

"The Count de Bregade is the owner of these glass works and the village and the forest which joins—rather *did* join, for there are few trees left—the forest of St. Gobain. This was a celebrated place before the war, and the hunting renowned, 'Chasse a Cour.' There are still remaining three deer, it would appear. Some men say they saw them a few days ago. It must have been a charming place—trees and lakes and undulating country. The Aisne has always been mentioned for its quiet and charming beauty, and now. . . .

"The Count remained with his people, and was made prisoner here in his chateau; and here in his chateau Von Kluck had his headquarters. When the people were removed from here in 1916 to another part of the German possessions, about the time that the French advanced, the Germans had *set fire* to the chateau of the Count and *sent him the photograph* of his chateau in flames! What exquisite cruelty!

"The *embalmed body* of the Count's mother was taken from the family vault and the trinkets and rings on her neck and hands were taken, and the body left exposed, not returned to the vault! When the French entered here in the autumn they found the body and placed it again in the vault.

"The Count is a remarkable figure in the history of these parts, much beloved by all; he is goodness itself. From the time he became prisoner with his people until he was liberated some months ago he never had his hair cut—why? no one knows—so that on his liberation he appeared with his hair quite long and tied in perruque fashion. I believe he was most striking. I should fancy him as a picture of the seventeenth century. . . . He comes here every week, and it is sad to see him wander away alone to where once stood his chateau and his beloved trees. The Marquise de Noailles is his niece. He has no children, but he wishes to rebuild his glass works to give work to his people. To realise his courage one should be here to see what he has to undertake. And he is an old man!

"As for a regular scheme of work I cannot yet give any definite idea. It is just beginning. When I tell you that it is *the most advanced* in returning life to all the devastated regions, you can judge that it is a work that asks for time.

"We are living in a wooden hut, *well ventilated* and open to all the moods of a very capricious season—wind, rain, snow, sunshine. But I am

happy, so happy, to be able even to help a little. How could one think of oneself when we look around us at others. I am grateful to you and to the Comité. You have given me the privilege of coming here. I only hope I may be worthy of that trust."

The French Flag Nursing Corps, which was initiated in September, 1914, to provide thoroughly trained British nurses to work in French military hospitals under the authority of the French War Office, is by degrees being demobilised, and only 23 out of the 250 Sisters sent to France are now on duty there, and in a few weeks the beneficent work will probably be at an end.

The medical officers of the Service de Santé express themselves in the most appreciative terms of the work of the Sisters, and invariably mention the first class discipline of the Corps. This is just the praise we, as Hon. Superintendent of the Corps, value most, as without discipline the best work in military service is seldom possible and it means good training and knowledge, and loyalty to those responsible for *esprit de corps*.

As the Sisters are demobilised one and all regret severing their connection with France, and the thrilling experiences in the war zone, together with devoted service at the base appear equally to be regretted. Several of the Sisters are remaining to work in France in civil spheres of activity, and after a rest several others hope to return there.

A Sister writes: "I had very touching experiences just before I left. The boys in each of my wards collected and gave me some lovely Louis XVI silver, a cup and saucer and spoons, as a small souvenir to take to England. I just felt like weeping."

Another Sister says: "Alas! I have said farewell to the most interesting period of my life. Never before have I, a plain and poor person, been able to realise myself. These gentle, brave, unselfish and patriotic patients have called forth their own virtues in those around them. They seem to touch one's soul, somehow. I do hope I don't shrivel up again when they no longer need me." That appears to us a very pathetic paragraph, but we feel sure this little Sister, who really has both a charming face and personality, will continue to grow in grace, we hope in a sympathetic environment.



CROIX DE GUERRE WITH PALME.

Much valued by British Sisters to whom it has been awarded.

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