enough to write about it.

This little city has just received its quota of refugees. The next one is squeezing up to make room for thousands of rapatriés. Another is taking care of hundreds of children from Paris who in this way are to have one summer free from raids. There is not an inch in the whole of France which is normal. France, with her love of beauty and art, is the battleground for the whole world, the scene of physical struggle for the supremacy of the beauty and art of ideals.

I come back to my United States, even to the corner farthest removed from the actual scenes of war, and finish this story in a land of abundance, and warmth, and safety. I find my own people eager beyond expression to realize what it has all meant on the other side, anxious to measure up to the fullest that is expected of them, serious in spite of rejoicings over the signing of the armistice, willing to do anything desired — and reluctant to admit, “It

is all so far away, I can't quite picture it to myself as something real. I wish I might."

So I write on under these varying conditions, trying to tell what the four years have meant to the women of France, what changes have come to their homes, to their ways of living and to their thoughts. I try to make their experiences my own, in so far as imagination can take the place of reality, and then I try, with much humility and admiration, to make you live the life of Madame France, the warrior, and finally the victor, through the pages of this little book.

R. LOUISE FITCH

MADAME FRANCE

CHAPTER I

SHE RALLIES HER FORCES

“**W**HAT are the women of France doing? You never see any of them knitting?” Thus is the war work of Madame France defined for her by newly arrived America. This is followed by a justifying, “Well, you never hear anything about it!”

That is the strange part of it. You don't. Ask Madame France herself what she has been doing in war work and she will hesitate a bit and say, “Why, I don't know. Nothing special — just what had to be done these past four years.”

There, she has answered it in the simplest and most dramatic way possible — “*just what had to be done these past four years!*”

America, fresh from drives and mass

meetings and parades and bands and Red Cross rooms and knitting bags, finds it difficult to understand a land where none of these exists. "Drive" has no equivalent in French. French papers have tried to explain it, with queer results. Money is raised, much of it, but not by the drive method. France does not parade or hold mass meetings. She does not send her men to war with speeches and music — they just go. There are no Red Cross workshops — by that name. The women do not knit — in public.

Small wonder, then, that America, looking for familiar signs of war, is puzzled. To have the enemy three or four or six thousand miles away is one thing. To have it — no other gender applies — in one's field and dooryard and house, is quite another.

Did Madame France, for months beforehand, get ready for war by making surgical dressings, hospital garments; by knitting wristlets and sweaters and helmets? Did she make garments for pro-

spective refugees, leather-lined jackets for her aviators? Did she make scrap-books and collect music and victrola records for her cantonments? Did she cheer her men with visits at hostess houses during their days of preparation? No, not a single one of these things did she do.

Madame France, like a woman of any other country, will open her heart at times, and, urged on by a few questions, tell her story of the war, especially its beginning days, far better than anyone else can do. Modified a bit as to number of men, definite work, personal details, the following interviews will apply to the average French woman in the summer of 1914.

Madame W—— is an educated and cultured little woman with a husband and four children; in 1914 the oldest child was seventeen and the youngest, seven. She had a fine home, two servants, and had given her time until August 2, 1914, to her home, her family and friends, spending a few weeks away

at the sea or in the mountains each summer.

“Did you think, Madame W——, in 1914, that there was going to be a war, especially after the assassination of the Archduke?”

She hesitated a moment and then replied, “Yes and no. Friends of ours were in Lorraine that summer and wondered at the great numbers of Germans there. The hotels were full of them, which was quite unusual, and when comment was made, they always claimed that it was a part of their general manœuvring and war training. It did not look right.

“We were in Switzerland during the early part of the summer. There were many Germans there. Their general attitude, occasional remarks, I can’t tell you what — but I felt there would be war before long. My instinct told me, ‘Yes.’ My reason said, ‘No.’ There was no reason why war should be made against us. We had humiliated ourselves many times to keep peace. We

did not want any war. We had done nothing to warrant it. So I reasoned to myself, but all the time my feelings said, 'It is coming again.'

"The last day or two of July it seemed inevitable. Germans were massed everywhere along the border, though we still hoped war might be averted. My brother is a chasseur, and always in a war the chasseurs are the first to leave, as they must report within an hour of mobilization orders.

"I wanted to see him before he left, of course, if there should be orders to mobilize. I was advised not to try to go to his home in the Vosges, as I might find it difficult to get back if troops had to be moved. But my husband was willing that I should go, so I went to the telegraph office to send a message that I would leave that night to see him. I sent my message, did a few errands, and when I came back past the office the mobilization orders were posted! This was at four o'clock on Saturday afternoon. Of course I did not go, as it

would have done no good. He had to report within an hour."

She was silent for a moment and then added quietly, "I always felt sorry for my brother. His wife and children were away from home, as the whole family had attended a wedding and he had just returned alone while the others stayed on for a visit. The order came so suddenly that they had no opportunity to come back and of course I could not get there, so he had to leave all alone, with none of his family to see him off."

"Were many of your family mobilized?"

"Fifty-seven," was the reply.

"Fifty-seven! Why that seems impossible."

"Of course my husband, as he was over forty-eight, was not called to the front, but he belonged to the reserves for the protection of Paris. My son, who was under eighteen, was below mobilization age, though he went later. The fifty-seven included brothers, nephews, brother-in-law, cousins, none more dis-

tantly removed than first cousins. Not all left on Saturday, of course, but each had his orders and left within the next few days."

"What did you women do after your men left?"

"We were quite busy for a while. The mobilization orders, as I said, were posted at four o'clock on Saturday afternoon. On Sunday morning at seven I went to the office of the Maire of our arrondissement to get some information.

"Every man in the office had gone. There were crowds of people there. There had been no milk supply that morning and they were clamoring for milk for their babies and for their sick. There was no one there to look after things as all the men had gone. Something had to be done; they must be quieted and sent away. I told them that if they would go home then and come back at the regular time in the morning they would be able to get their milk as usual. I did not know at that time what could possibly be done, but we had to get them

away quietly. Some other women had come in by that time and we simply assumed charge of the office. We worked on all morning, answering questions and making plans.

“After lunch” — she smiled and corrected herself, “after the lunch hour — there was no time to eat — we had another crowd. Women poured into that office demanding that their men be sent back. They did not want war and had done nothing to make fighting necessary.

“I had the queerest feeling. They must be calmed and sent back home. I did not know what to say, but I opened my mouth and suddenly found myself saying, ‘This is not the place to talk like that. Go tell those things to the kaiser, he is the one to hear them. Our work now is to save France.’ I was really frightened and did not know what would happen. It was the strangest thing, but those women calmed right down and went away.

“Then we had to make good about the milk for next day. We went to all

the depots in our arrondissement and found how much each could expect, and then when the people came in the morning we told them where to go and how much to get. The trains were needed, of course, for the troops, and it was difficult to get the necessary supply into Paris. But we had it, for the babies first, for the sick next, and what was left for the old people.

“There were many things to do at the Maire’s and we kept things going the best we could for some weeks, until the men were recalled or replaced and could take charge of things again.”

“I suppose the wounded began coming back soon, didn’t they? Were you prepared to care for them?”

“No, we were not prepared at all, and it was only a couple of days before we had them. We had not enough nurses. Nursing as a profession has never been popular among the French women and women had never nursed much in a war before. That had been done by the men. But we had to do it now. I was

always sorry I could not help more in that way. For weeks I spent a part of each day at the Maire's office and then I became an officer in an organization to supply clothing, linens, etc., to devastated cities in Lorraine, my own part of the country. I was so busy with these things and with my family that I could not give more than two nights a week at the hospital."

"Two nights a week? Do you mean that you worked at the hospital all night, two nights each week, after working all day?"

"Oh, yes. It wasn't much, but it seemed to be all I could do, and help was needed very badly."

"How did the women take it when their men left so suddenly?"

"Ah, they were wonderful. I never saw anything like it. The day the greatest numbers left, the crowds at the station were immense. No one was allowed beyond the gates except the soldiers, but as I was a member of the Red Cross I could go through. There

was the huge crowd of women on one side and an equally large crowd of men on the other. They were all quiet. I did not see a single woman cry. They were perfectly calm, and they knew what war meant, or they thought they did. No one knew what this war would mean. It was inspiring to see the crowds. As the trains pulled out, every one, men and women, sang the Marseillaise. . . . The men were gone, and the women went home quietly, and went to work."

"Since then?"

"Since then we have been doing what had to be done. We were so entirely unprepared and everything happened so rapidly that we had to plan as we worked. We never dreamed that the Germans would come through Belgium. It wasn't long before we had the crowds of refugees from Belgium and northern France to care for, though they did not come through Paris so much at first.

"And you see all our men between eighteen and forty-eight were mobilized at once, so we had much of their work to

do. For many of the men there was no time at all to arrange business affairs. They simply dropped their hammers or shut their desks and went away. You cannot make many preparations for settling a business in an hour or even in several hours.

“We had to help the older men who were left or do the work ourselves. We did not have hospital facilities or preparations. We did not have enough clothing for our soldiers, nor enough ammunition nor the necessary preparation for food. As I said, everything happened at once and there was no chance to get ready. In just a few days we had all these problems to settle and they had to be settled immediately.”

“Did you have any idea that the war would last this long?”

“No; none of us dreamed it would not be over in four years. We thought the battle of the Marne would end it. Then came the trench life beginning in December. No one will ever forget that first year, neither the men nor the women.



The spirit of Madame France is not confined to her girls and young women. It was a woman like this who declared, "Nous continuerons — jus qu'au bout!"

We did not know what a trench was like or what would be needed, and the men were not prepared in any way for anything of the kind. It was the beginning of winter, you remember. Yes, there was much to do.”

“Have all the women worked or has it been just a few?”

“It has not been ‘just a few’ but it hasn’t been all, all the time, I am sorry to say. You can’t entirely make over human nature, even with a war. There are selfish women in France as elsewhere. Some women say, ‘I have done enough for France when I sent my husband to fight,’ and so they do nothing, and the rest of us with sons and brothers and other relatives have to do the things necessary to keep the husband of such a woman clothed and fed. There are some women who, since their rather worthless husbands went to war, are really better off, for they have their allocations and do not have to work as hard as before.

“You Americans think we are frivo-

lous, and of course some French women are so even in war times. But we are not all so at heart. We like to be considered gay and happy and we show that side to most people. These four years we could not have endured, had we not been able to appear light-hearted at times. The women as a whole are working. We have had to work in one way or another."

"How do you feel about it all, now that you have suffered so much? Do you want to end it now?"

She looked up quickly and said, "Why, there is only one thing to do. We must finish it, and until it is finished, there is only one thing we can think of — how best to do the things that must be done to end it all. If this could only be the last time that we need ever think of war! France has had so many wars, our children are all brought up with the sound of retreating or advancing guns. If we could only know that this would be the last, that we would never have to fight again, never! Surely this will be the

end of wars. Our one thought is to finish it — forever.”

The light from the little lamp fell upon her black dress with its crepe trimmings, and suggested the question, “Have you lost many of your own men in the war?”

“Ten are killed, and several have been wounded, some permanently. And then my mother died during the past year also.”

And the next day in the mail came the little slip of paper which said that her son, then twenty-one, had been seriously wounded. The mother did not eat that day, but she kept on working. Her only comment was, “It is his foot. I am afraid perhaps he may never be able to go back and fight.”

How else did the French women meet the emergencies of those first few days and weeks?

Dr. M——, a French woman who had been a practicing physician for a number of years in Paris, had made all plans to spend the month of August, 1914, in

England. She sent her twelve-year-old son on to England a week early, and planned to join him at the home of relatives in the first week of August.

When the mobilization occurred, she received word August 4 at noon to report for duty at the front at four o'clock of the same afternoon. She felt sure that it must be a mistake, as women had never been allowed at the front before. She had always signed her initials in her official work and realized that in the list of doctors she had probably been mistaken for a man. She was not at all unwilling to go, but felt that the authorities should know the situation.

She tried to see the Minister of War but a thousand or more others were lined up before the office on similar errands. She tried another government official with the same result. Finally she consulted a prominent physician and told him the situation. He agreed with her that undoubtedly it was a mistake, but that her orders were military orders, which could not be disobeyed. He advised her

to send the War Department a note of explanation and then to report as ordered at four o'clock. Undoubtedly she would be recalled the next day.

In the meantime four o'clock was rapidly approaching. There was her home to close, her son to notify, her business to settle, in the remaining time. As the nearest approach to a uniform, she found the suit worn once when she had spent some time in the Balkans. She left at four o'clock.

That was the first week in August. It was in October when she received a reply from the war office. By that time she was too busy and there was too much to do, to take advantage of the government's mistake. She simply continued working. She had never operated before, but operations had to be performed. The need for nurses was far greater than the supply, and the doctors were forced to accept the services of any who volunteered, regardless of competency.

Dr. M—— was put in charge of an operating unit and during the battle of

Verdun operated seventeen hours a day, for days and days at a time, under the most difficult of circumstances, lacking countless "necessities." After more than two years of continuous work, she was recalled by the government to establish a new normal training school for nurses, where everyone except the patients is a woman.

These interviews give a faint idea of the conditions when war was declared on France, and of the tremendous need for help and supplies. After these wants were partially supplied and the first winter in the unspeakable trenches was ended, came the first gas attack by the Germans. Here again was an immediate need, and the women helped to make the masks.

So it has been through the whole four years. Nothing was ready, situations developed almost second by second. With nearly an eighth of the population of France under arms, the reserve army of women has been ready to do "whatever had to be done." Such things have been countless.

CHAPTER II

HER AID TO THE ARMY

IT is impossible to tell of the work of the French women in sequence, for there has been no sequence to it. It has all happened almost simultaneously. With everything else, and before it, and after it, has come the army.

The immediate needs of the army when the war began can be stated in one sentence — but it is rather a long sentence. They were food, clothing, blankets, ammunition, and firearms; barracks, tents, doctors, nurses, medicines, towels, mess kits, cooks, kitchens, fuel, means of transportation for men and materials, ambulances, hospitals, hospital trains, surgical dressings, horses, aeroplanes, oil, serums; and before these were well started the needs included trench weapons, trench garments, instru-

ments, steel helmets, gas masks, and more hospitals, doctors, nurses and ambulances.

Of course this includes no luxuries such as books and pianos and victrolas and entertainments and newspapers and letter paper and cigarettes and rest huts and such things. This list includes no civilian needs mentioned elsewhere which arose simultaneously with the needs for the army. These are simply some of the things the army had to have the day it started, not for training camps, but to *fight the enemy*, and it did not have them, in sufficient quantity, if at all.

Now what could the women do to help with any of these things?

Immediately the three branches of the Red Cross began to work: Société Blessé Militaire, the most wealthy and aristocratic; Union des Femmes de France, women of the upper middle class; and the Association des Dames Françaises, women of the lower middle class. (France is not yet a democracy in any sense of the word, though it is a republic.) All of

these are branches of the Red Cross, but each works independently of the others.

These women began work at once and continued with great devotion throughout the war. They are nursing in all military hospitals, hundreds of them having done voluntary service since the war began. They have established private hospitals and canteens at the stations in the larger cities through which pass troops and wounded. They have established many *ouvroirs* (workshops) where necessary linen and clothing can be secured. In 1917, the A. D. F. had enrolled 16,000 nurses in 350 hospitals, the U. F. F., 23,000 nurses in 360 hospitals, and the S. B. M., 15,500 nurses in 796 hospitals.

