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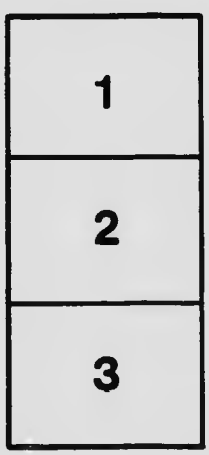

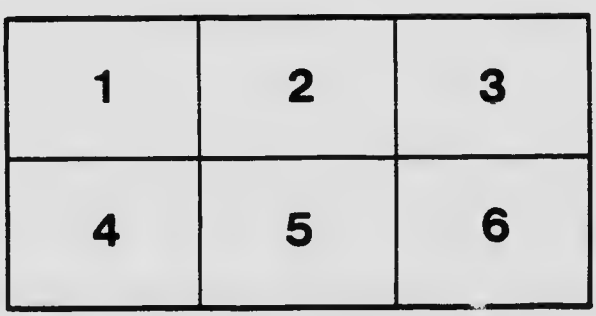

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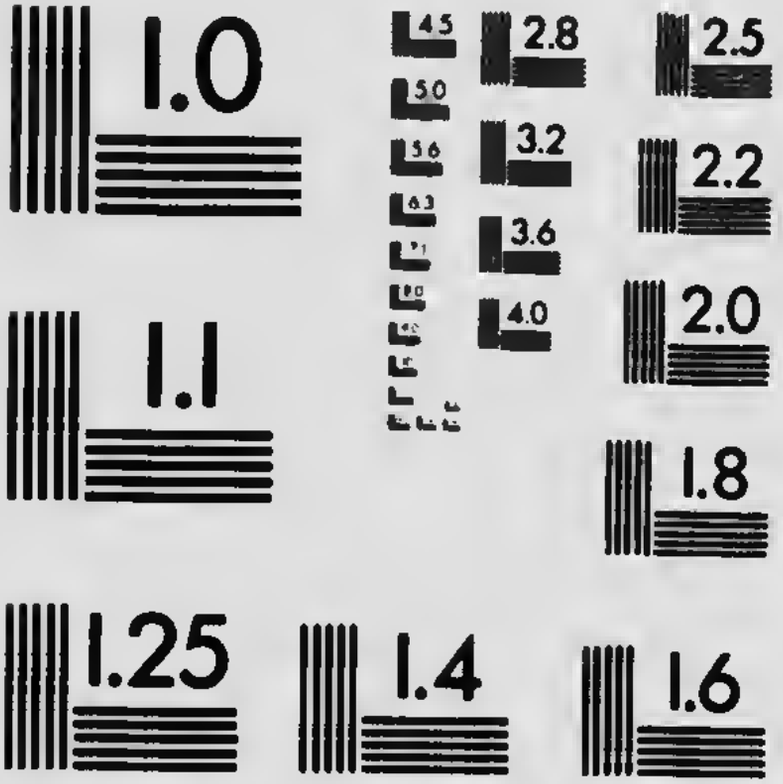

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HOMELESS IN PARIS

Frontispiece

ADA LEIGH
(MRS. TRAVERS LEWIS)
From the painting by Horace Middleton

HOMELESS IN PARIS

THE FOUNDING OF THE "ADA LEIGH" HOMES

BY

MRS. TRAVERS LEWIS

(ADA LEIGH)

WITH FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON:
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN CO.
1920

TO THE
MEMORY
OF MY
PARENTS

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE,
PALL MALL,

27th July, 1920.

DEAR MRS. LEWIS,

I have laid your letter of the 26th instant before Queen Alexandra, and Her Majesty wishes me to express to you her hope that the publication of your book "Homeless in Paris" will be successful.

Her Majesty has known, almost from its inception, the good work which you have carried on for nearly fifty years in connection with the "Ada Leigh" Homes in Paris, and remembers with pleasure her visits to the Homes with His late Majesty King Edward.

Her Majesty fully appreciates all you say regarding the many difficulties with which you have had to contend consequent upon the war, and the necessity of re-establishing the work and putting the Homes in good repair.

