

Amiens, Nov. 18, 1917.

I am so glad to be here doing this little bit of work in France. There is nothing grand and glorious about it - as there is about military work. The weather is usually rather abominable (that is fall and winter weather). The sun almost never shines now. There is often a fog and the cold damp is very penetrating. The last week I have worn my waterproof all the time, but I suspect that is not a very good thing to do, from a hygienic stand point. These poor refugees have been here for varying lengths of time. Sometimes newly arrives and some times for three years. The last spring and summer a great many women and young children were repatriated by the Germans, who keep all the strong men and women as prisoners and send back all the old and weak. The refugee population is rapidly sinking into a state of hopeless poverty and pauperism. People who lived independently and decently are obliged to adopt any and every means to feed and clothe their children. This little old city is crowded and these poor people are crammed into all sorts of dirty holes and corners. That might be all right for a makeshift, but the tragedy is that when they are in, they can't get out, because they can't earn enough to buy furniture - and it is very difficult here to get places to live as there is no building going on. Of course all the strong men are mobilized - but there is one class of people here who are better off than the others.- the class where the husbands are mobilized to work on the railway or other government works and who live here with their families. They earn about 5 francs a day. But they are paying for furnished houses, as they never get ahead enough to buy furniture. You can think what it means to support a family on a dollar a day when food is no cheaper than it is in America. The people are terrified at

the cost of living. But people, who can pay, can have food. I have never been short of food. But before the winter is over we may have to make some sacrifices. Of course we have almost no sugar, and certain other foods are very rare. I was in a food shop the other day and for curiosity priced some cooked pork. It was \$1.30 a pound. We are going to have bread cards. We already have coal cards. There was a bread crisis here last week. I know that the situation was critical. Some people went without. But in our house we had it, owing to the foresight of the lady with whom I live. I know I did not think I ought to have so much bread given me for breakfast (the "petit dejeuner" is served in one's room) and I sent some of it back. Madame sent up three loaves as an optical demonstration that I might eat as much as I liked. The petit dejeuner is only bread and coffee, so of course she thought it was important to eat enough bread, as I am walking all morning. A bread famine would be awful for the poor, as they live almost entirely on bread and vegetables. I often find them making a meal of dry bread alone. The bread is very nourishing, but is rather indigestible. I like it very much. I had a little scrap of white bread to-day for the first time since I left the ship. It came from the soldiers' mess at the British front and was brought from the front by the husband of Mme. Nolgrone, with whom I live. He is home over Sunday on permission. It seems that the English soldiers have white bread.

I think our latitude must be considerably farther north than Massachusetts. I really must look on a map to see. We really have very little day light. The time changed on the 7th of October. I wish they had given us summer time a little longer because it is really quite dark by four o'clock. I generally do clerical work then, because it is very difficult to find one's way in these narrow

old lanes, and the oldest streets are nothing but lanes - and very narrow ones at that. It is awful to go stumbling about in the dark - and not very safe either, when the Red Cross on my coil cannot be seen - though of course one has only to speak and a soldier or any body would instantly become respectful. The streets are unlighted for fear of enemy aeroplanes. I do not mean there are absolutely no lights, but there are very few. The other evening I had to see a soldier, returned to civilian life on account of tuberculosis. He is working during the day, and I could not see him before 6.30. I felt it necessary to get somebody to go with me, even at that hour and you know I am not a "fraidy cat".

Mr. Edward T. Devine of the New York School of Philanthropy paid us a visit recently. Our relief work is under his jurisdiction. He thinks that the greatest good the American Red Cross can do is to start an establishment for selling furniture to these people at a price below cost and payable by instalments. He thinks that if they could get furniture that many of them would move into villages, out of these horrid little rooms.