The French Red Cross nurses are working not alone in France, but with their men in Morocco, Serbia, Russia and Salonica. They have shown the utmost bravery, serving with the doctors directly at the front, under fire, in the occupied cities, Reims, St. Quentin, Soissons, Noyon, etc. Almost fifty have died "on the field of honor" in

the bombarded cities where they were caring for those sick with contagious diseases. A few have been awarded the Légion d'Honneur, more than one hundred have the croix de guerre and about five hundred have received special medals or citations.

The work of the nurses in France, during the first two years, at least, of the war, was done under the most difficult circumstances. Nursing in war time, especially at the front, is hard even under the best conditions. It is much more so when supplies are inadequate, hospitals not equipped, and the average nurse insufficiently trained.

Nowadays the French look at the many perfectly equipped American hospitals, the numerous fine hospital trains, the innumerable ambulances, all ready for the wounded before the fighting occurs, and they think of the many men of their own whom they might have saved had they had the time to prepare.

At first French hospitals were equipped near the front. With the uncertainty of

the battle line and the constant shelling, much equipment was lost, many hospitals were evacuated hurriedly and moved to the nearest spot of comparative safety, a barn, a school building, anywhere for the time being. The nurses knew no hours of work because the amount to be done had no limit. Perhaps it is no wonder that after four years some chose work in munitions factories — for a rest!

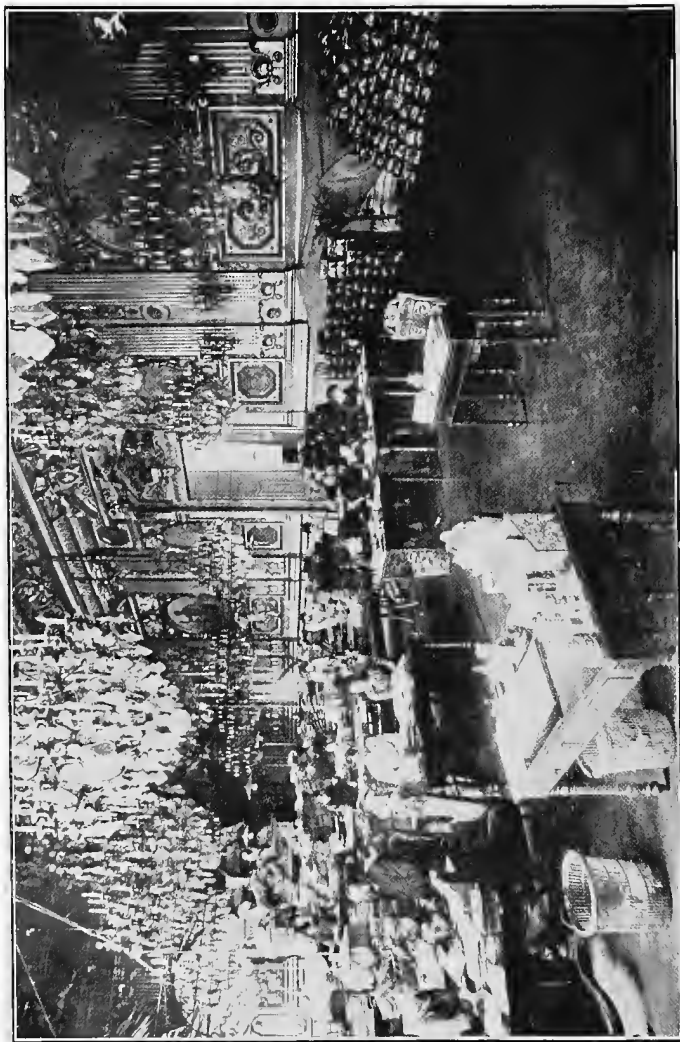
It was not long before France realized that in this war some further qualifications were necessary for nursing than a motherly interest or a willingness to serve. Preparations were made for training schools for nurses and every effort was made to secure women of education and refinement to engage in this work.

Nurses as well as doctors have had to learn by experience the many surgical needs due to the various kinds of wounds from shell, dum-dum bullets, ordinary bullets; gas burns of different kinds; new fevers and new infections; shell shock; rebuilding mutilated faces, etc. No one knew how to treat many of these

before this war began, and the French, like the others of those first two years, had to be experimented upon.

As the hospitals increased in numbers and in patients, sufficient help became more and more difficult to secure. Again the women came to the rescue. In many of the French hospitals they performed practically all the service work, even to the stretcher bearing, carrying the wounded up the many flights of stairs, in and out of ambulances, and so on. There seemed to be no question as to whether the women could stand it. It had to be done, and the men were not available, so the women did it. Three hundred women were employed simply in service work in one hospital.

Those who wished to find surgical dressings shops in France, generally had to go to the hospitals. Many of the patients, on the road to recovery, rolled bandages and folded pads. In many of the hospitals there were employment bureaus. Lines of women without work



A ballroom turned into an assembling station for clothing and food for prisoners in Germany.

applied each day, and to many of these was given the work of making dressings and refolding them after they had been cleaned; for the French, short of materials, used their dressings often as many as seven times. Many of these women were refugees who received pay for their work and thus earned their own living.

Every large city in France was dotted with little workshops where the needs of the soldiers were met. Perhaps in a former grand ball room where many a noted person had been guest of honor, the women sat at their sewing machines, before the piles of cloth, hurrying to get the uniforms ready or the hospital garments made for their men. Beneath brilliant crystal chandeliers, with beautiful tapestries on enclosing walls, in rooms famous in history, where kings and queens have held court, were tables piled high with cans of sardines, soap, beans, chocolate, festoons of bologna linking the chandeliers. Here women in the always present cover-all prepared packages of food for prisoners in Germany.

In another room piles of reference cards touched the chin of some famous gentleman now commemorated in bronze or stone. The descendants of his race worked busily here to find all news possible of a prisoner's family. Some of these old buildings surely wondered at the strange and unaccustomed scenes which they beheld. Everything must be made to serve a definite purpose for the war, and pleasure halls saw only the pleasure which comes of service.

"How long have you worked here?" The question was asked of a woman preparing packages of food for war prisoners.

"Ever since the war began."

"But don't you take a vacation once in a while?"

"I will when the war is *over*. Practically all these prisoners get is what we send them twice a month, and hunger takes no vacations."

"Are you paid for the work here?"

"No! not I. I do not need it. Some of the women who need work are paid."

The *ouvroirs* served two purposes. Women who could not leave their homes came to certain *ouvroirs* and obtained yarn for knitting, or garments already cut for sewing. They were paid usually by the piece. Other *ouvroirs* had installed machines for cutting and for sewing, and other women came there to work.

Sometimes an *ouvroir* was established in a building used for housing refugees, and the women of these worked right there. Not always were the *ouvroirs* in tapestry-walled rooms. Sometimes the rooms were rather dark, sometimes they were not quite finished, as the workmen who dropped their hammers on the day of mobilization had not yet returned; but wherever they were, they were busy places.

With an eye on the future some men and women organized cooperative organizations, and made uniforms for the soldiers, with the hope of doing general tailoring when the war should be over and everyone would be buying new clothes.

One *ouvroir* devoted its entire energies to securing towels for the soldiers; another, garments for the *reformés* who were permanently out of the war because of disabilities and had to start life and business anew with the handicap of ill health or maimed body. Some *ouvroirs* sold toys, beaded articles, jewelry and other things made by the wounded or mutilated.

The blind occupy the attention of many women, who provide temporary lodgings, food, clothing where needed, raise money and equipment for schools to teach them other means of communication with the outside world. Women and school girls spend much time each day in writing braille. Women teach in the schools for the blind and try to add that touch of courage sometimes necessary for a man to start alone in a dark world.

A few women teach in the school for *mutilés* down in southern France, at Montpellier; though most of the teaching thus far has been done by men because

of the trades taught. The men are getting excellent instruction to fit them for real work in any of twenty-one different trades that they may choose. They have clubs and entertainments of their own making or that of others, they have all the fun of being school boys again, and they have learned that happiness does not depend upon the number of limbs one possesses. The women who work with them consider them a fine tonic for the blues.

Helping the soldier's family is also helping him, and many are the societies which aid the families or widows of soldiers. One of the most interesting pieces of work for war widows is done at the Ecole Rachel at Paris, where five different trades are taught to women.

One department is devoted to chemistry, where women are given practical instruction to fit them to work in chemical laboratories, to become pharmacists, and to make food analyses. Another department teaches them how to construct artificial limbs, including the covers,

leather braces, and so on. A third department teaches women how to make false teeth, that they may become assistants to dentists. Department four gives instruction for making electrical threads for telephone and telegraph instruments, which requires adroitness and skill in handling delicate things. The fifth department gives a course in tinting and retouching photographs.

Practically none of the women in these courses has worked before and all have some education. When the courses are completed and the examinations passed satisfactorily, employment is secured for them. This work is carried on by private subscriptions largely; it was founded and is managed by women.

A very important work, the value of which cannot be overstated, is that of the Pasteur Institute where the serum which prevents tetanus is made, as well as the serums for diphtheria, typhoid, etc. With all the terrible conditions under which the early days of the war were fought, and with all the unspeakable

situations in the country evacuated by the Germans, there has been no plague, no scourge of disease, and for this the work of the Pasteur Institute is largely responsible. The main institution is located in Paris, the laboratories at Garches, a near-by suburb.

Before the war there had been no feminine invasion at either place, but when necessity again turned to women, they answered. M. Roux, the director, now has several young women, one an American, in his chemical department and speaks most highly of their work. At Garches all of the work except in the stables is now done by women. It is all intensely interesting, from the huge cauldrons of serum, the large jars in rows on the cellar shelves, looking for all the world like the winter supply of preserves, to the tens of thousands of tiny bottles, each a dose, filled, sealed and labeled ready for use.

In reply to the question, "Do you find the work of the women as satisfactory as that of the men?" the director

replied, "Oh yes, perhaps more so, for they are more delicate in their touch."

There are several smaller Pasteur Institutes in other cities in France. M. Calmette, director at Lille, is one of the foremost scientists of France. His ability was recognized by the Germans, to the extent of allowing him to remain at work in Lille, when they captured the city in 1914. His wife was taken a captive into Germany, and he has never heard of his seventeen-year-old son since the Germans entered Lille.

The war greatly increased the number of tuberculosis patients in France and it has been necessary to establish many hospitals and sanatoriums for them. A large number of the patients are soldiers. Some are the children of soldiers or other members of their families. The tubercular map of France showing the locations of these hospitals is speckled in every direction. At the various coasts, in the mountains of the east and south, in the valleys — wherever conditions and climate will permit, there they are. This

of course means more nursing — and more women to do it.

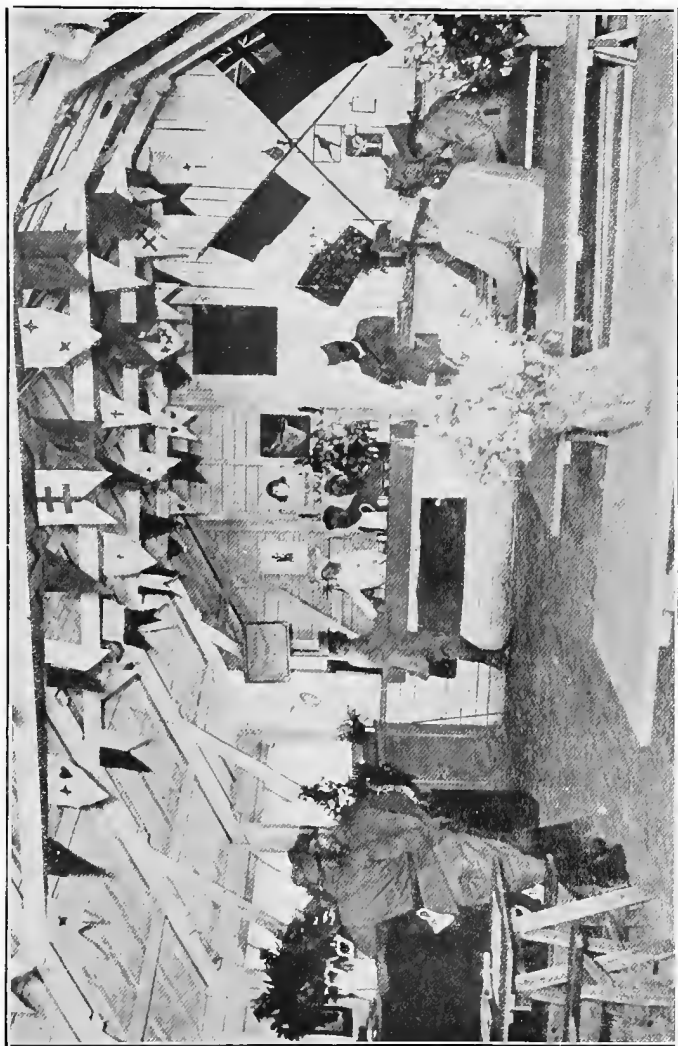
The French Red Cross established many canteens and temporary hospital rooms at stations throughout France. Here meals were served and care given when necessary. The devotion of all classes of women has proved equally great.

At Lyons there is a little woman of the poorer class who missed only one day at the station with her pail of chocolate in the early morning for the passing soldiers. On the day when her son was killed, she stayed away, alone with her grief; then she came back to go on serving the sons of other mothers. The women of the Red Cross there speak with the greatest admiration of this faithful little soul, who worked that she might buy materials to make her morning pailful of chocolate. This task she began when the first troops went through before the Red Cross canteen had been established.

Foyers were not confined to the sta-

tions. They were in all the large cities, where men might rest and receive food before returning to the front.

Much of the work of the French, both men and women, was handicapped because the supply of food and materials became low. Women did not have sandwiches and pies and cakes or any of the corresponding things that the French like, as the men passed through smaller cities and villages — for several reasons. One was the lack of instant communication. There were less than half as many telephones in the whole of France as there are in Chicago alone. France has not yet acquired the telephone habit. There were practically no autos in France except for strictly military purposes, because there was very little oil, so it was not possible to carry things about quickly. Last, and most important, France was on rations regarding bread, sugar, cheese, meat, etc., not because she was saving for some other nation and had plenty, but because she did not have it for herself. The amount of bread apportioned to



Foyer du Soldat, conducted by French women.

any one person and to any one village left no possible chance for taking food to the stations for hundreds of soldiers as they passed through. The city had its allotment and could get no more; in fact, it was often obliged to share suddenly with many refugees. The army had its daily allotment, and however much the French women would have enjoyed cooking dainties for their men en route they could not do it.

French women have furthermore been obliged to save fuel. The biggest and best coal fields of France were captured by the Germans during the first month of the war, and though recently retaken, because of their flooded condition, will be unproductive for years. Scraps of paper, twigs, small sticks which make fine Hallowe'en bonfires in America are carefully guarded, as they may be all the fuel the French housewife will have for a time. She cannot use it for extra cooking unless absolutely necessary.

All the new departments in governmental work meant extra clerical help,

of course, and again thousands of women were employed, many with little preparation for such work. All the big manufacturing concerns needed more help in office work, banks called for more women to help in their work, all business concerns needed women to fill the places of the men who had gone. In some localities it has been difficult to get good food cheaply, or to find a place for the women to spend their noon hours.

Here the American Young Women's Christian Association has found a way to help. At St. Etienne, a cafeteria has been operating for many months. One of the best chefs available does the cooking and the prices are very reasonable. Because no wine is served, failure for the place was prophesied at once by many, but it has been very popular from the first day and has outgrown its quarters.

The women and girls who came there could not sit in the dining-room for the whole two hours, so rooms on the floor above were secured for club rooms. Eng-



In the noon hour mothers working in a Bourges munition factory took their babies from the government nursery next door and went over to the Y. W. C. A. rooms to listen to music.

lish classes are in operation to meet the demands, and there are gymnasium classes, folk dancing, singing, and all the further accompaniments of a club. Other places of the same kind have been opened at Tours and at Paris, and have completely overrun their present quarters.