Queen Alexandra trusts that your wishes in this respect may be realized, and that your devoted efforts in furthering the good cause to which you have devoted so many years of your life may be crowned with success.

Believe me,
Yours sincerely,
HENRY STREATFIELD.

MRS. TRAVERS LEWIS,
241, KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
NR. RUTLAND GATE, S.W.

LAMBETH PALACE, S.E.,

22nd Sept., 1920.

DEAR MRS. LEWIS,

No one who has opportunity of knowing about the difficulties and the dangers attending the life of young English girls in Paris can fail to realize the value of such work as that which has, for more than forty years, been carried on there under your guidance.

The carelessness, growing sometimes into callousness and even cruelty, which is shown by many who ought to be on their guard against exposing young women to such peril is almost beyond belief.

If your appeal makes people think afresh about what their carelessness may involve it will have done noteworthy service. Your perseverance during so many years entitles you to the thanks of us all.

I am,

Yours very truly,

RANDALL CANTAUR.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

The "God of our Fathers"

Look at the generation of old and see: did any ever trust in the Lord, and was confounded? or did any abide in His fear and was forsaken? or whom did He ever despise who called upon Him?

HOMELESS IN PARIS

CHAPTER I

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

WHO was "Ada Leigh"? Let her speak for herself.

I am the fifth child of a family of twelve. My Father, the late Evan Leigh, traced his descent from old baronial Saxon times, and used to tell his children of the traditions of past centuries, open-house hospitalities, spacious chimney corners with huge fires, and not least the faithful retainers.

He was the fifth of six sons of the late Peter and Mary Leigh of Ashton Mills. This estate had been held for generations, and is still known as Peter Leigh's land. Their sons were fine, robust men, each over six feet.

Their mother was small and beautiful. When visiting her at Ashton Mills, it was a wonder to me to see how her tiny fingers could hold so many rings. She carried a small silver bell at her side from room to room, to which her maid Letty always responded.

Each of my grandparents lived over fourscore years, when the forces of nature gradually faded away, and Peter and Mary Leigh, so long and happily united in life, now rest with their forbears in the Leigh Chapel at Dukinfield.

My Mother was one of a family of seven, the third of five daughters, and the first to marry. Her Father, the late

James Allen, of Macclesfield, belonged to a family who had lived on their estate for generations.

My Father, when he married, had not yet decided his path in life, but he had invented and made with his own hands a beautifully ornamented box for my Mother in which to keep his love-letters. This box is in my possession, and is constructed with such ingenuity that to open it—unless let in to its secret—would defy the efforts of the most curious. Evidently, the power of love begot my Father's first invention, and was an index to his future career.

During their early married life he and my Mother lived on my Grandfather's estate, where my eldest Sister and two Brothers were born.

At the age of twenty-two he invented what is known in Cotton Spinning as "The Coupling of Mules." My Grandfather was so delighted and proud of him that he invited the neighbouring cotton spinners to come and see "What my son Evan has done!" This invention revolutionised the Cotton Spinning of that day, and saved England annually millions sterling. His invention, which produced so great and wide economy in this industry, was quickly copied, but, alas! amid the general *éclat* and congratulations was forgotten to be patented! In telling his children of this invention, my Father spoke of the joy of its conception in the knowledge of having rendered some service to Labour in his day and generation.

Later in life other inventions followed.

My Father and Mother were different types of characters. He was dignified with very winning manners; my Mother stately, courteous, with undoubted powers of command; both of strong sympathies but differently expressed, generous, with an open ear and ready sympathy for suffering.

My Father was very open-handed, almost to a fault; both he and my Mother would support a cause, however unpopular, through a sense of justice. From early childhood, every Sunday afternoon we were gathered round my Mother's bedside in prayer, indeed her prayers for each

child dated ere it was born. After my Mother was nearing her fourscore years, she wrote to me :

" All my prayers are praises now ! "

My Father was very self-restrained and patient, and always upheld my Mother. Each night upon returning home, whoever the strangers were that might be present, my Mother was the first whom he greeted. Indeed, they were lovers to the last. On Sunday afternoon, they would walk together in the grounds, and flowers in my Mother's hand as they returned were of his plucking. In the years spent at home, never do I remember my Father losing his self-command or doing a discourteous action. He truly was THE GENTLEMAN AT HOME.