But I love visiting these people. The French are very delightful in their own homes. There is one family I know of - there are nine living in one room. It is inconceivable. You never dreamed of such a place. Mr. _____ cattle are lodged like kings in comparison. There is usually a little half cleared space in front of the door, and I stand there and talk. "But, Madame", I say, "if you do not keep things more clean, I will not send you milk for the children". She tells me that she would like to move to a better place, and smiles at me so sweetly, and dances her very homely and very dirty baby before my face saying, "Dites bon jour a Mademoiselle", that finally I

succumb and set down on a dirty chair, and take the dirty baby in my lap. And we say how nice it would be if she could find a better place to live - say two rooms, at least with a garret or a cellar - where she could keep the coal and vegetables. And really, you know, Mrs. Chadwick, it isn't exactly easy to keep house really nicely for nine people in one room - to keep all your clothes (not many it's true) and to cook and sleep and live within four walls - especially when you judge it wise also to keep poultry and rabbits there too. This poor lady has a great trouble. Her oldest son is now old enough to work, and to her dismay he has taken a notion to stay away from his home. Sometimes he does not even come home at night. She can't understand it.

The French are called the most polite people on earth. One is pushed about a bit on sidewalks and street cars, and if officials are overworked and busy, one may suffer a little from their nerves; but ordinarily they are very tactful, and it is delightful to be treated so tactfully. If one wants to register a letter one buys a stamp and makes out a form as we do in America. After which one goes to the wicket and tells the clerk that we wish to "recommend" a letter. I suppose the idea is that we "recommend" it to their care.

You would find many picturesque things here. The cathedral is like a vision above all the misery. It of course is in the old part of the town. The old houses are charming to look at from the outside - and there are many interesting things beside - the Algerian troops with red fez (What is the plural of "fez"?) on their heads - the Hindoos with turbans @ the French soldiers on permission still sometimes have their red trousers and blue coats, - I suppose to save their other uniforms. Sometimes one meets a party of British wounded convalescents. They wear a sort of blue washable uniform with red ties. It is very

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attractive.

Women are taking the place of men in many fields. We have many women in the tramways, as conductors and motordrivers. They generally "tres serieuses" and are much nicer than the lads of 17 or so that are also employed. These latter sometimes play and talk so that I am afraid of accidents.

The names of the streets are very interesting. Probably many of them are named after old names that were found on them but ~~xxx~~ others probably have some historical connection. There is the "Street of the Grey Sisters", the "street of the Hat of Violets", the "street of the King's Mill", and "Street of Three Pebbles", the street of the Dead Bodies with^{out} Heads", the "street of the Soldiers Beds" and many others, similar.

Amiens is the town of Jules Verne. I think Peter the Hermit was very active in Amiens in old times. There is a statue of him just east of the Cathedral,- also I believe it was from paintings for the Amiens library that Puir de Chavani~~er~~ got his first great recognition from the people. These are not here now - having been sent to the south for safety. I have not visited the Library or Museum which are rather fine. Like other places of the kind, they are closed during the war; but a French friend of mine knows the concierge - - -

35 rue Bellevue
Amiens, Somme.
Nov. 29.

My dear Mrs. Chadwick:

You invited me to let you know if we were in need of help. If you still wish to do something special, at the sanatorium, for this town (later on, when Christmas is a thing of the past) I can assure you that the poverty is dreadful, and there is much need.

I am acquainted with two hundred families now. There have been six deaths in the families I visit, and every one from tuberculosis (and you know I am not confining myself to tuberculosis work, but work with all forms of sickness and underfeeding)

Some of my families when there is tuberculosis are so poor that they cannot get anything to eat but bread without butter, and coarse vegetables. Of course the government pays something to every refugee - thirty cents a day to all people over seven years of age, and twenty cents a day to children under seven - but that does not buy much where food is as dear or dearer than it is in America. These people have no furniture of course. They either have to pay for rented furniture or go without. I often find very ill, very infectious consumptives in the same bed with two or three other people; the mattresses are made simply coarse canvas stuffed with straw, and bed sores are a common result.

I have one woman patient who is too sick to get well. There is a husband (mobilized to work here) and three children. There was only one single bed for the whole family, for a whole month after I knew them; because I was powerless to get beds. Now there are two other straw mattresses on the floor.

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Dr. Cabot says we must keep pounding at the supply department at Paris.

But they have a gigantic task and we sometimes have to wait for weeks before supplies are doled out to us.

However, a doctor is coming over from Nisle. I am now to work entirely with him. I hope in having a freer hand now to be able to do more effective work.

If the tuberculosis sufferers at Westfield wish to send some help to the poorer sufferers here, I will render them an exact account of the way the money has been spent.