At St. Etienne, the Young Women's Christian Association, upon request of French authorities, has taken over a beautiful park where outdoor recreation is provided, pageants are given and games taught. The Minister of War at Paris in the summer asked the Young Women's Christian Association to take charge of a club house for his sixteen thousand women employees, and now the same work is going on there. These clubs have added much to the happiness of the girls and consequently much to the efficiency of their work.

The wife of the little shopkeeper in France has always been his right hand assistant, or in some cases he has been hers. So it is not strange at all that

she should continue his business while he was away. Many women who had never helped their husbands in big business concerns kept the business going while he was at the front. Madame France put not only her hands and her heart but her mind also to this big task which she was so helpful in solving,—that of working for the soldier, and keeping his business running until his return.

CHAPTER III

THE WORK OF HER HANDS

WAR is full of shudders, however it is waged. It contains enough terrors when both sides are fully equipped and when it is a match of strength against strength. But it is unspeakable when, empty-handed, one must meet one's neighbor, suddenly become an enemy; a neighbor which for fifty years has been hardening its arteries with iron, and turning its heart to a shell; a neighbor which has filled its mind with false doctrine and false philosophy, while it filled its storehouses with cannon; a neighbor which replaced its soul with greed for power, and did not realize that the weight of this power would crush it.

This was the enemy France had to meet in August, 1914. And she had to meet that wall of iron and steel with a wall of flesh and human hearts, for her bullets

were not made and her cannon yet unforged. This was the horror for the women of France when they saw their men depart. They knew, all France knew, that the supply of munitions could not last long, nor could it be made fast enough: there were not enough men left to do it all at once. But — guns and cannon and shells and aeroplanes and powder and tanks must be made.

“Very well,” said Madame France “if they are needed, I will help.” So off she went to the munitions plant, put on her cover-all and increased the volume of the tiny stream which flowed so slowly from factory to battle line. With her help it became a wide and rushing torrent, until the wall of iron facing France was entirely demolished.

In every munitions plant in France women have worked, and with perhaps half a dozen exceptions, at every kind of work. In the foundries with the grease and the heat and the smoke; in the filing room, they could be seen boring, polishing, testing, labeling, packing, transferring,

loading. They worked in bloomers and blouses or in cover-alls — white in most cases, black where the work was especially dirty.

Women are not allowed to lift more than a certain weight in factory work, so for the big shells, special apparatus was erected to help swing them into place. But amid the big noisy black machinery an old can full of flowers, or a single rose pinned to the black cover-all brought a little human note. Always there were flowers — on the machine, in buttonholes, on the workbench. The iron has not touched the heart of France yet.

Women stepped into wooden shoes and stood before the cauldrons of chemicals, slowly stirring and stirring, while the fumes yellowed their hair and eyes and skin — but the work had to be done. They filled the cartridges — hair covered, nose protected from the fumes of the deadly powder. They packed the huge cans with packages of powder, just so many to a can, and every one had to go in. A few tears perhaps as they would

not all go in, the first few times. Then the trick was learned. They worked with the cotton "right from Texas"; they made little pieces of machinery from special designs; they managed the compressors; they weighed the powder, black and white; they made camouflage devices; they were busy everywhere.

Some of the task of preparing for the enemy was clean and light. The aeroplane factories work much in wood and cloth, and there the women in white cover-alls did all kinds of wood work, even to the making of the tiny pieces for parts of the wings. They constructed the cloth wings also, and the leather work; they helped assemble the parts, and varnished and marked.

Figures vary daily so that what is true to-day is inaccurate to-morrow. Some idea of the great increase in numbers of women munition workers may perhaps be gained from the statement that one factory grew from less than two thousand employees to more than twenty-five thousand seventy per cent were women.

The problem of transportation within the factory limits was not a simple one. One factory was almost five miles long and about half that in width. Street cars touched it at only one point. This meant long walks, before and after work.

Work in munitions plants was not entirely happy work for the women. The first three years at least were far from cheerful ones for France. Many of these women were homeless refugees, living in the crowded rooms available; many had lost at least one man from the family; the work was hard, there was little of cheer when the work was done, and news from the front was at times quite discouraging. It is the custom in France to rest for two hours each noon. Where could these women rest? There was no place to go except the street, and much of the time the weather was cold and rainy.

At the close of the third year of the war three women were sent to France by the Young Women's Christian Association of America to see where that organi-

zation of women, existing for the benefit of women, might perhaps be able to help the French women. At once they were asked to do something for the French munitions workers. Discussions and investigations resulted in plans for a large building across the street from a big factory near Lyons. The building was ready in the spring of 1918 and the first Young Women's Christian Association "Foyer des Alliées" was opened.

[It has a large dining-room where coffee, chocolate and tea, salads, etc., are sold. The women munitions workers bring their own lunches there to eat, and supplement them with the simple dishes obtainable. They bring their own wine, also, if they wish, for none is sold, but strange to say the bottles have diminished in number since the value of good coffee, tea and chocolate has been discovered.

Adjoining the dining-room is a big assembly room where the women write letters, mend, embroider, visit, or just sit and rest. At one end of the room is a little stage and a piano, and every noon



On the terrace of a Y. W. C. A. foyer for munition girls. Observe that she took the flower before the sandwich!

some sort of entertainment is given. The best of the talent at Lyons has formed the habit of going out at noon to sing and play for these women.

At first the women looked at it all rather skeptically. Then they came again. It was always warm there, and dry, and the ladies who wore the "Egrec Dooble Vay Say Ah" on their sleeves were always smiling. The interest grew; the music was good, some one recited, something always happened.

Suddenly they found themselves singing the Marseillaise for the Young Women's Christian Association ladies, and almost before they knew it they themselves — French workwomen — were singing a real American song, real American words! Then they heard one noon why the American ladies had come to help, that their own country and the country of the American ladies were good friends, that they had the same colors in their flags, that they each had a big celebration day in July (and there was a figure 4 in both dates), that a Frenchman

had gone to help America once when Americans were in trouble and now America had come to help France, her men to fight and her women to work, and that all the women in America and France were working to help the men end the war as soon as possible so that all the world could live again in peace and freedom.

More and more factory women dropped in at noon, and soon there were a thousand coming every day. Someone expressed a wish that she might learn English—and an English class was started. Someone liked to recite and sing, and so she was asked to do that very thing. Someone else liked games, and there was a playground ready outside with someone to teach interesting games and exercises.

These French working women have discovered many things since the foyer was established, that they can laugh and play together, and their work seems easier; that they can plan and carry out things all themselves; that this foyer is

really theirs, for them to enjoy and use as much as they like.

As Lyons is a great Catholic center, there was much concern at first in Catholic circles over the wisdom of allowing Catholic women to attend a place conducted by Protestants. The people of Lyons and the factory women soon learned that the Young Women's Christian Association women had just one object in view — to help make the lives of the factory women more pleasant, as their own contribution in helping win the war. The women could come or not to the building, as they chose. It was there and was theirs to use.

The influence, upon the munitions workers, of the Young Women's Christian Association workers and their efforts, has been quite remarkable, so much so that it has been spoken of over and over again by French men and women. Without exception they class the moral influence, unconsciously exerted, as of prime importance in the results attained.

Since the establishment of this foyer

requests have come for others almost more rapidly than they can be filled. Now there are three foyers at Lyons, two at Bourges, one at Roanne, one at Montluçon, one near Tours, and one near Paris.

The idea was not new to French women, but they lacked the money and the organizing ability which the Young Women's Christian Association provided, with additional tact in working with all religious and political beliefs without offending any.

Often interesting discoveries were made about the women workers. One woman hovered pathetically over the piano in the foyer day after day and finally it was found that she had been a concert musician before the war. When that profession had closed she had played at the movies, and as the need for that vanished, she came to the munitions plant, for she had to live. She was very happy to be asked to play accompaniments and solos at noon time.

Two girls in bloomers and blouses,

who were shunting a small freight car down a siding at the factory, were formerly a teacher and a nurse of nearly four years experience. It seems that the nurse had wanted some *easier* work, so she was pushing loaded cars about the yards of a factory.

The women represent all kinds of occupations — milliners, with homes destroyed; lace makers — city in ruins; modistes — no business nowadays. There are many who had never worked before.

Some factories work in three shifts of eight hours each, some in shifts of ten hours, and a few in two shifts of twelve. This is the actual working time exclusive of the two hours rest. Practically all factories allow their workmen fifteen minutes in the afternoon and sometimes the same in the middle of the morning for a bite to eat and a bit of rest. Wages as a rule are good. It is difficult to translate them into American terms, as the purchasing power differs in France and has not been stationary during the war. The women seem satisfied, and

many have much more money than they ever had before. In a number of factories the workmen have organized co-operative societies, which have proved beneficial.

Munitions-making is not the only hand work done in France. Anything that man has done, woman seems to be doing now. Women act as motormen and conductors on street cars — and they mend the family stockings while they wait for their shift! They do freight train braking, serve in dining-cars, carry baggage onto trains and through stations, help load freight at freight depots, serve as guards on the subways, deliver mail and telegrams, push carts of every variety and description containing all sorts of supplies. They clerk in all kinds of stores, sell papers, bring produce to market, sprinkle streets, drive taxis, in fact “my work” and “your work” seems to have been changed to “work for France.”

It is difficult to say just what is the most important piece of hand work French women have been doing. Munitions-



At Dunkirk the girls helped the men unload food from English boats.



There were many thousand girls who made the shells that stopped the foe.

making has been absolutely essential, for without it men cannot fight. It is perhaps the most spectacular as well.

However, men cannot fight if they cannot eat, no matter how much ammunition they have. The food supply grew steadily less during the first three years of the war. France does not produce enough foodstuffs for her entire use, and because the difficulties of shipping were so great, because so large a percentage of the peasant population was gone, and because the land was needed for other purposes, the situation became increasingly difficult. Peasant women have always worked in the fields and they continued to do so, adding in many cases to their own work, that of a husband or son. But even this was not enough; bigger crops had to be secured, more land cultivated.

Once more Madame France came to the rescue. If the need were in the fields, there she would work. But she did not go out to the fields in an automobile, with cook tent and wagon fol-

lowing. She did not take a course in practical farming. She just walked to the fields and began to work.

Here again France has her own methods. She is a country of small land owners, each one working quite independently, for cooperation is entirely unknown. Some of the larger holdings are cultivated by machinery, but the average farm is run by hand. So many horses have been requisitioned during the war that oxen, slow — picturesque perhaps, but *very* slow — were substituted, or failing these, the earliest tools, the hands, were used.

So women plough the fields, and do every kind of farm work; they have planted, cultivated, threshed, stacked hay; they have gardened, tended the livestock, cooked their own meals and cared for the children. Small wonder that some at forty years of age look sixty. Long, long hours they spend in the fields, for farming by hand is slow work. Often the only assistance has been from the children and the older men of the village.

Grain is cut by scythe, stacked by hand, and when it is all removed from the field, the women and children go over the fields again, laboriously picking up each little overlooked stalk. Much threshing is still done on the barn floor.

The government has tried to help, in the matter of harvesting especially, and has released some men from the army during harvest time, usually widowers with families, as this occupation is of course far safer for the men than the trenches, and is just as important.

Numbers of the women who have gone to the fields have had no training in farm life, but they need work and want to help. Some of the women on the big estates are as deserving of praise as the others. Many a woman has assumed entire charge of her estate, managing it so that it has yielded as much as before; in addition she has looked after the family of the assistant in his absence at the front; often too she has provided a house for refugees.

In the south of France women have labored in the olive orchards, and in the

vineyards. They are working in the three hundred factories for canning fruit and making jams, and in the three hundred vegetable canning factories. France has always worked with her hands, but she has worked harder than ever during the years of the war.

The housewife in the cities and in the small villages does not have all the modern conveniences for doing her work at home and consequently it is accomplished with less speed than it would be otherwise. Many of the houses were built hundreds of years ago, and have not been changed since. There are almost no sewer systems, and to a strictly practical person the architecture of a beautiful building loses much of its charm after crossing the open sewer before it. There are few electric lights and the supply of petrol has been very low. Some cities are entirely in darkness at night within and without except for a few candles, and have been so for years, since the supply of oil grew less. There are few delivery wagons in large cities now, and

none in small ones. This means going to market, though that is not a new habit in France. The peasant still washes her clothes on her knees in the little river, or at the public wash house. There is very little coal, and on that account a great deal of suffering and illness has resulted, especially to the children. Coal in the summer of 1918 sold for eighty dollars a ton, and not a great deal at that price could be bought by the average family.

Every cook book in the warring countries has had to be revised over and over again and France has long since given up her pastries, rolls, cakes and sweets. But she makes most palatable things of every eatable scrap she can get, and patiently looks forward to the time when she can again show her abilities as a cook.

“The work of her hands” has greatly increased, though the number of her hands remains the same. They are not as dainty hands as once they were, but they could not be more respected by the men at the front who have received the benefits of their toil.

CHAPTER IV

HER REFUGEES

FRANCE has had many problems during this war, and if they could be graded as to importance and work involved, the old degrees of big, bigger, biggest, would have to be entirely discarded. The new degrees would be large, immense and tremendous. In the latter class comes the problem of the "réfugiés, évacués et rapatriés."

Imagination, aided by pictures and descriptions, however vivid, cannot put the live human feel into it. One cannot paint the sensations of weariness, hunger, despair, resignation, by pen or brush or typewriter.

One can describe bursting shells, houses jumbled masses of stones, a woman with her child in her arms and her worldly possessions on her back, hurrying wearily

along the road, her world in flames behind — and what ahead? No pictures can include the sigh as it escapes from the heart, the tears which overflow the emotional eyes no matter how calm the outward eyes may be, the cumulative rage which must be held in check in the presence of the enemy in one's own invaded city.

France sees these expressions as well as the pictures, and sees them take place. And they are not the emotions and pictures of a strange people thousands of miles distant, but the realities that happen to her own friends, her own relatives, her own neighbors.

The war game is not played by the enemy to suit the convenience of an invaded country. How far the line will bend, how many people will be made homeless, the hour when they will leave, where they will go, are not questions which can be decided beforehand. They *happen* — the answers must be given at once.

Picture that great army of people;

women and children of all ages, old men, sick, infirm, all streaming out of the towns and villages into the great highways which lead away from home and the enemy. Perhaps they had an hour to decide what of all their possessions to take, perhaps they had five minutes.

How long would their journey be? They knew not.

Where were they going? They knew not.

How long would they be gone? They knew not that.

All they knew was the fact that the shells of an enemy were already destroying their homes, and the enemy would soon be there. They must go *at once* somewhere. So into the other cities farther south they flocked, by hundreds and thousands, on foot, on horse back, in carts, on trains. They came at all hours of the day and night. Tired, because of days upon the way with no chance to rest; hungry, but often too weary to eat, in they came in all stages of life, with their queer little assortments of

baggage: coffee pots, mementoes, family pictures. Invariably there were the family pets, ducks, a goat, rabbits, and always dogs. Paris had to build special kennels for the dogs.

There were always the dregs of the city (and often the topmost cream). Some have had nothing and were losing nothing; most of them have had some business, a farm, a store, a beautiful home, a good position. On they came together, some so ill they could not walk alone, all patient and quiet, simply waiting for what fate would bring next.