When some unruly act of ours had to be reported to him, my Father's reproof—expressing his opinion of how differently he had thought of the culprit—gave one the consciousness of having fallen from a height which was in itself a punishment. The least deflection from truth was seriously reprimanded, and was generally referred to my Father, whose attitude towards a prominent and wealthy man, who had proposed to him to assent to a falsified statement, was one of the traditions of the Manchester Exchange—of which my Father was a member for forty years—and where his word was trusted as his bond.

Only once, as child, I very justly aroused my Father's displeasure. He had purchased a costly Atlas, and was explaining it to us, the five eldest (of whom I was the youngest). Being left alone for a few minutes, my idea was to write my name, which was just possible in " Pothook " style, upon the maps of the different countries. When I had succeeded in doing so upon several of these, and was very intent upon my occupation, my Father entered the room unawares. A sharp box on the ears made me look up with indignation to know who had dared touch me ! My Father's look of anger brought a flow of tears. " Don't you see that you have spoiled the Atlas ? " When words could be found, my reply was :

" I was only writing my name upon the countries I want to see ! "

Then his look of anger quickly dissolved to one of compassion.

I was born at Macclesfield, but my first recollections centre upon Red Hall, Audenshaw, where my Sisters were born. This house was one in which Charles II took refuge during some of the stormy periods of his life, and was well adapted to be a place of hiding.

We attended St. Stephen's Church, Guidebridge, where my Sister Bertha was the first child christened.

One of my first Sundays in St. Stephen's Church, being too small to kneel up in the pew, I sat on a hassock, and read attentively the prayer being offered. When it came to the words, " Put down Satan under our feet," my feet gave action to the prayer in lively attestation ! Sundry taps on the shoulder did not stay me, for I thought that the Congregation would surely follow ! It was not until I received a really very angry look from our governess and a severe reminder that I realised myself as the only one so interpreting the prayer—it was my first Litany. When my Mother apologised to our Rector, the Rev. Canon Eagar, D.D., he laughed and said, " She will make a good Churchwoman ! "

My Grandfather often walked to St. Stephen's Church, coming back to Red Hall to dine with us. What awakened my notice in his attendance was that when the collectors came round he would put his hand in his pocket and look aside as he put a handful of silver in the plate. On remarking upon this to our governess, she said, " He does it so that his left hand may not know what his right hand does."

Our parents did not frequent the theatre, but each Christmas took us to see the Pantomime. Upon one of these occasions, when I was about eight years old, the play was " Jack the Giant Killer," and the climax so affected me that my sobs and tears could not be stayed. Our old nurse, Alice, who sat by me, in trying to comfort me, said, " He

was not really killed—only pretending—he will do it again to-morrow." "Only pretending!" Swiftly rose my indignation that my feelings had been tampered with, also amazement that anyone would dare to pretend to die! It was my first and last pantomime—never could I be persuaded to go again. Each succeeding Christmas my Father would say, "No one will be killed this time; it is 'Sinbad the Sailor,'" or other title. But no, it was useless to try to persuade me. All went but myself, I being left alone with the family doll, which could open and shut its eyes, and was only brought out on birthdays. That early impression of having my sympathies played upon by "only pretending" has never faded. Many years after that my next visit to a theatre was up the back stairs to the Théâtre Français in Paris, looking up some of our British ballet girls.

In 1850, we moved to Newton Grange (opposite Phillips Park), which had been a very large house. The tradition was that it was built by a wealthy gentleman who had nine daughters and would not allow any of them to marry. This spacious building was then divided into two good-sized houses. Curiously enough, one part was occupied by the family of the late Rev. Canon Bardsley, who had seven sons and had had one daughter, whereas we rented the other half, and numbered seven daughters and one son! The chief observation made by the mother of the seven sons when calling upon my Mother (and duly impressed upon us) was that the two families should not play together—so we were severely warned off.

