

de Quakers qui, sans renoncer à leur attitude traditionnelle à l'égard de la guerre sont venu reconstruire nos villages détruits, et soigner les femmes et les enfants chassés de leur foyer par l'invasion; les cantines créées sur les routes ou s'écoule le flot incessant des combattants et des blessés; la quantité des hôpitaux fondés, recrutés, entre-tenus par nos amis de l'Empire britannique, tout cela forme un tableau auquel l'auteur a su donner la grandeur qui lui appartient. Nous ne souhaitons qu'une chose, et elle est facile à réaliser: c'est que son livre puisse être lu en France comme en Angleterre."

#### THE CALL AND THE ANSWER.

Part I deals with the Call and the Answer, and includes three chapters "The Scene Surveyed," "A Day's Work at the Office of the Comité Britannique," and "British Nurses in France: The French Flag Nursing Corps."

The Scene Surveyed enables us to look down as from an aerial vantage-point upon the regions of Western Europe—upon a world at war.

"That scarred line from Yser to Jura attracts like a magnet; it sucks up like a sponge. All Europe and much more than Europe is conscious of it. Not a hamlet by the Atlantic or the remote Pyrenees—not a village in the British Isles but has a vision of it; and far away in the South Seas and beyond the North Atlantic it is the same. To it men and women are sending, sending, sending. They have sent sons and brothers, lovers and husbands. They have sent arms and ammunitions. They are sending letters and little gifts. Those that have nothing send their thoughts and their fears. Could we use that other vision of the mind, we might see those thoughts, prayers, curses, apprehensions, hopes and passionate desires flying in that one direction like the birds that fill the sky at the time of their migration. But we should see also, pressing thither, streams of embodied human energy—passion and calculation alike translated into active force and absorbed into the momentum of a single will."

Writing of the British workers for the French soldier Mr. Binyon says that when they have returned to their homes in Britain "they will testify to what they have seen and known.

"They will have learnt that Paris is not France, and that the tourist of other days but rarely came into touch with the true French nature, with France herself. They will grow to understand how fine is the texture of human qualities and human resources which underlie French history, French art and civilisation, and which have made the French so great and renowned a people."

Of the British nurses in French hospitals Mr. Binyon writes:—

"Who, that has seen them at work, has not admired their skill, their resource, their patient deftness? They have behind them a hard and splendid training, which ensures that only enthusiasts for the vocation become fully-qualified nurses. Very few had experience of war and the wounds a modern war produces; therefore their

interests were all the more engaged. But it is not only their own work that has been invaluable, it is the training they have given to others less skilled. For under the nurses or sisters work the V.A.D. probationers.

"The V.A.D.s," says a surgeon, "are undoubtedly the surprise. They are splendid, and as probationers under trained nurses in a ward, nothing that I can say is good enough for them."

(We wish the V.A.D.'s were always, or commonly, content with the position of probationers.)

AT THE OFFICE OF THE COMITÉ BRITANNIQUE.

The day's work at the Office of the Comité Britannique, at No. 9, Knightsbridge, S.W., begins "when, at a punctual nine o'clock in the morning, the purple-scarfed Boy Scout, who with so polite a firmness guards the door, lets in the arriving Director-General." From that time onwards its manifold activities are ceaseless.

"Seating ourselves beside the Director-General, and locking unabashed over his shoulder, we get a glimpse of his morning's correspondence. It is comprehensive and formidable."

But first there are some fifty "Ordres de Mission" to be signed, those valuable vouchers which, by a special concession to the Comité, enable its workers to travel free in France.

One touch will amuse trained nurses.

"Two drivers write to ask about their passports, their *fiches* and their *carnets*. The *fiche* is a paper of identification; but I dare not try to explain what the *carnet* is; it is just a little book that gives a great deal of trouble."

We cannot even peep into the many rooms, all hives of industry, in this busy building, but mention must be made of the room on the ground where the President, the Vicomtesse de la Panouse, reigns, who, Mr. Binyon explains, "holds all the threads of the Comité's activities. No one is so intimate with the condition of things in France; no one knows better the real needs of the sick and wounded; and with her large sympathy with the English people, her knowledge of the right persons to do the right things on both sides of the Channel, she has done, and continues to do, inestimable service to the cause of the friendship between the two nations."

#### THE FRENCH FLAG NURSING CORPS.

We congratulate the Sisters of the French Flag Nursing Corps on being accorded the position of honour in the book, the first chapter after that on the office in London being devoted to their work; for although the need of skilled nursing to mitigate the sufferings of the French wounded was obvious in the early days of the war, the assistance offered by this Corps was discounted and discouraged by the War Office and the British Red Cross Society, and it was not until the Director-General and the President of the Comité de Londres, now the Comité Britannique of the French Croix Rouge, recognising the value of the fine work of the Corps in the French Military Hospitals, affiliated it as a department of its own work, that the Corps received the appreciation

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)