The cities farther south found themselves suddenly deluged with their helpless neighbors from the north. There they were. What should be done with them — not to-morrow, not next week, but that minute? Buildings of all descriptions were requisitioned, public buildings, schools, hotels, convents, unfinished apartments. They were requisitioned for a day or a night or weeks or months — or years, as the need has demanded.

There were the sick to care for, at

once, and they were many. There were the hungry to feed, and that meant everybody. They were dirty, for fleeing from an enemy cannot be accomplished in luxury and convenience; some were filthy, from habit; all cities have that variety.

And when all their immediate wants were supplied, there was yet to settle the problem of lodgings — and that involved all sorts of complications; a daughter with aged parents, a mother and several children, an elderly man and his invalid wife, a grandmother and grandchildren. The situations were as numerous as the people. Lodgings had to be equipped. That meant chairs, tables, stoves, dishes, and beds at least, plus bedding and some kind of linen.

After lodgings, clothes had to be supplied. Many persons had none except what they wore, and after several days on muddy or dusty roads these were hardly suitable for further wear.

Then came the question of work. Many had never worked before, some from shift-

lessness and some from lack of necessity. Both classes now had the same thing in common — nothing. Self-respect does not permit of charity, and so work had to be secured whereby all the necessities might be paid for in instalments. Those who had neither self-respect nor possessions had to be made to feel responsibility.

All the problems of charity, social service, and relief which any community ever has was dumped upon city after city in overwhelming numbers, with no preparation and no organization for handling such problems on a vast scale. There were no relief lodges nor aid societies as they are known in the United States.

The women of France have never worked together in organizations. They knew little of social service. They have worked as a mass of individuals, rather than as individuals in a mass. The nation as a whole has been very proud of its individualism. But whether as a mass of individuals or individuals in a mass, the refugees were there and had to be

taken care of. Immediately individuals and groups of individuals started organizations, raised money and opened relief shops.

During the first days of the war the women offered their services in any way. Those with leisure time made garments and knitted. But when the refugees arrived with neither home nor work, the government requested the women to put up their knitting needles and help with the problems of the unemployed and homeless.

Hundreds of organizations all managed by women now exist for relief work of every kind. Women are represented on the boards of all other organizations. The voluntary workers raise the money, procure the supplies, manage the organizations, give work to those who need it, especially the many refugees, and pay a minimum salary for the work.

The knitting needles and sewing machines were turned over to the unemployed women to make the needed garments for soldiers and refugees, and thus



All that they own is here in the wagon, but they are on their way back "home."

they became self-supporting. Each organization has taken care of twenty to twenty thousand. Not only did France have the problem of her own people to solve, but there have also been the thousands of Serbians and Belgians in France without home and country, and in need.

The names of some of the organizations give an idea of the work involved:

Central Bureau of French and Belgian Refugees,
assists 15,000 refugees.

Society complimentary to the French and Belgians,
procures food and lodging for 1,400 refugees;
700 are fed each day.

Society for Scattered Families, tries to locate members of families which have become separated,

Committee of Devastated Aisne, accumulates stocks of provisions for the time when the population there shall be free.

Assistance to the Refugees and Victims of the War, provides clothing for the babies, an employment bureau, etc., assists thirty families a day.

Committee for the Refugees of Meurthe-et-Moselle,
assists 12,000 refugees.

There are organizations to assist the évacués from the invaded departments, to procure clothing for the children and for the adults, to make layettes for the babies, to send the delicate children into the country. Every phase of the life of a refugee is studied and assistance is given.

How do the various members of a family know where to find one another when they are so scattered throughout France? That question forms instinctively in thinking of the problem of Northern France. It bobbed up with great persistency almost coincident with the flood of refugees.

“Where is my sister?” “How can I find out where my parents are?” And immediately from the worried men in the army, “What has become of my wife? Where are my children?”

As a result, two large central offices have been established, one in Paris and one in Lyons, where the most minute and complete system of records is kept of all who leave their homes through any

channel from the invaded country. They are classified by départements of France, Aisne, Nord, Oise, etc.; they are classified by cities, Lille, Lens, St. Quentin; they are classified alphabetically, by families. All information possible concerning them is secured.

These offices employ hundreds of women, all voluntary workers at first, and they take every possible means to find members of separated families. Often a memory for names or addresses will help locate a missing member. Catalogues are issued every few weeks with complete compilation of material, and these when distributed lead to further information. Every means of obtaining information is seized. For instance, officers write to some one from St. Quentin, whose street address is the same as that of an inquiring family, and thus knowledge is secured of the former neighbor. Often refugees or rapatriés gave news of a friend who was still left in the invaded districts.

The population of the invaded country was something like three million, so very

simple arithmetic is required to estimate something of the number of cards necessary to make this department a success. Each département of course registers all who pass through it and cooperates with the larger offices, so that missing members of hundreds of families are located each week.

After a few weeks of work it was discovered that spies and codes are not confined to any one locality and it therefore became necessary to adopt a new method of disseminating news. Soon information to or from any one in the invaded country or in prison camps could never be delivered as sent. The message had to be rewritten, the wording entirely changed, so that enemy codes would be worthless.

Some queer situations have arisen from variation in viewpoints. France is not very well acquainted with itself, and still conforms a good deal to its old description — Paris, and France. Customs differ quite widely in different parts of France, and especially is this true regarding food.

What is considered a necessity in one part is a great luxury in another. For example, the people of the north are accustomed to having butter for breakfast; to them it is as necessary as bread. In the south, this is an unheard-of extravagance. When the refugees from the north were sent to the south, in accordance with custom they asked for butter for breakfast. "The extravagance of some people, without even a home," was commented upon in no gentle terms and "butter" almost caused a woman's riot. They understand each other better now, but it has been very difficult, especially for the older people, to become used to new ways.

It has been equally difficult for some cities to accept gracefully their quota of refugees. One little city has had all its many summer hotels filled with old people, who outnumber the residents three to one; some are fussy, many are ill. Another city gets the inmates of an insane asylum or of some houses of prostitution, or a host of the feeble-minded. One city

has room for thousands but no work for any; another has work for thousands but no room. To build homes for them has not been possible for many reasons: lack of workmen and materials and time (France is built slowly, of stone), instability of the refugee population and lack of knowledge of the duration of the war. So they all have been getting along as best they can, often excessively overcrowded.

Another little city has handled over sixty thousand refugees for a longer or shorter time, from a few days to many months. The women of the city have worked more than faithfully through all these years, and it is not easy work either. They have prided themselves justifiably in being able to meet every emergency. The Maire thought he had them beaten once when on a Saturday he announced that six hundred mattresses would be needed by Monday. There were just three hundred mattresses available in the city, but the women had the other three hundred ready by Monday, though there

were many women missing from church on Sunday, and beds were not burdened with occupants for long on either night. On Monday the Maire was led triumphantly to the big hall in the old convent, a refuge for refugees, and there his worries disappeared beneath the pile of mattresses, six hundred of them all ready.

This whole problem of the homeless from the north and the homeless from the other invaded countries, especially Belgium and Serbia, is a most tremendous one, both for those who have left their homes and for those who must assist them. The women of France have done a wonderful work with them, but it is not spectacular. Much of it has been very hard physically and mentally and emotionally; much of it has been received with diminishing gratitude, for generosity becomes habit both for the giver and the receiver in some cases after four years.

The work cannot stop with peace, for the whole invaded, demolished north will need assistance for many years, and

the women must continue to give it. It cannot be done in clean workshops or in one's home. It will have to be done under the saddest, most disheartening, revolting and unspeakable conditions — but it must be done. Already the refugees are returning, as they are permitted, to the districts recently freed from German invasion. Once again the problems pursue — lodging, food, clothing, materials, work. The women who return have all they can do; the others are helping them, in every way that they can, and help will be needed for a long time.

CHAPTER V

HER RAPATRIÉS

AS the line was pushed back in the fall of 1914, back went the refugees to their homes, or what was left of their homes. Then machinery, provisions, furniture, had to be provided so that they might start life over again. Then again the battle line came down, and this time caught many who could not escape, so that for two years or more they lived under the jurisdiction of an enemy, in their own towns. Some of these people were finally repatriated and came back again, through Switzerland.

The call of home was too strong to resist and when the enemy was no longer in their door yards, back they went again. Then came the big drive in the spring of 1918 when Paris itself was once more threatened. For the third time some of

these same people came on ahead of the enemy.

Why did they go back each time to a dangerous country? Home is home, and to a Frenchwoman it has been home for generations and generations. There is always the hope that at last the enemy is repulsed for all time. The little patch of one's own in whatever condition has a pull which cannot be resisted.

Life in an invaded city is not what one would voluntarily choose. Leaving out of consideration all the cruelties of physical nature proved against the German invader, there are agonies more torturing than physical pain to sensitive souls. There is yet to be recorded the pleasure of billeting German officers, by inhabitants of an invaded French city. Over and over comes the same story, of selfishness, discourtesy, greed — if nothing worse were mentioned.

“The officers — they are awful, lots worse than the soldiers.” A middle-aged nun, a rapatriée from Lens, in telling her experiences as unwilling hostess and ser-

vant to German officers, could not find suitable or strong enough words to express her contempt. Insults, coarse and brutal language, bestial actions, she was compelled to endure day after day in her own home, and she was powerless either to leave or to compel the intruders to do so. The agonies that hundreds of women have endured while being obliged to watch the tortures to death of loved ones can never be computed.

The Germans have played upon every possible emotion in their endeavors to weaken the spirit of the French while they dwelt among them. Offers of food when one is half starved, if one turn traitor; promises of recovered family if one leave one's country were common.

A subtly brutal incident is told of a prominent official of one of the larger cities. An English bomb fell upon a building killing the French official's young son. Immediately the Germans were most sympathetic. "It is a great calamity that has come to you, in the death of your son by the English, but of course

knowing the English as we do, it is not surprising that they should shell French cities and kill French children." German officials came to the funeral bearing large bouquets of flowers. "Accept our sympathy for this great sorrow that has come to you through the English. Is there anything we can do for you to help lighten your grief?"

"Yes," was the reply. "Send me home to France." The answer was a great disappointment after this exceptional show of sympathy.

The Germans engaged in the publishing business for some time and distributed, free, to each convoy of rapatriés copies of the Ardennes Gazette, beautifully illustrated, with poetry and jokes and columns of "pure reading matter," though not a great deal of emphasis should be placed upon the "pure." This paper was their final effort to ingratiate themselves with the rapatriés, and their last fling at the English.

"Before and after" pictures are displayed in this paper: the pleasant village

street, houses uninjured, trees full of blossoms, children playing in the streets; same picture after being bombed by the *English*, showing nothing but ruins! A corner of a French cemetery, green and well kept, a corner of a German cemetery even more beautifully kept, a stony ill-kept grave of the *English* showing how brutally they care for their dead! The photograph was probably taken on some no-man's-land before any beautifying could be done, but the inference is that it is typical. Then there are pictures of children crowding around the German doctor in an invaded village, begging him not to leave them as they are so fond of the kind doctor! There are pictures of French prisoners, well groomed, in beautiful surroundings, bands playing and so on.

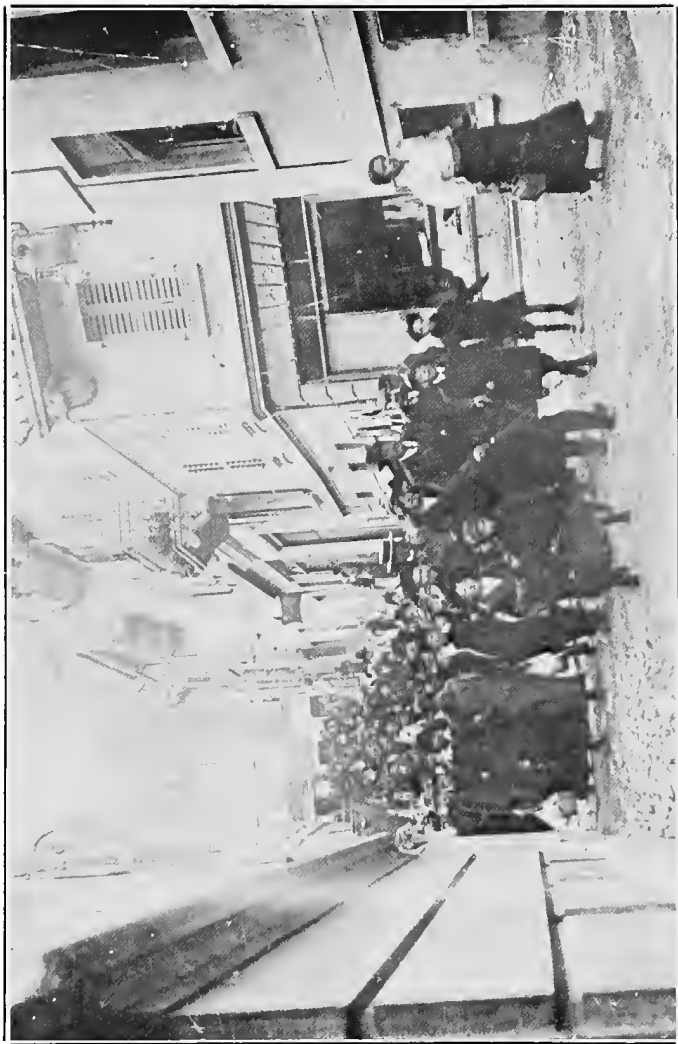
Yes, there is the history of Napoleon — and the inference is plain, one does not need a magnifying glass to see it. The greatest general that France has ever had, one of the greatest the world has ever known, could not beat Germany and her Allies, so what is the use of trying

now! Always in every paper there were the latest German victories, to prove resistance useless.

As for breaking the morale of the French people, even of those who had lived the lives of captives for years amidst want and humiliation while their hearts must have continually dilated with suppressed rage — it did not make a dent in their spirit, and the *Ardennes Gazette* has been merely a “scrap of paper.” But the mental agony that these captives and refugees have endured was much more wearing than their physical deprivations.

In October, 1914, the first convoys of rapatriés arrived by way of Annemasse. They were sent in irregularly every month or so until the beginning of 1916, when arrangements were made with the German government and the Swiss government to send them in regular convoys at specified times.

The reception of the rapatriés at Evian on Lake Geneva, where the welcome home has taken place, was one of the most per-



The returning tide of rapatriés at Evian, on their way back to the homeland.

fect pieces of organization and war work done in France. Every day for six weeks or two months in succession, the rapatriés, arrived, about six hundred of them at seven o'clock in the morning and another six hundred at six o'clock in the evening. Some had been in the invaded country ever since the beginning of the war, some for only a few months. No one knew when or how his turn might come to be sent back to free France. That depended entirely upon the pleasure of the invaders, who had a strange sense of humor.

An elderly couple belonging to a prominent family in France lived in Roubaix, which was captured by the Germans during the first year of the war. A daughter living in central France, who has worked unceasingly since the beginning of the war with the rapatriés, tried every known method to have her parents sent back. Finally, through the request of a ruler of a neutral country, it was arranged that they should come with the next convoy. The little couple were notified by the Germans and told

what train to take. They arranged the few things they are allowed to carry out of the country, gave all their possessions and food to their neighbors and arrived at the station just before train time. Then up blustered a German officer and told them that they could go on back to their home; that they would see what it meant to be under German rule; not even the request of a king could influence a German. He himself was the ruler! The little couple were never able to leave the invaded city until it was French again.

Another touch of this same humor appeared in the evacuation of a city. The inhabitants were told that the city would be evacuated by quarters. The first quarter would be allowed to take thirty kilos of baggage; the second quarter might take what each could carry in a hand bag; the third, all that could be carried in a handkerchief apiece, and the fourth might leave as they were born, though this last decree was finally modified to allow them to wear the clothes they had on.