Three of my Brothers were born at Newton Grange, and here I met my first great sorrow—or rather, sorrow upon sorrow—in the death of my elder Sisters and a baby Brother, within a few months.

These sudden bereavements left their mark. My Mother always said that I had no "teens," but jumped from twelve to twenty; I ordered my mourning to be made with long skirts and put up my hair (which was then flowing down my back) under the largest tortoise-shell comb that could

be bought. The impression given was that of a solemn, silent girl. Indeed, my life was very solemn, quiet, and studious; also the warning that upon no account was my mother to see me fret, begot in me the habit of self-control and repression of natural feeling—indeed almost impelled me to live my real life in secret. Reflections of the past brought tears shed in a loneliness which was keenly felt, and inspired the determination every night to find some text in my Bible which breathed of sympathy and gave a healing power to the restraint of the day. These verses I would commit to writing, a habit which was continued for many years and proved to be an unspeakable comfort in bringing the Word of God home to my inmost being. Never will the night be forgotten when the words were found :—

"God Himself . . . shall wipe away the tears from off all faces."

The thought that God *Himself* should stoop to wipe away tears which those around me might rebuke for shedding made me weep more freely—kneeling. Music was a great consolation, a wonderful interpreter of sorrow; one's feelings could be freely expressed and not be misunderstood and confidences would not be betrayed. So about six hours a day was spent at harp, guitar, piano, or going to a neighbouring church with my governess to practise the organ twice a week. But as my Father had felt the lack of business training, he was afraid of accomplishments only. So for some months during the change of governesses we attended a commercial school at Ardwick Green as day-scholars. My Father, however, finding me in my bedroom at 2 o'clock in the morning working at algebra, stopped the day-school plan.

During my long stay at home I began to teach in the Sunday-school of St. Oswald's, Collyhurst, and became very interested in my girls, or rather young women, they being (although they did not know it) older than myself. This teaching was greatly blessed to myself: the truths which I sought out for the others were indelibly impressed upon

my memory; the Bible became intensely interesting, indeed a necessity for my every-day life; once, when travelling, being unable to unpack my Bible, I felt a real prop to be lacking.

The late Canon Hugh Stowell, of Christ Church, Salford, prepared me for my Confirmation. Very handsome, of a benign, winning manner, a brilliant speaker, he used to rouse the crowded meetings of Old Free Trade Hall, Manchester, with a strong enthusiasm upon any point. To me he was the embodiment of personal holiness, his goodness being of an inviting type and witnessed to by a saintly life. So many of the good people who came to us were austere, almost repellent—but Canon Hugh Stowell had the power of making goodness lovable and attractive. It was due to his teaching preparatory to my Confirmation (which I attended weekly for six months and a fortnight) that I learned to prove the Church Catechism from the Scriptures in my own hand-writing, which made me a strong Churchwoman. Although there were over two hundred girls in the same class, he saw each one of us privately before our Confirmation and also after our first communion. In later years it was my great privilege to take my two younger Sisters, Bertha and Hettie, to be likewise prepared by him.

Amongst our guests at Newton Grange to whom we were introduced by Mrs. Armstrong Roberts was Riccotti Garibaldi, son of the famous General. My parents, who had been spending that winter in Italy, when General Garibaldi roused his countrymen to the highest pitch of patriotism and self-denial, were intensely interested in his movements, so we heartily welcomed Riccotti whenever he could visit us. When he left England to return to Italy, my Father presented him with his first sword.

Just as Riccotti was leaving, I asked for his signature in my birthday book. The pen and book were there, but no ink, and the time was up. My face must have expressed my disappointment, when Riccotti in a moment—ere he could be stayed—gave a thrust to his wrist with his penknife, at

which I gasped—his blood spurted—he wrote his name with it, and added to his signature—" You made me do this ! " Perhaps it was the first blood he shed.

Two of my younger Sisters and myself went to school at Godesberg-am-Rhein for three years, where we were very happy. We had the best masters from Bonn. Here music again captured not only myself but my Sister Emma. I rose to practise at 5 a.m., but she—not to be outdone—rose at four !