I am working with all forms of sickness of every age; but to my mind tuberculosis gives rise to more misery than anything else. I felt that very keenly in America - and I feel it more here.

I hope you may all be able to put sad things out of your thoughts at Christmas and that you all may have a happy time.

Ever yours faithfully,

Annie S. Rathbone.

35 rue Bellevue
Amiens, Somme,
Jan. 20, 1918.

Dear Mrs. Chadwick:

This is a very precious day - a Sunday off - and I have worked very hard this week and feel I deserve a good rest. I made up my mind first of all to write to my friends - letters that I would enjoy writing. I have wanted to write to you and also to Miss Bailey for a long time. Perhaps you will show her this.

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I cannot tell you how pleased I was to get Dr. Chadwick's photograph, also the one of Maurice and Barbara. Looking at them, I think of the strangeness of the changes that have taken place since I first knew you all.

We are not definitely taken over by the Red Cross yet, but will be the first of February. We have now a Red Cross delegate living here. (Indeed he lives in the same house with me - he and his wife) and he is gradually getting things into shape. I am so thankful. The American doctor is not yet here, but I am now doing work that is most important during the cold weather. I spend the bulk of the time searching out the families of children that really have not enough to eat. I think that is more important (or at least comes before) dispensary work. So I don't care much if he does not come until Spring; though I was so impatient at first for his coming. I have had donations from private friends of my own, and Nenette Sanatorium sent me a lovely gift of \$300. I feel my time well spent in carefully using that.

We have had very bad weather for two months until yesterday. I have seen many kinds of weather but I think this climate in winter is the most depressing I ever knew. But there is one thing that makes it easy to stand. We know that the Germans cannot attempt very much mischief while the weather is bad. We are as you know far back from the front. When the ground was frozen we could hear the guns very distinctly. During the moonlight nights, they were going all night long.

Yesterday was typical of a good day's work. I wish you could have gone with me and seen the various features of life that I did. First case. Sick old woman but dragging around with the housework - feeble old husband, unmarried daughter with baby ten months old. The old lady and little grandson great friends (the other two members of family

were out). The old lady was used to talking to foreigners and talked as the French get used to talking to English soldiers, leading out prepositions, etc. and using a few English words. Speaking for the baby she said, "papa, soldat ecrosse, papa ties bon, apres la guerre papa marry mama, go live ecrosse." I hope it may come true.

Next case, a girl of 19, good-hearted but perhaps a little simple. She has many symptoms of early t.b. contracted I should judge while with the Germans who employed her as a nurse in a hospital for English prisoners. She was then I suppose 17 years old. She felt so sorry for the sick English prisoners that she gave them gradually all her money (she had 200 francs it seems). Then when she got sick herself the Germans repatriated her and her mother. Her mother was so angry at her for giving her money away, that she won't have anything to do with her and has gone to live in another town. I suppose the mother does not realize that she is really sick.

Third case: a tubercular little boy of 9, who hobbles about on his crutches and is always laughing. He is often to be found down on the street (they live away up over a store on a main street). He is a great favorite among the men, especially with the English soldiers. His father is sick with T.B., but manages to work. His mother is a very foolish woman. I can't keep my patience with her.

Fourth case: A very clean, nice woman with 5 children. She had written 6 months ago to the King of Spain for news of her husband, who is a prisoner. She received an answer only last Sunday. She showed it to me. It was sent from the Palace at Madrid by the Secretary of the King and contained a direct message from her husband.

Fifth case: Woman whose husband is in the trenches, and who has three children. She thinks she will put the youngest (3½) in school,

and try to find work for herself. I advised her to wait for 6 weeks till the weather got warmer - to stay home and keep the house (they have 3 little rooms) warm and comfortable for the children and I promised to help a little with food.

Fifth case: Paralyzed old lady without any relatives, lives with strangers, refugees themselves, who are very kind to her.

6th. New baby, father at the front, relative in the same house sick.

7th. Nice woman - tuberculosis - little boy $3\frac{1}{2}$ years infected also. Father is a prisoner and has never seen him.

8th. Young baby, little brother the quaintest little creature - likes always to play with pots and pans. Father is mobilized (garde de ville). It is his work to watch for enemy aeroplanes and to give the alarm immediately by telephone. It was he who first made me hear the guns at the front. He led me outside the city to the fields, but afterwards we could hear them quite plainly when the ground became frozen.