No money could be taken, and there was very little chance of smuggling it through. Paper checks on the banks in their city in exchange for their money could be taken, but these were worthless of course unless the French government redeemed them (which it did). The actual money, however, in the invaded country stayed there with the Germans.

The rapatriés were allowed to take no deeds, or public or private papers. Imagine the situation for France in the cities which are completely destroyed when owners try to establish claims and boundary lines!

The sick, the starved, the aged, mothers with several children, were usually the ones sent back. Picture their progress! When they finally started from their home cities they were usually sent through Belgium, where they were often required to wait for days and weeks. Belgium, also under German rule, could do nothing for them, food was extremely high in price, and a few weeks there was quite

enough to relieve them of the last of their little store of money.

Then finally on through Switzerland they went, where the Swiss Red Cross gave them their first taste of humanity. At St. Gingolph on the French border they were met by a French doctor and two nurses, the first people from home whom many had seen in four years. By the time the train reached Evian they had all been ticketed, baggage for families placed in separate specially marked bags, preparations made for transferring the sick, and the tension had begun to lessen.

Evian was a busy place for the ensuing five hours after the arrival of a convoy. The emotional side cannot be touched in a few words. One simply has to try to live in imagination the lives of the returning folk since the war began, to realize the scene.

Within five hours those six hundred people were fed; formally welcomed home with music and a speech from the mayor of Evian; they received their mail, which

sometimes gave the first news in four years of husband or son — nor was it always happy news. They had baths and clean clothes, were questioned by the intelligence officers, were examined physically, had their money changed into French money and very carefully receipted, and if they had none or not enough, received their allotment from the government; they received their cards telling where they were to spend the night, when they were to leave and for what place; they had their orders for new clothing, for medical attention if necessary; they were questioned as to ability, and employment was secured, and all was done with the greatest facility and order.

Most of the work there was performed by women, under the direction of the department of the Minister of the Interior. The serving of the six hundred twice a day was voluntary work. The office work, registering, etc., was also done by women, who did not conform to union labor hours, but worked at least

thirteen hours every day during the weeks while the convoys were arriving.

There was a hospital for children who needed medical care, and that meant providing lodgings for the mothers while the children were there. There was a home for the aged who were not well enough to go on at once. There was a home for abandoned babies, including some Boche babies, and for orphans until arrangements could be made for sending them on. There was even a school for the children who had to spend a few weeks there while brother or sister finished with the measles or diphtheria or gained strength enough through proper food to go on.

No more beautiful spot could be found for a first day at home than Evian, with its hills, its woods, its gorgeous sunsets and beautiful Lake Geneva. There were still hard days ahead, for with the rapatriés as with the refugees, leaving the home of centuries is like leaving a part of their lives.

More pathos and humor were mixed



The Liberty Tree planted in 1870 at Evian, Switzerland, has grown up to shade the barracks of rapatriés.

up at Evian than one will be apt to find elsewhere in the world, but whatever emotion was uppermost, those women at the registration desk never failed to share it. To watch them one would scarcely think that they had sympathized or rejoiced four hundred thousand times these past four years. They were as genuinely interested in the good news, the clever outwitting of the Germans, the sorrows and tragedies, as though they had never heard any of it before.

It is certainly appropriate that some of the barracks for housing the rapatriés were built beneath the huge tree which was planted at the close of the war in 1870, and has been known as the Liberty tree. It seems prophetic of the liberty that has come to France.

The rapatriés were sent on within twenty-four hours, if possible, to make room for the next twelve hundred. Lyons was the big distributing point, and from there they went to various départements of the country, until it is advisable for them to return home.

The element of uncertainty has been present so constantly in war work in France that continuous complications have arisen and increased the work. The story of the city of Nancy, for instance, is quite typical of the bombarded and devastated territories.

During the first weeks of the war Nancy was seriously threatened and a large part of the population fled. Then when the danger was past the city resumed a fairly normal existence, the population returned and relief societies were formed for the refugees from the north and east who poured in from more dangerous sections. Schools were established for orphans, and relief stations, canteens, and *ouvroirs* to provide work and clothing were also established. This work was continued with efficiency for about three years.

In the winter of 1918 the bombarding began again, and the city became a dangerous place for people unable to defend themselves in any way, especially women and children and the aged. The

government ordered an evacuation as a means of protection for nerves and life in general. Though one may not be afraid, constant dodging of death without any means of protection or retaliation begins to bring results in weakened hearts, diminished resistance to disease, taut nerves. This of course was increased with the continued interruption of sleep, not once in a while but night after night, two and three times a night.

The city of one hundred thousand dwindled to forty thousand. One school moved down to southern France. Another school was transferred to Moulin, near Paris. Over in Brittany some three thousand children were sent. Nearly all the war organizations were moved elsewhere. They were still managed by the women and men from Nancy, however, and financed by that city. This arrangement naturally complicated matters greatly for city officials, but the work continued.

By removing so many from their own homes and source of supplies, incomes

ceased and that meant that work must be secured for mothers and older children. This also necessitated breaking up families temporarily. The majority of the children were cared for in schools and homes while the mothers secured work elsewhere. The surprising part of it all is that the forty thousand who remained carried on their business with their nightly pilgrimages to the refuge stations, and all with the air of, "Well, why get excited! What can you do about it? It won't last forever and we have stood it for four years."

Nancy, in the midst of its own troubles, took time to construct a beautifully simple monument to the memory of the first three Americans who fell for France. The citizens selected the site many months ago but apologetically explained that they had not been able to place the monument as that vicinity was rather heavily shelled just then. With all their difficulties they kept the city organization intact though it was pretty well scattered over France for many months, and they continued

relief and protective work though many miles removed from their own homes.

In the devastated districts close to the Lorraine line the complications have been more serious. It has taken much pluck added to material assistance to go ahead and rebuild a ruined home, and start all over from the very beginning with nothing but a pair of hands. In that section also they learned to speak with more than caution, for the country teemed with spies whose methods were ingenious but usually quickly discovered.

Older people who lived in Lorraine in 1870 days say that after the 1870 war they always hated to have a German resident die, for it meant that at least ten relatives from Germany came to the funeral and so fell in love with the country that they never went back! This mixing of the two races in Lorraine and on the border has resulted in many serious situations.

The little French border villages valiantly hung on, women and children working the fields, with gas masks dangling

where sunbonnets ought to hang. The workers seemed to become almost impervious to bursting shells which threw dirt in their faces or plowed up their gardens or chipped off a corner of a house. One marvels anew at the power of adaptability!

CHAPTER VI

HER CHILDREN

THE word "children" suggests laughter and happiness and pink and blue ribbons, and little lacy white dresses, and whistles, and ball bats and snugly "good nights," and all that is irresistibly lovable in the world.

What a change in one's ideas of childhood when seen through the eyes of Madame France the past four years! It seems as though there could not be enough forgiveness in the whole world to counterbalance the needless horrors inflicted simply upon the helpless childhood of France. The pity of it, the utterly useless terror of it all makes one turn cold with rage.

Will one who has seen ever forget the little children who came down from the north just ahead of the Germans? Can one ever forget the utter weariness and

hunger in those dirty little faces as the tired little feet stumbled into the canteens at Paris in the middle of the night? Will the picture of those pinched little babies ever fade? — babies just a few weeks old who had finally cried themselves to sleep because their hunger would not be satisfied with only water or cold coffee for the past few days.

No, these things will never be forgotten, nor the look of complete woe when once more they were dragged from a place where there was food and rest to go to the Metro station to escape yet another raid. Nor can one forget the terror, the nightmares of some of the little rapatriés, nor the eyes of others as they saw a lighted city at night for the first time in four years, and cried out, "Oh! there is too much light! The Gothas will get us." There are some things one does not want to forget.

About two million people have come down from the north, three-fourths of whom are women and children, the greater number, children. Some of the

children were with their mothers or grandmothers, some with neighbors, some alone. In the invaded country their lives were scarcely normal. In the occupied country they soon learned that the aim of one's existence was not to tell all one knows to an enemy, and not to know all that said enemy thinks one should. Deception and lying often meant saving their own lives or their families'.

They saw destruction and death, sometimes of friends, sometimes of their own mothers, often horrible sights which it takes them many, many months to forget, or at least to push into the background of their minds. They lived on what food they could get, not what they needed. They spent nights in damp cellars. They lost sleep. They had insufficient clothing. The women who worked with the rapatriés tell some pitiful tales. They tell them quietly, without emotion. After four years there are neither words to express emotions, nor degrees beyond the superlative, so one goes back to simple statements.

Many babies were left at Evian, no one knows by whom, or from where. Occasionally a woman left a Boche baby because she couldn't keep her family and that baby! Occasionally a mother left her other children, and kept the Boche baby — because it needed her and was helpless and the others could take care of themselves. A home for all abandoned babies was established in Lyons, where they are given every care and are to be trained and educated.

One day six children came in a convoy to Evian, without any relatives. They were all quite young. It was soon learned that their mother, after continued and pestering questions from the Germans, had unconsciously given some information which led to the arrest of her husband as a spy, and his speedy death. Her grief was so great that she killed herself. The six children were alone in the world.

One little girl who seemed to be without relatives in the convoy was in such a nervous state that she had nightmare



A Boche baby learns democracy with his French companions in a Lyons hospital.



No munition works or camouflage factory was complete without its nursery.

night after night upon arriving at Lyons. It was finally necessary to give her special care and isolation from the other children. She continually cried at night, "Mamma is killed, her blood is over everything, and it is warm! It is warm! Brother is killed too." After many months of careful nursing she became more quiet. The nurses thought perhaps she was dreaming a good deal of it. One day in another convoy, a girl a little older told the same story, the death of the mother with the same comments, and the death of the brother. Some one remembered the story of the first little girl and arrangements were made to have the children see each other, on the chance that they might be related. Those who saw the meeting of the two little sisters can scarcely tell of it without tears in their eyes. The mother, two little girls and the brother had been in a cellar during a bombardment. A shell burst there, killing the mother and injuring the brother so badly that he soon died. The two little girls had become separated. Can such things ever fade

from a childish mind so that they leave no scar?

Not all was sad at Evian. Sometimes a child discovered a former playmate from home, and great tales were disclosed. Sometimes the children realized quickly that at last they could talk, and their little tongues flew. The average child forgets soon, which is well. Those who do not forget have suffered in these few years more tortures than the average adult endures in a lifetime.

On the second of August, 1914, the first society for caring for orphans was organized. In the hurry of mobilization many men did not know where to turn for care for their motherless or otherwise needy children while they were gone. At once they were told not to worry, the children would be provided for, and thus *Les Orphelin de la Guerre* was organized, which cares for the orphans and half orphans. The number of children cared for has reached nearly one and a half million.

Down on the Riviera there are many

lovely estates and hotels which were taken for the children. Here they could be out of doors a great part of the year, and everything was done to strengthen the little bodies. They ate out of doors at tables under the trees, they often had their lessons out of doors, they swam in the sea or played in the hills. All possible was done to take away the feeling of an institution. There are orphan homes elsewhere in France, presided over by refugee nuns and other devoted French women.

During the spring of 1918 when the air raids on Paris and the vicinity were severe, there was much concern over the welfare of the children, the most valuable possessions of France. The alerte sounded five minutes before the lights in the city were turned off when a raid was signaled. Five minutes is not a long time to get into clothes when suddenly awakened from a sound sleep, and hurry rapidly to a place of safety down several flights of winding stairs to a Metro station a block or two away. A mother was kept busy when there were several children to pro-

fect. To sit sleepily on a cold cellar floor, with not quite enough clothes on, perhaps several nights a week, is not conducive to health, either. Bad colds and much bronchitis resulted.

So the government made plans to have all children sent farther south if their parents wished. Many who could afford to go took their children or sent them to a place of safety. If they had not the means they had at least the opportunity through the government offer or through several private organizations. Thousands of children spent the summer months of 1918 where there were no dim lights, unless because of a scarcity of petrol, where there were no raids and no guns.

The machinery necessary, mental and otherwise, to transfer these children, was quite stupendous. First must be found the places in central or southern France where they could be sent. This meant private homes in each of which one or more children were received for three or four months — more if the raids continued. If private homes were not avail-

able small hotels which could be taken for the summer, or other similarly equipped buildings were requisitioned. The personnel for running them and materials for furnishing had to be secured, and arrangements had always to be made for proper medical attendance and nursing.

Then came the task of checking the children, getting them ready, deciding where to send each one, having each examined physically. Also arrangements had to be made for special trains, sometimes for two hundred children, sometimes for as many as eight hundred at one time. Permission had to be obtained to take them, arrangements made for transportation to the station if the children were small, and adults secured to accompany the children on the journey, which usually took at least twelve hours.

Such a trip lasts long in memory! Most mothers consider traveling for a few hours with two or three children, at most, quite an undertaking. Try managing twenty or thirty for twelve hours, including all of the night in French third

class cars! No wonder some few frail little things found the excitement too much and spent a couple of days afterward wearing out a fever. Usually when a convoy of children was large, one city was used as a distributing point and various little journeys were made from there, an hour or two distant, with the children chosen for these places.

Then in the fall came the task of gathering them all together and bringing them back. A good deal of clerical work was necessary to check names and locations and report to the parents. These organizations were run almost entirely by women.

Some of the children were taken into the Pyrenees, some to the Mediterranean and some to central France. Down on the Riviera there is a beautiful estate valued at two million dollars, owned by a German. When war began the French government sealed the rooms and the property stood idle for a long time. Then it was opened, all the furnishings packed, stored in one story of the house, the

doors to these rooms sealed, and the rest of the house made into a rest home for Parisian children who were sent away from the German bombs.

Colonies for the many children who have contracted tuberculosis have been established in various parts of France and these too, of course, require the services of many women.

One big problem which the French have solved is the care of small children while the mothers work in factories, especially in the munition factories. The munitions had to be made, the supply of men was not sufficient, the women were willing to work, but what could be done with the small children? Many women were refugees and had no one at all with whom to leave them. So the plan which has been used in some French factories for many years was quite generally adopted.

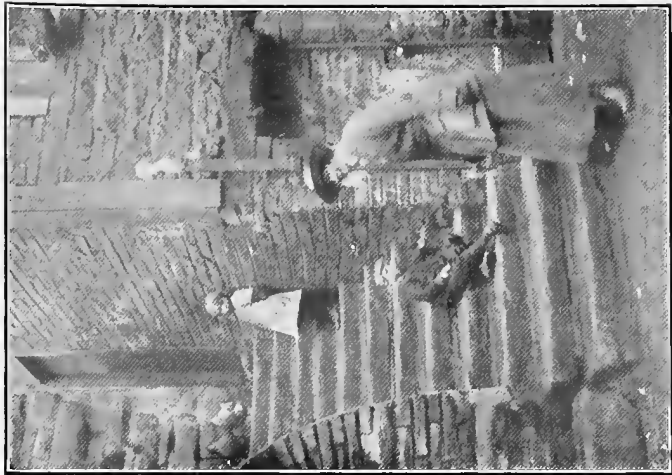
In the grounds of each factory was built a crèche, where children are taken care of during the day. The building for small babies under three years is called a puponnière. The crèche takes

care of those between that age and five years. The *garderie* is where children above five are sent. The word *crèche* has come to be used quite generally, however, as the place where any children are cared for.