At this school we were under the direct charge of the late Rev. G. G. Gardiner, and attended his church in Bonn ; he came every week to give us religious instruction. He and Mrs. Gardiner were both hospitable and kind.

During the long vacation, our parents came and took us up the Rhine to Heidelberg and other places of interest.

We were just nine English boarders, including Mary Siddons, the grand-daughter of the late Mrs. Sarah Siddons. Years after, when she was herself a famous actress and married, she gave a tea in London to her old fellow-students from Godesberg, to which I was invited but prevented from attending.

When I saw her later, and asked her how they had spent their afternoon, she replied :

" Well, we noticed that we had all turned our talents to something special in life, according to our different abilities. There's Julia, a sculptor ; Nellie, a pianist ; Quita, composing music, etc. ; and here am I, acting ! "

" And, pray, what did they say of me ? " I asked.

" Well," she replied, " when we came to your name, we said, ' There is Ada Leigh in Paris, providing the workhouses to which we shall all come at the last ! ' "

CHAPTER II

AMID VARIOUS ADVENTURES

ALTHOUGH I was for nearly three years absent in Germany, the interest in my Bible Class at Collyhurst was kept alive by occasional letters, and on my return home the Bible Class increased in numbers, although very shortly my Sister Augusta and myself had to leave for Paris, where our parents wished us to finish, as it was called, our education.

One of our friends spoke very highly of a school at Boulogne, saying we could always visit Paris afterwards. But Mrs. Armstrong Roberts, upon hearing of this proposal, discouraged it; tapping my Mother's hand with her fan, she said in a very determined voice, "No. Ada must go to Paris," and so it was arranged.

We were not at a school in Paris, but under the care of the late Mrs. Woolley, who, since her husband's death, had been acting as secretary to the late Richard Cobden, of Free Trade renown, who had been intent upon and had just completed the commercial treaty between England and France.

Mrs. Woolley had a pleasant house surrounded by a garden in the Avenue de Montaigne and an interesting household, occasionally including Mr. and Mrs. Cobden and other agreeable people. Being with Mr. Cobden, we naturally had many opportunities of accepting various invitations to concerts and other places of amusements, and met some of the most talented artistes of the day.

Mr. Cobden received on Sunday afternoons and we were always expected to be present, and were introduced to many

distinguished and eminent people. This, of course, was very interesting; but as my thoughts went back to my Class at Collyhurst—wondering what the girls there would think of my Sunday afternoons—I longed to be with them, if only for the Sundays.

Although we were under the spiritual care of the Rev. G. G. Gardiner, our old friend and chaplain from Bonn, who was then in charge of the Marbœuf Church, we were often taken to hear celebrated French preachers, amongst whom were Messieurs Coquerel, Père and Fils—of whom it was commonly said that the Father sent you to perdition in the morning, but the Son held out salvation in the evening.

Well do I remember the physique of these remarkable men—M. Coquerel Père, severe with his eagle eye and index finger pointing first to one and then to another in the throng (usually men) who hung upon his anathemas. The Son, equally eloquent but more persuasive, touched with the message of Divine love, preached at night to an equal crowd. Still, the services in the chapel of the Rue Taitbout did not inspire worship, but rather attention, as orations. Whilst admiring the eloquence one was not helped.

Some Sunday evenings we went to the Oratoire, the church of so many historic scenes and sacred memories. Wandering up a spiral staircase to the Dome, underneath which the service was held, one found a real " Upper Room " where one could draw " nearer to God."

About this time a lady, who helped Mrs. Woolley, went with me to buy a pair of gloves; not yet having been permitted to purchase for myself, as a matter of course, I waited until she said, " Choose your own gloves." Naturally welcoming this permission and addressing the girl who waited upon me in bad French, to my amazement she replied in English. Seizing the opportunity of a newly-found liberty and wanting to say something good, I asked her " where she went to church on Sundays ? "

"Nowhere," she replied.

"How long have you been in Paris?" was my next question.

"Four years." Seeing my astonishment, she timidly added:

"I did not know there was an English Church or Chapel in Paris."

