

OUR FOREIGN LETTER.

"HAIL COLUMBIA!"

DEAR EDITOR,—I have not seen my journal this week, as I have been moving about, but I understand it says that Miss Breay thinks £1,500 easily picked up, but you have not found it to be so. Blessed be America, it *has* been picked up. I told you that Mrs. Breckinridge, Associate Director of Public Health Nursing of the Comité Américaine pour les Régions Dévastées de la France—known for short as "The Cards"—paid a visit to Reims while we were at Verdun. She was very impressed with the value of the work done there, and the calamity that it would be if it were closed down. The next day she saw Mrs. Dike (Commissioner in France) and Miss Anne Morgan (Vice-President) of the Committee's Board of Administration in France; it did not take long for them to "take hold of the problem" as presented by Mrs. Breckinridge, and they have undertaken to finance the Reims work for a year. Isn't it perfectly splendid? Now the people who have come to know and trust the "Dames Anglaises" will still be helped—the chronics who lay in their beds with huge bedsores, but who now have sound backs, thanks to the care bestowed upon them by the English nurses, will not have to go back to the suffering of old, and, more than that, the splendid Public Health Scheme proposed for the city of Reims can be carried out.

I think I told you that all the official doctors of the town sent a petition to the Maire to try to keep the Unit, and this was warmly supported by M. Guichard, Vice-Chairman of the Town Council, and head of all the charitable works in Reims.

The Public Health Scheme, as proposed by the authorities in Reims, is that the town shall provide suitable fuel, lighting, and part attendance in each of the four groupments of baraquements, for two or more nurses, a pharmacy, a baby clinic, and a school clinic, and further, that the nurses shall be in charge from a health point of view of the whole groupment, and report any bad sanitary conditions, and any persons needing help to the Town Council; the nurse in each groupment to be the official representative of the Councillors and to have full power given by them to act on their behalf. The town is also anxious to have a Directrice for this service, and offers her suitable rooms and a chauffeur, in the centre of the town. It seems therefore as if the principal effects of the change will be that Miss du Sautoy will vacate the house provided by the Comité Britannique de la Croix Rouge Française, for quarters provided by the Town of Reims, that the work will be extended, and that the workers will doff their British khaki and don the horizon blue which the American Committee were specially asked by the French authorities to adopt after their work in evacuating the people during the German advance in 1918, as a compliment for the help they then rendered.

I spent two delightful days with the American

Units at Soissons, Coucy-le-Chateau, and Vic-sur-Aisne, and it was while driving from Soissons to Coucy with Mrs. Breckinridge that I said how grievous it was that the work at Reims had to be given up. To my delight she replied "Why, Miss Breay, it won't have to be given up after all," and then she told me that she had sent a long telegram to Miss du Sautoy to say that the American Committee would undertake the financial responsibility for a year. She said that when one considered the preventable deaths of the babies which would take place if the work closed down, it would be murder to allow it to do so.

Anyone who knows the efficiency of Miss du Sautoy, the high qualifications she possesses for the work before her, and the harmony, happiness, enthusiasm, and professional competence of those who work with her, will congratulate the town of Reims on securing their services, and the Unit on having so impressed the Town Council with its work that it is desirous to retain it as an integral part of the Public Health Service of Reims. More than all they will appreciate the swift decision of the American Committee at the eleventh hour, and indeed nearly the twelfth hour, to finance the work when it seemed inevitable that it should close down within a week.

I saw Miss du Sautoy and Lady Hermione-Blackwood in Paris to-day. They have seen Mrs. Dike and Miss Morgan, and the whole thing is "finished to be settled," as they say in Africa. "Hail Columbia!"

MARGARET BREAY.

COMING EVENTS.

October 2nd.—The Scottish Nurses' Club, 205, Bath Street, Glasgow. A Sale of Work. Opened by the President, the Marchioness of Ailsa. 2 p.m.

October 2nd.—Meeting Irish Nurses' Association, 34, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin. 8 p.m.

October 8th.—Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Council Meeting, 431, Oxford Street, London, W. 4.30 p.m.

October 9th.—Royal British Nurses' Association. Lecture on Sleep by Miss Good. In the Chair, Miss Alice Cattell. 10, Orchard Street, Portman Square, W. 3 p.m.

October 11th-15th.—National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland: Annual Meeting and Conference, Victoria Rooms, Bristol.

October 12th.—Flower Day in London in support of the Edith Cavell Homes of Rest for Nurses.

October 12th and following day.—Central Midwives Board for Ireland Examination, Dublin, Belfast, Cork. Particulars from Secretary, 33, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

October 14th.—Central Midwives' Board: Monthly meeting.

October 15th.—General Nursing Council for England and Wales. Meeting. Ministry of Health, Whitehall, S.W. 2 p.m.

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