These buildings are as modern and sanitary as can be. The methods vary slightly in each place but, in general, each baby when it is brought in the morning is bathed and dressed entirely in clothes provided by the factory. Competent nurses care for the babies during the day. There is a big room full of cribs for the naps and a room where the mothers put on clean white cover-alls and nurse their babies. There are diet kitchens and cunning dining-rooms where the toddlers eat; there are toys and gardens. Sometimes the babies are kept all week, going home with their mothers only for Sunday. At some *crèches* everything for the children is done by the attendants; at others, the mothers are themselves required to keep the children up to a certain standard.



Not camouflage, but mural decorations in a crèche for babies whose mothers work in a camouflage factory.



A blue triangle girl gets acquainted with refugee children living in a deserted back court.

In Paris, where the babies remained over night, the crèches had especially equipped cellars, with duplicate baskets or cribs for the raids. Some skill was required to carry forty babies down to the cellar in five minutes. But the nurses only smiled about it and said, "It isn't difficult when you are used to it, and sometimes the babies don't even waken!" Everything is done to encourage the mothers to care for their children in the best manner possible and while the outcome is not always encouraging from that standpoint, at least the children are given every chance.

The garderies have a great assortment of children, especially during the weeks when the public schools are closed. The children are taught games and lessons, kept out of doors as much as possible and required to be neat and orderly and polite. For some of them this is their first lesson along such lines.

The crèches are usually very attractive, and not built in the factory style of architecture at all. The contrast is quite

striking as one stands in the doorway of a crèche, carefully walled in from its surroundings. Bright flower beds all around, neat little paths and perhaps a patch of grass in front greet the eye; rooms within clean and bright; walls decorated with fascinating yappy ducks, or floppy-eared dogs, or teasing cats chasing along the picture molding. Across the wall on any side is the factory, with its noise and dirt, its piles of shells waiting to be sent north, or cars of raw metal ready to make more shells.

Child life in France became all topsyturvy, and the real world which is not full of death and destruction of man's own making will seem a queer place to some who have known nothing else since they have been old enough to know anything at all. War was written — no, not written, but fairly plastered — over everything. Tiny legs are wound with spiral puttees just like brother's, hat bands contain the word "Verdun" or "Marne" or "Ypres," showing where father fought — and perhaps fell. Toys are soldiers

or nurses, games are of war, often with real shells exploding near. Some pathetically humorous situations resulted.

A little lad of eight called at a school in Lyons one day for his seven-year-old sister. It was a bit unusual, but the instructor allowed her to go, thinking the mother had sent for her. Late in the afternoon the mother came to inquire why the child had not been sent home at the usual time. The circumstances were related and a search was made for the children. They were finally discovered a long way from home, trying to find the proper place where the little boy could enlist as a soldier and his sister as a nurse.

A baby of three who had never seen his father was not allowed to forget that such a person existed and was periodically shown pictures of father in his uniform, before he went to war, with his gun, etc. Finally one day father came home on permission. The child was introduced to him with the words, most excitedly spoken, "This is your father!" With

the recollection of the numerous pictures called "father" the child looked up in a puzzled way and said, "Which one?"

There is one place in Paris where raids have nothing but pleasant associations. Down in one of the poorer districts is a little settlement which has been doing excellent work for seventeen years. The directress, a most charming woman, has tried to make this spot a haven, in the world's distress, for the people of her community. The building is considered safe, so all the neighbors came there when the alerte sounded. As the directress lives there she was always on hand during a raid. She tried to make the hour or two or more as happy as possible for the children, often with music and games, usually with hot chocolate and bread.

One day when there had been no raids for several weeks, a little child asked her rather wistfully, "Aren't we ever going to have any more Gothas? We have not had chocolate for a long time!" The directress added, with a touch of sadness, "Thirty-three of my settlement boys have

fought for France. Five are yet living."

France is not an individualistic nation now when she considers her children. It is not "your child and my child" but "our children." They must in time rebuild, repopulate, redevelop France. They are the greatest asset of the nation and the women of France must train and educate not only each her own, but all those who have not proper care, or home or parents. Their bodies must be made strong to resist the great army of disease germs, their minds must be made keen to enable them to think the best for France, their souls must outgrow the many scars of the past four years, to make possible the fulfilment of the ideals for which so many fathers have given their lives. To accomplish this is now part of the work of the women of France.

CHAPTER VII

HER SCHOOLS IN WAR TIME

THE once familiar picture of the child starting for school each morning with his bag of books in one hand and an apple in the other and care far removed from his brow, will have to undergo many changes to portray accurately the French school child of the past four years.

France wants her children educated, or instructed, as she prefers to call it, and neither bombs, nor Berthas, nor gas, nor falling walls have prevented her from so doing. Nothing is as it was, but then nothing in the whole of France is as it was.

However, instruction has gone right on. In the invaded districts the apple in the school child's hand gave place sometimes to the gas mask, and the customary school room was transferred

to a cellar in many cases, but teacher and pupils were there regularly each day and the children learned to count by falling shells and cannon booms. They studied about all the battles fought throughout the ages in their very city, and they watched Liberty struggle once more almost in their doorway.

In Paris the schools were not closed for a day of their customary sessions, though conditions have been far from natural. Air raids disturbed a great deal, and the minds of little folks who are awakened night after night cannot be quite as keen as if their owners had had more sleep.

When Big Bertha arrived, there was even more difficulty, as there was no telling when she would hit or where. She seemed for a time to choose a certain section of the city in which a large girls' school was located. Windows were sand-bagged and every possible precaution taken. One of the teachers apologized one day for having so little time for an interview.

"It is just examination time and the

girls have been much interrupted this past week with so many raids at night, when they cannot get their sleep, and by the big gun during the day which has hit quite near us several times. The rooms are now so dark that it is sometimes difficult to work, and there is really not enough air because of the sand-bags. But the girls have been splendid through it all, and will pass their examinations all right."

She neglected to say that her own sleep had been further disturbed by the arrival at night of a friend from an evacuated city, who had no place to go, and that her home was now shared by the friend.

France has been obliged to try an experiment in the realm of public instruction and to her surprise has found it satisfactory. To mix the sexes in school, either pupils or teachers, has been quite unknown. There are no coeducational schools and it has been the custom for men to teach in the boys' schools and women in the girls'. When so many of

the men instructors left with their companies, it became necessary to put in some women instructors, if the schools were to remain open. The plan has proved very successful, even to discipline.

This, however, is not the only change which war has wrought in the educational system. In Lyons, for example, one of the finest lycées for girls was requisitioned almost at once for a hospital for the French wounded. Did the school cease to exist? Not at all. The seven hundred students moved over into an annex of a boys' lycée and for three years continued their work as before, but in the space intended for three hundred.

A normal school for young women in the same city was also used as a hospital. The pupils moved into a very tiny portion of the building and held many of their classes in the outside court as the only available space. The director of the normal school continued her work as head of the normal school and assumed in addition the directorship of the hospital.

Over and over again teachers gave up all vacations to do the extra work involved. In the invaded country many organized relief organizations, helped with ambulances, took on the work of a city official absent at the front, besides continuing their own work. Numbers of the teachers taught all day and worked two or three nights every week at a hospital because there was so great need and so little help.

Other complications arose with the coming of refugees. The great influx meant opening new school rooms, wherever space could be found, or doubling and trebling the number of pupils for each teacher. This meant cutting into halves or thirds the ordinary space considered necessary for pupils. Paper is scarce in France, very little publishing is now being done, and books are expensive. Refugees had little money, so old books had to be used, and every book and piece of paper carefully treasured.

Some of the refugees themselves were teachers in their own cities and whenever



“Allons, enfants!”

Their mothers are in a munition factory. The children are from a Garderie, and are singing the Marseillaise.



Outdoor school in Nice for children brought away from Paris to escape air raids and the big gun.

possible positions were found for them. The work with the refugees was very difficult as they were not always a stable population, nor did they come and go at the regular time for entrance or departure of pupils. Any teacher knows what that means.

There are the thousands of orphans also who are being colonized. Their instruction cannot be neglected, teachers and materials and equipment have to be provided for them. The only coeducational room thus far discovered in France has made its appearance in one of the orphanages and this new experiment is being watched with interest.

Again, the many thousands of children sent down from Paris and other raided cities needed instruction. The Germans did not wait until the close of the school term for raids and bombardments, so again the ordinary routine was broken and the needs of the moment were met. Many of these children were delicate in health and could not do the ordinary work, so special arrangements were made

for them. In almost every case the teachers were women.

With so many changes in business, it was necessary in occupations for women to reorganize courses of study, and even types of schools. Trade schools have been established for children, especially for orphans and children who will be obliged to earn their own living. Trade schools have also been organized for teaching war widows left with families to support. Technical schools have been opened at Paris and at Lyons especially, where young women may equip themselves for positions as assistant engineers, secretaries, industrial designers, for positions in customs offices, commercial and industrial legislation, mechanics, etc.

The new school at Lyons opened October, 1917, with an enrolment of seventy-one, forty-three in the industrial course and twenty in the commercial courses. Many young women are entering the field of chemistry, though that has always been more of a woman's study in France than in some other countries. Women

are even now holding positions in factory laboratories, pharmacies, and in the departments of food analysis.

Practically the only courses which were suspended in any of the schools were the domestic science courses, because of the scarcity of food and gas. These will be resumed when conditions are normal and the whole question of home economics will receive large consideration.

English is being studied in every nook and corner of France. Aside from the present invasion of English-speaking armies, and the consequent desire to be friendly with them, it was seen that there would be a great advantage after the war in the commercial world for those who knew English. This was recognized not only in the big business world of France but even by the servants.

A little maid at Hotel Petrograd in Paris, the Young Women's Christian Association hotel for women, was seen studying most diligently a small English book and dictionary after her work for the day was done. When questioned as to why

she worked so hard to learn English she replied in a voice which showed polite surprise at one's ignorance, "Why, no one will be able to do much business after the war unless she can speak English!" She was then reading some American fables and found them "very interesting but a little hard yet."

France is becoming one large English class, with its private teachers and special classes and courses in schools and universities, and Young Womens Christian Association classes for girls. It is of course a fair exchange, for all the rest of the world is borrowing some French person to assist with all the French words between the nouns and verbs. The registrar of a Paris Berlitz school smiled at the question, "Do you have many American pupils here?" and replied, "Yes, this is a regular American barracks."

The universities have increased their enrolment of young women and are changing courses to fit present needs, and are opening more and more courses to young women.

Aside from these many changes which the war has brought to France and her past ways of doing things, the pupils never forgot that their country was at war. Wherever inquiry was made, in Paris, in central France, in the south, the pupils have been giving and working for the refugees or the army.

One school reports that every child had given twenty-five centimes each week (about five cents) since the war began to buy materials to make layettes for the babies, clothes for the refugees, socks for the soldiers. The children did a certain amount at school in connection with their sewing lessons and gave three hours a week outside of school hours.

A school of poorer children gave each ten centimes a week or even less. If a child had a poor refugee relative, she was allowed to give the garments that she made to the relative. The pupils of one school gave a certain portion of their chocolate allowance each week for the prisoners in Germany. Chocolate has been almost as much a part of the daily

diet of a Frenchman as white bread has been to an American, and has been very scarce.

Some teachers have rather apologized for a lessening of the pace of the first two years. Perhaps it will not be held against them, all things considered!

CHAPTER VIII

HER SOCIAL LIFE

FRANCE is closely bound by tradition and the customs of generations and either finds it difficult to change, or does not care to do so. The custom of wearing black, including much crepe, as a mark of respect for her dead is practically universal. Mourning is worn a definite length of time for each grade of relative (two years for a husband), through the stages of deep mourning, light mourning, back to normal life, and the veil is long and thick. For parents or parents-in-law the period is eighteen months.

At the beginning of the war France had not time to discuss what she would do when her men should be killed. They were killed almost at once and in large numbers and the women simply did what they have always done; each put on her

black garments and continued to wear them the customary time. As one after another of her family were killed, many a French woman has remained in black since the beginning of the war.

Custom also excludes social life during certain periods of mourning. Consequently there was almost no social life in France during the war. That does not mean that France did nothing social, however. Society for pleasure was practically abolished, but any forms of social gatherings which benefited the war were continued. For example, many entertainments were given for the benefit of the Fund for the Blind, for the Orphans' Fund, for the School for Mutilés, for any one of the hundreds of funds to relieve war victims. Fairs have been held, moving pictures, concerts and theatricals given.

After the American invasion, there were difficulties in some sections. Movies could be given only in certain buildings with certain electrical connections. In a number of villages the French plans had to be canceled, as the Americans were

occupying the only suitable buildings and the Red Cross did not permit the buildings it controlled to be used for money-making purposes. But the French very gracefully accepted the inevitable and gave the movies anyway, free, for the benefit of the American convalescents in the village, and made plans to hold them for themselves in another city.

There were no large dinners and dances and teas. Occasionally a friend was invited to dinner, and the hostess apologized for the necessity of asking the friend to bring bread ticket and sugar! But all such things became so common, little was thought of it.

In May, 1918, France held her first art exhibit in four years, the proceeds from admissions going to war funds. The many bows of crepe in the corners of pictures showed how the pride of France in her art was mingled with sorrow for the death of her artists.

France had among other tasks connected with the war that of being hostess to all her allies. Permissions or leaves

for her own men were few and scattered during those first years, and when father did come home, everything stopped as far as possible in honor of his visit. The regular routine was so entirely upset that one small girl who had not had the pleasure of knowing her father very well, because of his long absence, remarked after his departure, "Is that man gone? Maybe we can have some quiet now!"

When the first permissions were granted the question arose at once, Where should the men go whose homes were in the occupied territory? French pay for *poilus* is not large. Many men had lost home and business and family, in the north. These men must be made welcome by the rest of France. So organizations were formed for taking care of them, canteens were opened and lodgings provided. Many families added one or more soldiers on permission to their own numbers for a few days.

France has been invaded by friend and foe. As the strength of the enemy continued, more and more allies came

to her assistance, most of them from a great distance. There were her own colonies, a different people, a different color and race. Something must be done for them. There were the homeless Belgians, the Serbs, the Czecho-Slovaks, the Greeks, the Chinese, the Italians, the Russians (whose position after the break-up of the Russian army became quite unenviable). Then there were all the English-speaking people, the English themselves who could usually go home to England for permissions, the New Zealanders and Australians who were so many thousands of miles from home, the Canadians and their next-door neighbors, the Americans.

The women of these countries all wanted their men well cared for; many of the men did not see women of their own countries for four years! Madame France was supposed to represent Canadian women to the Canadians, Belgian women to the Belgians, American women to the Americans. In addition to all her other work she did the best she could to be not

only war worker, but hostess for these numerous strange men. She opened her home to many, she helped organize clubs, Franco-American, Franco-Canadian, and many other Franco's.

She did countless things which she had never done before. She has never permitted her daughters to walk alone with men on the street. She tried to realize that it is "done" by the best families in other countries. She has heretofore kept her evenings for her family and intimate friends. She gradually added to this group a few of the "foreigners" who have no other time, and because it is their custom at home to visit in the evening!

She heard in these conversations, and her daughters heard, of things utterly foreign to the customs of her country — of coeducation from the primary grade through the university, of girls' societies, of club work, of girls (the best there are) who travel alone, of careers for women who are not obliged financially to indulge in them, of the finest college women in the nursing profession! She heard these

things, and sometimes wondered just where she would find herself when all should be over and the invaders, both foe and friend, departed.

It was not always easy to play the hostess, for oftentimes the black garments had not been worn long, and oftentimes her own men had returned mutilated, blind, tubercular, needing much of her attention. But she shoved her responsibilities up a little closer to make room for one more, and appeared gay, no matter how she felt.

