

would have a nurse to develop it as it deserves to be developed. I have only had Fridays to spend there, but so great has been the response of the people, due largely to the work of the Blerancourt nurse, Mlle. Dumon, before me, that 189 visits, of which 147 were from children, and the balance mostly from expectant mothers, have been paid me at our temporary dispensary on the thirteen Friday mornings I have spent there, while I have been called upon to make 130 visits in the afternoons. Now Mme. Forron, of the Florence Nightingale Training School, is taking over the work as a full-time nurse in residence, the local doctor, with whom we have been co-operating, is engaged for our weekly baby clinic, and a trim little three-roomed dispensary is just built and equipped. Coucy is fully organised in other words, and with its eight shattered villages nestling round its gorgeous old ruin of a mediæval castle, makes a centre as interesting as it is picturesque."

It was in the temporary dispensary that I saw Mrs. Breckinridge at work, and there was not a spare minute. As one patient was disposed of, another came in from the waiting room in quick succession. Expectant and nursing mothers unfolded their troubles and difficulties, babies were weighed, dried milk given to those who needed it, with directions as to how it should be made. Sympathy and encouragement for the elders, and toys for the waiting children to play with, created an atmosphere which could be felt of goodwill and comfort. Those who attended knew that they were welcome, that they were cared for, and, without doubt, they would come again.

Careful records are kept of each one; there is a card index, with a different coloured card, and an exhaustive history in each case, for an expectant mother, a nursling, a young child (2-6 years), and a school child (6-14 years); lastly a card for an adult.

It is interesting to note the French equivalent for the English, "a little of what we have ourselves" (such as tea and red herrings).

The card of the young child is printed at the back as follows:—

"A litre (about a pint and three-quarters) of milk a day is indispensable for a young child. How much does this child drink?

"Wine and coffee debilitate a child. Does he take them?

"Pure water is useful to the health of a child. Does he drink it?

"Is his room ventilated day and night?

"Does he have baths frequently?"

Searching questions and excellent advice.

When we went down to lunch I made acquaintance with Mrs. Seegar, the Directrice (*pro tem.*) Miss Nicholls, Miss Clarke and Mme. de Maurico. The room was charming; just an ordinary barraque, but the walls were coloured to tone in with the cretonnes, the table decorations corresponded, and the countryside provided the lovely flowers.

LES HARCOTS.

It was at lunch that I first heard of "les haricots." One of the most valuable branches of the work of the "Cards" has been to bring to these agricultural districts of devastated France the agricultural implements, the seeds, vegetables, fruit trees, farming implements for the cultivation of the land which it was impossible for the farmers to obtain, even if they had the money. Amongst the gifts received by the Committee was a large consignment from far-away California of "Californian beans." But, unfortunately, they arrived too late for sowing this year. What was to be done? It was doubtful whether they would keep till another spring. Besides, in the meantime, they would form a happy hunting ground for the rats, and there is war to the knife against rats in France. To waste them was not to be thought of, even if the cost of their freight right across the continent of America, and the Atlantic Ocean, had not made them very precious. So the Town Crier was pressed into the service, and went round the neighbourhood proclaiming that at half-past two on the afternoon of Friday, September 17th, the ladies of the American Committee at Coucy-le-Chateau would distribute the beans to those who brought receptacles for them—a large measure for each member of the family.

On the invitation of Miss Clarke, a charming member of the group at Coucy, I went with her to the hut for the distribution. Miss Clarke was a recent arrival; in fact, she had only got her *horizon bleu* uniform the day before and was "absolutely thrilled by it." She had supplied herself with a list of all the families in the neighbourhood, but, as we walked up to the hut, just after two, she said they did not know at all whether anyone would come, the small Californian beans were so different from the large ones to which the French were accustomed. However, she must be ready for them.

Not come! Up the hill they were streaming already, women, children and a few men, carrying bags, sacks, baskets, anything that would hold the beans. "Oh," said Miss Clarke, "I am sorry we are not ready, but I'll have it all systematised in about fifteen minutes." So a trestle table was quickly placed across the entrance to the hut, sacks of beans were placed in position near by, by the boy in attendance. Miss Clarke produced her list, each applicant gave her the name and address of the family, and the number of its members, which were carefully checked, and if necessary revised, I was fully occupied with filling the receptacles they brought with a measure for each, and the boy mainly with filling from the sacks the big pan from which they were served. Amongst the applicants was the Town Crier himself, who received Benjamin's portion, and whose left arm was replaced by a hook. Nothing daunted, he twisted the cord of his sack round the hook, flung the sack over his shoulder, and trudged off with it on his back. I had to leave eventually to see something of the chateau under the guidance of André. It is scarred and battered to a frag-

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