9th. Little boy sick, but greatly improved - father was soldier but returned to civilian life because wounded. He has found a little work that he can do.

10th. Two old ladies wearing white caps, one a widow has a goitre and seems quite ill. The other 73 years, pretty deaf, but the dearest, spryest little thing. She is unmarried, but it seems hard to remember to call her "Mademoiselle". In order to live they have been making earth sacks, which is the poorest paid of any work. They earn each about 10 cents a day (and food is dearer here than in America). This little old lady had to pitch and carry these very heavy bundles of sacks about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. I arranged for them to have groceries and to get some knitting work from our "Oerure".

Well I mustn't write much more. I made sixteen visits in all be-

sides office work, and arranging for distributions. One always sees things to thrill and long lines of French commissaire wagons drawn by horses going to the front - companies of British infantry marching off, kits on back, officers at front and at rear. Yesterday I saw a German officer marching into town, bundle on back, under guard of a British corporal.

I think in many respects you are better informed about the war than I am. I only read the French papers (or practice in the language) and there is not much in them.

Everybody is looking forward to the force of the American nation in the spring. I hope they can get in in time. I am very hopeful.

20 rue Porte Paris,
Amiens,

Mar. 6, 1918.

Permanent address of dispensary.

Very good news. After all these months of waiting Dr. Baldwin came yesterday. I can write to you now in a few days, I hope. I shall not be less busy, but undoubtedly I'll be less racked. For the first time I have something definite to tell.

41 rue Galilee,
Paris,
28 April.

Have had no mail since before leaving Amiens a month ago, and I've no idea where my mail is. I've been at Beauvais for a month running a hospital. Now I'm back in Paris and expect to take up T.B. work; but first I'm to have a good rest. Have been glad that I had the wonderful experience. Some day I'll tell you more. Address Mail Dept. American Red Cross, Paris.

May 13.

Have just started T. B. work, Indeed haven't started, but am at least here. It is an old chateau now used as a sanatorium. Have a long letter half finished, in which I'm trying to tell you a little about our leaving Amiens. Saw Dr. and Mrs. Wyatt at Paris. They have been over all winter with the Rockefeller Foundation. Dr. Wyatt sends a message to Dr. Chadwick to come over to Macedonia - but don't ever let him come to this climate. They send kind regards to you both. Will try to send you better pictures, if they are to be had.

May 29.

Am going to the front to take care of American soldiers. Will not be able to write for a while. Am feeling fine.

June 14.

June 14.

Did not go to front after all, but are with American soldiers in an evacuation hospital just outside of Paris. I sleep in the city. It is a great pleasure to be with the boys, but I am afraid I cannot stay here as a new unit of nurses has just arrived from America for this place. Please excuse me for not writing. The work is too strenuous to allow one time to write. Send regards to all.

Somewhere in France.

Dear Mrs. Chadwick:

This time I cannot exactly say where. It is in a French hospital comparatively near the front. We have French, Americans and Germans to take care of.

I've been temporarily lent to the Service de Santé Militaire. You see there were so many American boys who could not speak French, and yet they have had to go to French hospitals. That made it so hard for them, and also hard for those who were caring for them.

I was for a time taking care of American boys in a large tent hospital outside of Paris. I liked them so much. They are so dear and brave. I asked to have gassed patients. It is the dreadfulest sight one can see - these poor young fellows dying of gas poison. Any one who has once seen it knows that the Germans must be beaten. Such a cruel conception - such fiendish execution. To my mind it is the worst feature of the war, by all odds.

I was on night duty there (as I am now), and I used to

have to go into Paris every day to sleep at the hotel. We used to have air raids at night and shells from Big Bertha by day. It got rather tiresome after a while.

We have had tremendous bombing here. One night they dropped bombs all around us. There were such terrific crashes that I thought the hospital was hit. The glass was broken in our windows. But the hospital wasn't hit. Only some poor cows in the field beside us that lost their lives. The patients who showed most fear were the German prisoners.

I can't write good letters, on account of the censor. Give my love to all. I do want to write some letters to the sanatorium.