CHAPTER IX

HER RELIGION

IT is not difficult to see the material things accomplished by an individual or even by a nation, nor is it difficult to see the changes in material situations. It is even possible to understand mental changes and emotions. But to see and understand the soul of an individual or of a nation is extremely hard. Feelings, beliefs, the guiding motives of life are not easily expressed nor are they always truly portrayed in deeds.

France has been struggling for many generations to express her own soul to herself. She has tried through ceremonies, and bloodshed, through legislation, through power, through indifference, but always as a nation of individuals. A national soul is not the sum or the average of its individual souls.

My ideals plus your ideals do not make our nation's ideals. A national soul is something outside of each individual soul. It is more than any one or the sum of all, but is included in each. It is perhaps the sum of the sacrifice of individual souls for the soul of the whole.

As a collection of individuals, France has sacrificed and endured and suffered — and remained unembittered and calm. The sum of the individual sacrifices and devotion can never be computed. What has been the impelling power to keep her sane, she hardly knows herself. Perhaps it has been philosophy, perhaps it is religion, perhaps a mixture of both. But if philosophy, it has been close kin to religion.

Is France more religious than she was when the war began? How can one tell? France is a religious nation, and the form and power which religion should have caused much discussion and many battles. The predominating form of religion is Catholicism, though France wants it understood that she is not priest-ridden.

The separation of church and state took place in 1905, but the separation of church and politics is not yet fully accomplished.

Those who are not Catholics have been called atheists, but this is about as close to the truth as to say that all who are not Methodists or Baptists are not Christians. Some did not like the ceremonies, or the confessional, or the authority of the Catholic form of religion, and have ceased to conform, but this does not imply that they are not religious. Service has supplanted services, as religious expression for many.

Protestantism is a tiny little bark in the sea of Catholicism and though the sea is rather rough at times, the bark is persistent. Intolerance has not been entirely abolished from the religious code of ethics. However, every one has learned much during these four years, and it may be that a national religion, regardless of the form of expression, may result.

There were in the French army some 25,000 priests, of whom 300 were chaplains; 340 Protestant ministers were also

in the ranks, 68 of them chaplains. Together they have fought and prayed to the same God, through different word expressions. Hundreds of Catholic sisters and Protestant women have worked unceasingly and have sacrificed and suffered, to relieve the suffering of others. Perhaps it has been that their own souls may be saved, perhaps it has been that the souls of others might be comforted. The impelling force is the same. Whether it has all meant more religion or greater opportunities for expression of the religion which has always existed within, is hard to tell.

The Catholic church has done all in its power to give spiritual aid to its believers. Some say that religion has taken a deeper hold upon the Catholic people and cite as proof the great increase in the sale of candles. Others say that that increase is due to the great number of deaths and therefore is simply conformity to custom. Still others say that it is due to the scarcity of petrol in many places, which thus makes candles the

only method of illumination. Church attendance seems about the same. The population has shifted so greatly that this also is difficult to estimate. There seems to be no standard of this kind by which to judge. Old residents have gone, new ones have come, and the changes are frequent.

An interesting discussion has been taking place in some of the Protestant synods. So many of the ministers went to the front that it was difficult to keep the work of the church progressing satisfactorily. It was sometimes difficult to find ministers to perform marriage ceremonies, conduct funerals and administer baptism. The question of admitting women to the office of minister, either with all a minister's duties and functions, or as assistant, has been very thoroughly discussed, pro and con.

The pros have won out however and France will soon have a training course for women for the ministry. The admission for candidacy will be very carefully made and the training will include

such courses as will enable a candidate to do social service work as a part of her parish responsibility. This is indeed an innovation occasioned by the war.

Judged by outside standards, France is at least as religious as she was four years ago. An inner feeling one can judge only by conversation and general attitude. It is quite impossible that any nation or any number of people could go through the things that have befallen France, during the past four years, without doing a great deal of thinking. The people can never possibly come out of it as they went in. Inevitably they must be either more hard, brutal, and cynical, or more gentle and considerate.

The faces of the French, the men who come from the hell they have gone through or the women who have endured so much because of their sufferings, are not the faces of cynics or of brutes. Neither do they show a spirit of senseless resignation, of self-abnegation. They seem to reflect only a courage to serve on, with the best of heart and mind and body

until the curse is lifted forever from their land and their souls, and then to serve on just the same.

Over and over again one hears women of France saying, "The most serious thing I ever did in my life before the war was to dress for a card party. I can never go back to that world when the war is over." Her "card party" for four years has been the care of hundreds of refugees, and refugees are often dirty and uneducated and unrefined. Or day after day, or night after night she has worked with the wounded, and that is sometimes pretty hard on the stoutest nerves. Or she has served at depot canteens long, long hours at a time. "I can never go back to the old world. I did not know there was so much to do in the world. I must continue to help." All this may not be religion, but it is certainly a very close imitation.

CHAPTER X

HER HANDICAPS

TO understand just what the war has meant to the woman of France and what problems she had to face almost from the beginning, it is absolutely essential that the France of these four years be understood. There is not a tiny corner of the whole country which is normal. First, last and all the time, France has been an invaded country and the battlefield of the war, in the west. That immediately takes France out of the class of other combatants and gives her entirely different situations and problems. The war work done, and the manner of doing it and the peace problems to be faced cannot be compared with that of any other country because there is no other where the situation is the same.

The whole of France can be tucked

into the state of Texas and still give Texas something like 50,000 square miles of elbow room. Considering the average density of population for the two countries, France, 189.5 per square mile and Texas, 14.8 for the same space, a great many more people would have to be added to Texas to make the situations comparable at all. In some sections of the north of France the density is 776 per square mile. The 1911 census gave France a population of about 39,000,000, which means that there are many cities and villages (36,000) and they are rather close together. Texas with 50,000 square miles more has less than 4,000,000 population. The invaded territory was populated to the extent of about 3,000,000, scattered through scores and scores of cities and villages, ranging from a few hundred in population to the 206,000 in Lille.

Some of the oldest civilization of France had its beginnings in this invaded country. Some of the most historic buildings, the most beautiful architecture, tapestries and

other works of art belonged in this section. That is not all, however. For with the love of art which France possesses, she has her practical side.

Her cities were busy places with smelting works, and mills, with quarries and mines. Flax and hemp were spun and woven. The lawns and laces of Amiens, Armentières, Dunkirk, Valenciennes, and the net of Calais are known far beyond France. Woolen goods were woven in Lille, Roubaix, Reims, and Sedan. Cotton cloth and velvet were made at Lille, Amiens, St. Quentin and Rouen.

The greatest sugar mills in France were in this section. So were the greatest coal mines, where more coal was mined than in all the rest of France together. The largest slate quarry was also in this section. Then there were factories for making plate glass, hardware, paper, vinegar, candles, boots, chemicals, tapestries, umbrella and knife handles, buttons and a long list of other commodities. To all that must be added rich farming lands, and the usual business firms and banks.

Everything was working busily until the beginning of August, 1914. Since then — surely this cannot be the same country!

Where are the 3,000,000 people of the invaded territory?

Nearly all not in the army were thrust into the rest of France, where they came homeless, and without funds and work, without food and with much illness.

The factories and the historical places and the homes and the farms and the mines and all the rest?

Everything possible has been carried into Germany, most of the rest destroyed. Before the war, the destruction of a little city by storm or fire was a great calamity. Villages and cities by the hundreds in France have been demolished, dismantled, burned, completely desolated and ruined. In one city, only one wall of one church remains standing.

This means not only the destruction of property but the destruction of the means of subsistence for three million people. On one hand the supply of food and fuel

for France has been reduced, and it never was sufficient for her needs without outside importations; on the other hand the number of people to be fed and cared for on this decreased supply has been greatly increased. This is one reason why Madame France fills what was once her coal bin with every possible chip and stick, and why she no longer makes her famous rolls and pastry.

Every few weeks during the past four years, the various allies have read with interest that England had landed so many troops or that a certain number of Canadians or Australians or Americans were in France, and every one, including France, rejoiced. But no one except France has quite realized what it meant to have friends as well as foes upon her soil.

There was Belgium, who had to borrow a little corner of France to call her official home for a few years. There were the many Belgian refugees of all ranks to be cared for. There was the Belgian army which had to be reorganized and rearmed.

The same had to be done for the Serbians and the Greeks. France did it.

There were the British troops and the Italian, and lastly the Americans, to provide with locations for docks, recreation centers, hospitals, aviation fields, hotels, business offices, training camps, railroads and other activities. The greater the influx, the greater the needs of all kinds.

Different business methods prevailed in each of the allied countries, and France had to understand each or try to have the allies understand hers. There is, for example, a long distance between the deliberate methods of France and the do-it-yesterday methods of America. Then there came the problems of recompense to the landholders for all the space used by the allies in their different phases of preparation and work. There were all the problems of ammunition for her own army; and aeroplanes, tanks, and ammunition to make for some of her allies. France has attended to it all, and at the close of the third year of the war was

holding 574 kilometers of the 739 on the western front. It has been a tremendous task, much larger than is always realized, because, once more — France was the battle ground.

Some of the tasks of the women sound simple, perhaps, but consider the situation, more in detail. Have you important business to transact?

Telephone! There are no telephones or perhaps only one, except in large cities and very few there.

Telegraph! Very well, but the station is some distance away, and you will have to show your papers.

Take an auto! Auto? There are no such things except military autos and a few taxis.

Call a taxi then. Certainly, if you can find one within a few blocks, but if you go out of town in a taxi you must get special permission from the police, and his office is not open between twelve and two P.M. Also the allotment of gasoline may not be sufficient for the taxi driver to take you there.

Motor cycle? Have you permission to ride on that out of the city?

Ah, you are thoroughly disgusted and will walk, as it is only a few miles. Very good, but have you your permission to walk outside of town?

Trains are uncertain. War supplies and troops take precedence. Trains may be on time and they may be twelve hours late. Did you register with the police before starting for the station? No ticket otherwise. Sleeper? It is possible, but hardly probable, and will cost you ten dollars a night!

Send a letter? Most certainly, send it — but don't look for an answer. It may take two days to go an eight-hour trip and it may take six weeks.

And even if all permissions are perfectly satisfactory and you have registered with the police and you have your ticket and the way seems perfectly clear, the rules for travel may change over night and nothing you have will be valid. There have been spies to guard against and nothing stays for long as it was.

These were some of the joys of living as a civilian in warring France and they perhaps explain why women's war work was not done in France in the way that it was done in countries farther removed from the recent conflict.

Such a simple matter as calling an organization together by a notice in the weekly or daily paper meets with two difficulties. First there are few if any organizations in smaller cities, and second, only cities of some size have newspapers. These are small, two or four pages at most, because of custom and the present lack of paper. There are no civic organizations, no literary societies, clubs, lodges or orders for adults and children which are found abundantly in the United States. France knows the idea of unity but not the practical application of it. One must understand all these things to understand how France accomplished her work, especially her woman's work.

A cross section of the daily life of Madame France in no way resembles a similar section before the war. Life is

very different for her and for her country. As a nation she has been obliged almost to efface her national life while she fought to retain her nationality. The war found her as a woman with much of the work of her men to do. Six hundred men are gone from just one little city of three thousand.

Her problems included the immediate and numerous needs of her large army, and her civilian population (together nearly one-fifth of her entire population). She had many new situations to handle in the continuous stream of allies of other nationalities, which emptied from their countries into hers. The constant increase of her debt, and the constant decrease in her resources through invasion, destroyed much business, and the shortage in her food supplies, oil, and fuel taxed her ingenuity seemingly to the limit, though had that limit been still farther removed she would have met it in some way. She cannot think her own thoughts, live her own life, follow her own religion alone. She shares them

all with the world which came to help her.

The coming of America lessened many of her problems while it added others. Hospitals and camps are situated near many small villages, and the American spending propensity has added new life to these places. The American Red Cross has been ready with offers of assistance in any line, and requests have been filled for nurses, doctors, a hospital staff, supplies, canteens for refugees, dispensaries, clothing, furniture, use of camions — the essentials most needed in the places most difficult to secure them. This lightened the burdens of Madame France tremendously, and after four years of the hardest work and struggle she began to breathe a bit more easily.

If she had had time to think and prepare she might perhaps have changed her methods in some respects. It is usually easy to see after something has happened, but it is often difficult to look ahead even when there is time for argument and discussion. Whatever she

might have done, the admiration of the world is hers for what she has done and is doing. No task has been too large or too hard for her to undertake, and the tasks have been tremendous and innumerable.

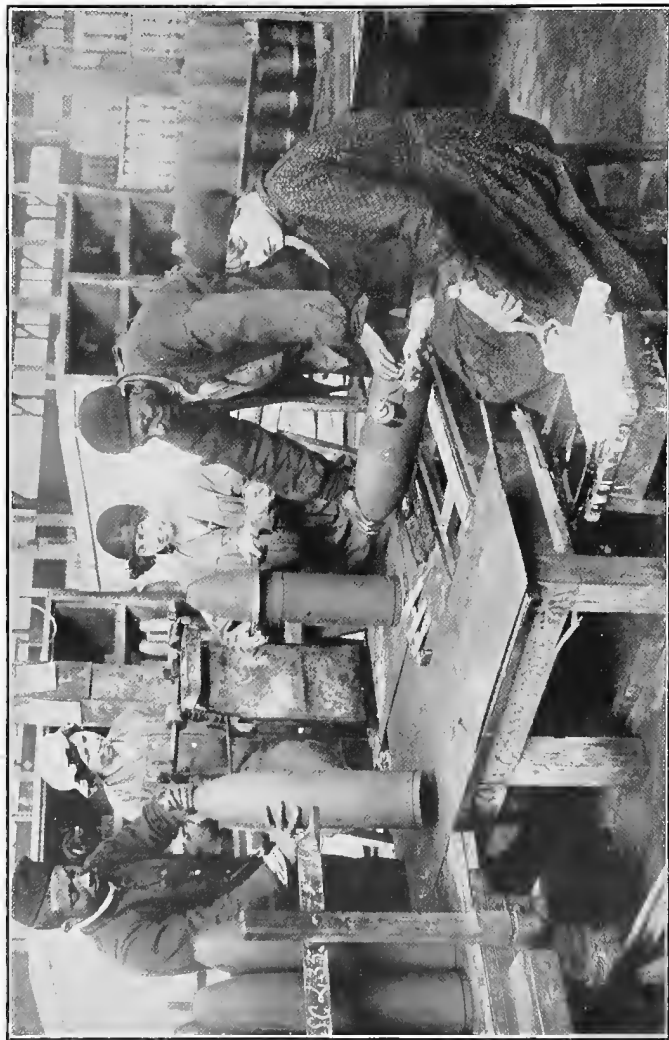
CHAPTER XI

MADAME FRANCE, THE WOMAN

WHAT kind of woman is Madame France? She is not any one kind. In no country are the women all of the same pattern. One finds all kinds in France as elsewhere. All the virtues and all the vices abound and flourish on French soil as on any other. No nation has yet been discovered where both do not exist. It is easy to live a life of morality when no temptations assail. Many virtues are entirely of the negative variety, virtues simply because they are not vices — and when the test of the struggle comes, since no moral muscles have been developed, the virtues tumble. Self-control, unselfishness, sacrifice, generosity cannot be learned in a day. There are many women with these qualities latent and when the real need comes their response is a surprise even to themselves.

The women of France are of all varieties. The war might have been lost the first year if all the women had done as some have done. It might perhaps have ended sooner had all done as some others have done. Many find it difficult to sacrifice when for the first time in their lives, comparative comfort and the craved luxuries are within their grasp. Many think they must have what they like, regardless of the rest of the country. There are many whose tottering remnants of morality fall completely at the thought of money for a new fur collar. There are those also whose ideals of marriage consist of a contract with an officer with good pay, the pay to come to the woman and the officer in question to occupy a dangerous place at the front. There are some with no heart, no mind, no conscience and no soul. But these varieties are not peculiar to France.

