

## "SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE."

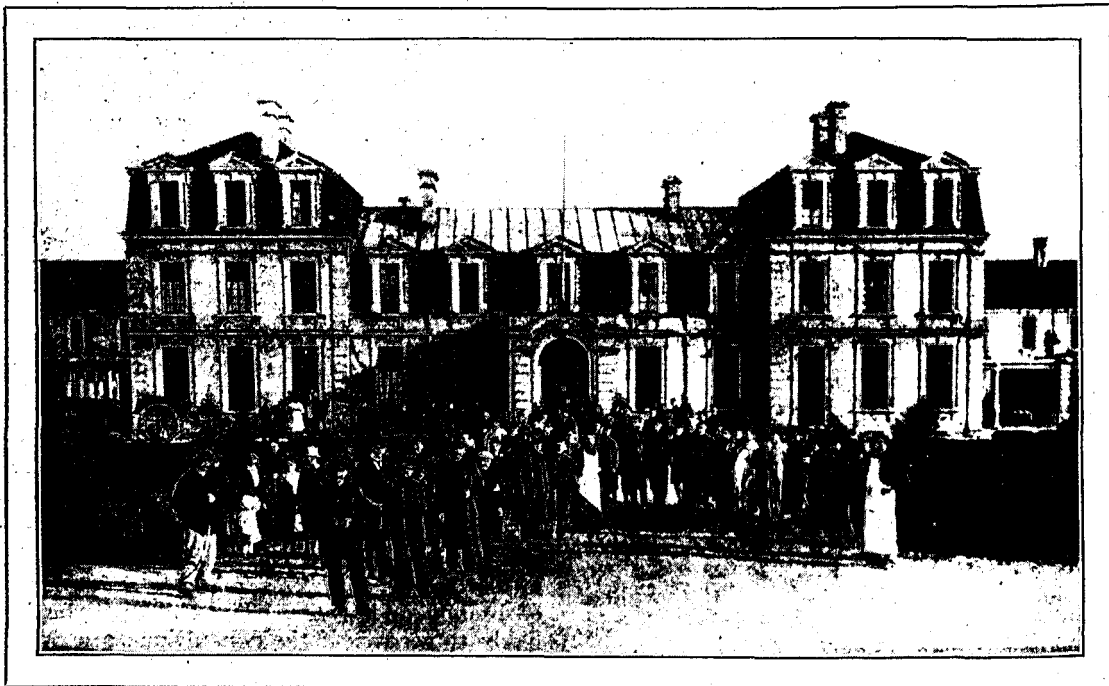
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### TO CAEN.

We fit in the shadow of late afternoon through the beautiful wooded country from Lisieux to Caen, and our first view of *la ville aux clochers* is no surprise. Somewhere perhaps in dreams we have seen those historic spires dominated by St. Pierre pointing heavenwards. Here we are in the very heart of the Conqueror's country, and the twin spires of the Abbaye aux Hommes bring us as close to him as the Tower of London. The former he builded gloriously out of love for Matilda of Flanders, the latter for safety's sake in his slim dealings with the citizens of London. William of

Ouistreham, where French Flag Sisters are nursing wounded, and we pass close by the celebrated Abbaye aux Dames, where in her own foundation of la Trinité, Queen Matilda's tomb, although twice desecrated, is still tended by pious hands, and her dust preserved. We pass the old walls which enclose the Hotel Dieu, part of the Abbey, the park and gardens, where devoted women are busy with works of mercy.

As we turn in at the gates of the hospital where our Sisters are on duty we note the fine situation on which its beautiful pavilions are placed. Spacious grounds surround them, and the administrative block faces lawns and beds of glorious crimson geraniums, the most splendid we have ever seen. To approach the portico we pass the block on the right, and there at the windows on



ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK AND WOUNDED SOLDIERS, CIVIL AND MILITARY HOSPITAL, CAEN.

Normandy loved Caen; it was his dwelling place, the centre of his kingdom which he embellished and made beautiful. It was to Caen—after death at Rouen—that the faithful few brought his body and laid it, but not to rest, in his Church of St. Etienne. We remember how centuries later his tomb was rifled, how his bones, given to a monk, were lost when later the Abbey was sacked, and how his great thigh bone is now all that remains of the mortal remains of William the Conqueror, if we discount his descendants splendidly enthroned and ruling the round world.

It is growing dusk as we come into Caen, but its picturesque streets and churches and Renaissance *hotels* have wonderful charm in the evening light. We are bound for the hospital in the Rue

the second floor are to be seen the smiling faces of British Sisters in their becoming caps and uniform, and fitting away round a corner to the left a little French nun, all smiles and dimples, no less charming in the demure habit of her Order. Religious and lay Sisters together on duty and working harmoniously, from all reports, for the comfort of the sick and wounded. And pray why not? It is but yesterday—in the æons of time—that a King and Queen of England in the year of Conquest commenced to build their magnificent Abbeys in Caen, to placate an irate Archbishop of Rouen, who had excommunicated them for marrying within forbidden limits, and we may surmise that Norman and English were present together on that great day when, in 1077, the

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