Standards of morality are not fixed quantities. France has hers, other countries have theirs. They differ. France is invaded by millions of men of other



The fortunes of war brought strange occupation and stranger companionship.

nationalities with different moral standards, higher and lower.

One of the most immediate needs of France in 1914 was munitions. Into the factories came the men of all shades of color and morals — Mussulmans, Chinese, Sengalese, Moroccans, Algerians, Arabs, with the others, many physically unfit for military service. Into the factories also came the French women and here they have worked side by side with these men, with the same trucks, at the same machines. Perhaps it is superfluous to state that the situation has been difficult and the temptations many.

Elsewhere France has had her trouble. One officer asks for segregated houses near his camp. The next requests the French to remove all such women from the vicinity of his. The attitude of the men in the armies complicates matters still further.

Some men came to France with a reckless spirit of, "Oh well, I am going to get killed anyway, so I might as well have one fling." Some come from the trenches

with the idea that a man ought not to be very particular about what he does after he has lived in that hell for a while. Some become careless when away from home. Some have ideals which cannot stand an ocean voyage. Some have come with the preconceived idea that all French women are gay and painted and lacking in morals, so they look at all French women with that interpretation.

Oftentimes, the real French woman is much puzzled at the insulting manners of her guests and forms quite uncomplimentary ideas of her allies, when she finds some personal ideals do not seem as high as she had fancied they would be.

France has the problem of her refugees. Many have lived with an enemy where all that is worst in human life has been uppermost and it is necessary to reteach many things both to children and adults, since the need for deception has been removed. The scum of the cities from the north has poured into the rest of France and it is not possible in sending refugees to temporary lodgings to dis-

criminate between the moral and the immoral.

This whole question of morality concerns certain elements in France greatly. There was no time to decide before going into battle what the attitude of the country should be toward it, nor how she should and could adjust the matter to suit herself and all of her allies. Single standards of morality do not abound in many countries. France has all the conditions before her from a country representing single standards to a country which practices polygamy.

If all the women of any country wanted a single standard, it would have to be, but neither all the virtues nor all the intelligence have been confined to either half of the human race. Organizations are trying through a systematic plan of education to create a public sentiment favoring a check in the spread of moral disease, at least, if for no other reason than for the welfare of France.

Much care and careful consideration is being spent now upon the children of

France, whether legitimate or illegitimate. They must be given their chance. Homes have been established for the girls who are not bad by nature, but who have been the victims of war conditions, in one way or another. They are helped to help themselves. When France is left alone again after the war is quite over she will be able to handle her own problems of this kind with much less difficulty than she can at present.

French customs regarding marriage differ from those of many other countries. A girl grows into young womanhood with the idea that she is expected to marry. She is not expected to marry without a dot or marriage settlement from her family, nor is she expected to marry without the consent of her parents. It is perhaps natural that with the death of so many young men in France, and with the decline in family fortunes, the French "fortune hunter" has gone forth, especially after the arrival of the young and reputedly wealthy Americans — and her hunting is not always difficult.

Conditions are bringing changes. The Catholic church has made marriage possible in less time than heretofore. France has warned the woman who marries a Mussulman of the polygamous laws of the country to which she will go, so that she may know what she is doing. The dot is sometimes overlooked now.

Madame France has the problem also of restraining some of her over zealous daughters from putting no limit to their charges for commodities. American boys are generous as a lot, and knowing nothing of language, conditions or customs, will pay whatever price is asked, not without grumbling afterwards sometimes. Americans have "so much money," it is so easy to get it from them, they will not know that the regulation price is being broken, could every one resist? It becomes a case of break the law, but don't get caught!

Sometimes the Americans themselves are the cause of law-breaking, when they offer extra money for food "now" even though it is not the time in which food

is permitted to be sold — only an hour early, perhaps, but not the regulation time. France is trying hard to regulate the prices of certain commodities at least, even to closing the little shop if the proprietress fails to conform.

These are the worst sides of Madame France, which can be told in a few paragraphs. To her virtues, and the marvelous work she has accomplished, without ostentation, this little book is a brief testimonial.

The man of any nationality whatsoever, who is refined, a gentleman in every sense of the word, whether highly educated or not, a man who brought his own ideals along and has kept them carefully with him all the time while he helped in the fight for ideals, will find women of just that same type in France. These are the women who take no advantage of his isolation from his own women folk, except to be courteous and friendly. These are the real women of France, who have kept their own ideals through everything, though separated from their own



French girls, and men of many races. The photographer spoke more deeply than he perhaps intended when he labeled this picture, "Mixing high explosives."

men. They have worked with brain or hand, or both; they have sacrificed and endured; they have encouraged the weaker ones to keep on trying; they have given sympathy and courage to the disheartened men, mutilated, disfigured, without funds, or outlook, or family.

These are the women who are taking vacations only when the war is completely over, realizing that war conditions continue long after peace has officially come. These are the women who have lost their own homes without bitterness; their own families without cynicism; women who, after years of comfort and abundance, begin again with nothing; women who have had every luxury and could have them now, but who give of their means and their ability that others may not lack so much.

These are the women who prefer to be considered happy, and carry their sorrows within, while their faces smile. They assume any problems which come their way, with intelligence and determination which means only success, and

they work on untiringly for France and ideals, personal as well as national.

Madame France is such a woman in all classes of society. It is not difficult to find her. All that is necessary is the desire. She is there in large numbers, not on the streets or in the cafés, but working, that a new and yet more glorious France may be wrought from the ruins amid which she stands.

CHAPTER XII

SHE BEGINS TO BUILD ANEW

WHAT will it all mean to Madame France? For more than four years she has lived a life of abnormality and uncertainty. Customs and traditions of centuries have entirely disappeared. She has been obliged to assume so many responsibilities and solve so many problems that her old world is gone. This means not only her physical world, but her mental world as well. So many unusual conditions have arisen, without warning and without precedent, that even her habits of thought have been uprooted.

What will be the result of it all for her? When the war is all over and the peace terms settled, will she go back to the old ways? Will she connect the several ends of customs and obliterate the past four

years? Will she sweep up the débris, mend the broken pieces and go on as though nothing had happened? That is quite impossible, for neither broken cities nor broken hearts are ever quite the same even when mended. They may be better, they may be worse, but they are never the same.

Perhaps it is a fortunate thing that there will be no specific date at which the war, with all that it involves, will be definitely ended. The tremendous strain, mental and physical, under which Madame France has been doing her share in the war has been very gradually lessening since the summer of 1918, when the certainty of victory began to be realized. This tension will continue to dissolve gradually until the time (should such time ever exist) when her help will be no longer needed. Especially since the signing of the armistice has she been able to see with a clearer perspective and to realize wherein she will be an important factor in the life of the nation hereafter.

The women of France have occupied

a most important place in the economic world of their country during the past four years. Many have been independent financially as well as in action for the first time in their lives. Many whose husbands are numbered among the killed or crippled will find it necessary and desirable to continue as the money maker for the family. They have proven themselves able to earn a man's salary by doing a man's work, and this has greatly changed the visions of the future for them.

The war has caused some strange shifts in conditions. The poorest class, which has had nothing, has suddenly found itself possessed of huge wages. This money has not as a rule gone into better homes and better food, better living conditions and permanent investments. This class of women has not learned either to save or to spend. They have simply bought, generally clothes and adornments. The careful middle class, which had good homes, good business, comforts and some luxuries, with the future ap-

parently well assured, after the German invasion was obliged to begin again absolutely at the beginning of the financial world. Business gone, homes destroyed, property confiscated or ruined — there was nothing left but unquenchable courage. But with the inequality in the distribution of wisdom the present conditions will again be reversed, for money does not take care of itself. After the first wild orgy of spending has in turn spent itself, some of the poorer class will have learned something of the value of money aside from its immediate purchasing power. There is a possibility that each of these classes will have more sympathy for the other because of their war experiences.

There will be some discontent among the spendthrifts who have saved nothing, when wages resume an approximate uninflated pre-war basis. This situation brings forth problems and possibilities. Shall this class be left discontented, or shall they be taught economy and thrift? As the war progressed, it became in-

creasingly difficult to obtain food. Prices rose rapidly, but more serious than that, food became more and more scarce. These conditions led to the organization of cooperative societies among factory employees. The purpose of these was to establish various kinds of cafeterias in the different factories where good food could be obtained at moderate prices.

If women remain in the factory world, as they undoubtedly will, these organizations will increase the scope of their usefulness, as they already give evidence of doing. They will institute recreational and educational features as well, such as are now conducted by some factory owners and outside organizations, for these have already proved of the greatest value to the employees.

Some of the cooperative societies organized during the war have had the foresight to plan for after-war days. Some have financed themselves in a small way with what the members could provide, others have borrowed capital. They have done the needed war work, making of

uniforms or other war materials, with the ultimate intention of swinging gradually and without confusion and loss of time into a corresponding peace trade where their talents and equipment can be used. This removes some of the peace adjustment problems from the shoulders of the government and will give the workers experience in cooperation, leadership, and management. Usually the personnel of these societies includes both men and women working the same number of hours for equal pay.

There is another organization among the laboring class of French people, both men and women, and that is the "syndicat" which is in reality a labor union. The future of this is quite uncertain, because of the unusual conditions in France. There have been strikes and threatened strikes during the war period and there will be more of both. It is hardly possible that France alone should escape entirely the influence of Bolshevism and radical socialism. Some of the unions have been quite beneficial in

securing legitimate reforms in working conditions, but are impairing their usefulness by losing sight of "legitimate reforms." Greed for power which became an obsession and a disease in Germany has spread in some form to other countries. The very class of people who opposed warring against this obsession have caught it in a milder form. Many want power, not for the good they may do with it, but to crush others.

Because of the unusual conditions in France, she will be spared a run of this in its worst form. The laboring class in France at present is a very unstable quantity. Many thousands will be returning to their own homes, soon, either in distant lands or in other parts of France, and it takes some time for ideas to permeate a new mass of people. The people of northern France are going to be exceedingly busy for the next few years and will have little time in which to question whether or not they are dissatisfied or unhappy.

Men and women must reestablish

homes, rebuild cities, replant orchards, retill soil. They must equip factories again, and commercial establishments, secure raw materials, reestablish markets. They must open schools, erect churches, repair highways and bridges, railroads, telephones, start anew city governments, restock farms.

In the undevastated sections of the country there are many readjustments to be made, which are even now in the process. There are still the orphans to care for, and the crippled, occupations to provide for the mutilés and the blind, the dismantling of camps and hospitals, and the disposition of materials and workmen. There are also the countless changes to be made in the business world with the return of the men. In fact there are such quantities of things to do that Madame France, if she exhibits in reconstruction days the courage and adaptability of war days, will not fall a victim to radicalism of any description.

France understands herself much better than before the war. Sections of the



The work might vary, from saw mills to munition factories,



but the spirit of determination remained the same.

country have differed very greatly in customs, methods, dialect, and have retained quite strong sectional feelings. France is rather a stay-at-home country, which has meant lack of appreciation and understanding of sections and people farther removed. The many refugees representing all parts of northern France, the thousands of soldiers on permission, or in convalescent hospitals, the many thousands of children for whom to provide homes — all these things and many more have contributed to a better understanding among the people, and especially among the women of France. Their problems are now national rather than sectional and should result in a greater unification of the country.

The life of the peasant women of northern France can never be quite the same and in some ways this will probably be a good thing. As early as the spring of 1918 plans were made and drawings completed for the rebuilding of the destroyed homes. None of the art is to be lost. There is to be no attempt to Americanize

France. The plans call for homes of the same general style as those destroyed, with the advantage of some modern conveniences. They will still be French homes built in accordance with French architecture for French people, with a few extras slipped in, to aid in hygienic and sanitary ways. Four years away from what was, will make her a bit more willing to accept what is, though it is very difficult to separate permanently a French peasant and tradition.

The women of France do not consider the subject of marriage as they did a few years ago. Women of all classes have been obliged to work and have learned thereby economic independence. They rather like it, and the early marriage with its financial settlement does not appeal as it once did. Large numbers of marriage ties which were never deeply fastened have been dissolved by divorce during the war. Women are going to have more to say hereafter about whom they will marry and why. This will be a great rent in French tradition, but it is

inevitable. Since all classes of women have been doing one kind of work or another, there is a greater respect for work of all kinds for women, by women.

The very strict chaperonage customs among the wealthier classes have been broken over and over again during the war, from necessity and expediency. They can never be resumed with all their former rigidity. Any girl who has learned to do things alone will resent assistance, either proffered or enforced. Her little voyages of exploration alone have been too interesting to surrender. And she will experiment more and more — alone. Her part in the war has been too interesting and too much needed, she will insist upon her share of reconstruction work, also.

Suffrage? The vote? Equal rights with men? Of course they are coming, perhaps not immediately but rather soon. They have already been discussed by the government. The suffrage party has in no way handicapped the government during the crisis of the war, surrendering personal desires for the solution of critical

and immediate problems. The French woman has been considered the silent influence of France, and it has been claimed that she exerted more influence over the vote of the men than if she voted herself. However that may have been, the situation is not what it was before the war. Now there are thousands of women with no men folks to influence, but with homes and families and business to manage and protect. These women rather want a voice in the reconstruction of France and the working out of the peace terms. They have proven themselves reliable, efficient, loyal, untiring in work and devotion, in the greatest crisis that France has ever had to face. They know that they can rely upon their men to remember this. Full suffrage would be a commendable collective *croix de guerre* for the women of France in return for heroism displayed the past four and a half years.

Madame France cannot pick up her school books and go on where she was studying when the war began. Those

books must be altered now to fit new conditions and needs. The technical world is already opening for her and she is entering it eagerly. The professional world has opened its door a bit wider and she is going in there. But there is a different world which she has had to enter rather unprepared and where she must continue to work. She has known very little of organized social service and she has had a tremendous amount of it to do, and will have for years ahead. She has been learning cooperation and team-work during these past few years, and all that involves one's obligations to one's neighbor.

There may be no "better baby" contests in France for many years, but the effects of the hygiene exhibitions conducted by the American Red Cross in various cities in France will have its effect upon the mothers of France in their care of their children. More efforts will be exerted to develop a stronger physical France, through scientific living, both in adults and children.

All these changes for Madame France are not coming at once. Indeed some will not be noticeable for years, but they are on the way. It is very difficult to break away from the traditions of hundreds of years. Class distinction, so tightly drawn now, will not give way at once. It is too deep rooted. Peasant life will not change rapidly. It has endured in its present form too long. Many other things will change very slowly, but the change has begun.

Now that the fighting and destruction are ended, Madame France is beginning to build anew. Her allies are gradually leaving, so she can make plans with some assurance of permanency to them, she can consider the number and size of her problems and the manner in which she wants them solved. With her foreign friends still with her she can only work around the edges. There is always the possibility that America in her zeal and willingness to help will unconsciously work to Americanize France. Nothing could be more undesirable. France is France

as a nation, and America is America, and they are quite different in temperament, methods, habits of thought. France without her own background, without her own traditions and ideas, would not be France, nor would it make a good America. As soon as the need for America's assistance is ended, it is greatly to be hoped that she will leave France to her own destiny. She will have given to France the greatest gift she could give to any nation, the American spirit. With that and her own spirit, France will not be the France she once was, but a unified and glorified France, one of the greatest powers among nations in helping spread the gospel of peace as learned through the horrors of the past four years.