My heart bounded with the thought, "If I could only have this girl to come and read the Bible with me on Sunday afternoons?"

Directly we returned, seeking Mrs. Woolley and telling her of what was to me a great surprise—of an English girl having been four years in Paris and never been either to a church or chapel—I spoke of my desire to have her come to me on Sunday afternoons to read the Bible. She replied:

"And miss the Reception!—Well, you are an odd girl!" Seeing my intense earnestness, Mrs. Woolley most wisely gave me permission to invite this girl, and allowed me the use of the dining-room on Sunday afternoons and to come in to the Reception later, when tea was served. This arrangement was happily carried into effect. This girl knew of others similarly situated. So during the two winters spent in Paris some twelve or fourteen British and American girls occasionally came, as one told another, and were all invited to attend the church or chapel of which they were members. The American girls had come to Paris to work the Wheeler and Wilcox sewing machine, which the French girls absolutely declined to do—being indignant that they should be asked to work with their hands and feet at the same time!

Mr. Cobden and myself often spent our evenings alone, the rest of our party going to some evening entertainment. Sometimes, after playing one of his favourite sonatas, he would try to explain to me the meaning of Political Economy. He was a very thoughtful and interesting man; one could not look upon him without realising that he was weighted with a great mission.

Curiously it is through the commercial treaty between England and France—which Mr. Cobden helped to materialize—that to-day we are able to hold the properties of our Homes in Paris in perpetuity; and it was my privilege to sit by him whilst he explained some of the problems it involved—little dreaming that years later this treaty would prove such a valuable safeguard and blessing to the cause, the tiny seed of which may be traced in the words spoken to the English girl in the Paris glove shop, *Au Tunnel de Londres*.

Probably, of Mrs. Woolley's party, Miss Emma Novello attracted me most. Her charm of manner, dignified bearing and ceaseless activity impressed me as belonging to one who was seeking to live in earnest.

As, unlike my Sister, I was not interested by the French language, and had never really studied it, Miss Novello advised me to try my hand at painting; so obtaining my parents' permission, instead of spending the time with my French master, Monsieur Charpentier, I became a student at the *atelier* of Monsieur Claude Jacquand, a great historical painter.

Mons. Jacquand was a severe master, and considered it as an insult to his pupil to take either the brush or palette into his hand, or to show what colours to use. His visits were brief and to the point. After making an elaborate sketch, he would obliterate it with a majestic wave of his hand and flip of his handkerchief, with the words, "*Faites encore!*" Another time, when venturing to ask what colours to mix, in a very obviously polite and condescending tone he replied, "*Faites ce que vous voudrez!*" We were left very much to ourselves; some did not continue—indeed, of the students it was the survival of the fittest.

A longing to join Miss Emma Novello at the Louvre possessed me, so, my parents' permission obtained, it was arranged for me to accompany her and try my hand at copying some of the old masters, instead of studying French (the only language I really wanted and never

studied)! The Louvre fascinated me immensely, and my parents were greatly satisfied with the results of my efforts upon my return home.

How to arrange for my Bible Class on leaving Paris after two winters was a matter of great moment. The Rev. G. G. Gardiner knew of no lady to take it. His church in the Rue Marbœuf—originally the church of the British Embassy—was at one end of a very narrow street, with the chaplain's house up many stairs at the top. Mrs. Woolley was interested, but could not be expected to give a room for the class when we were no longer at her house. She advised me to send the names and addresses of the girls to the Chaplain of the English Church in the Rue d'Aguesseau. Having only once been to that church on New Year's Day for the Holy Communion, I wrote to our clergyman at Collyhurst, the Rev. A. B. Clarke, where my Bible Class was held when at home, for a letter of introduction to the Rev. Edward Forbes. I had never had a letter of introduction before, and how to present it was a question. Upon venturing myself, I was most kindly received, and the story of my Bible Class at Mrs. Woolley's was listened to with much sympathy as an effort which had been achieved under great difficulties.

Mrs. Woolley, very thoughtfully, invited the Rev. E. and Mrs. Forbes to dinner so that we might talk over the position. They were really interested and said how greatly such an effort was needed. So before leaving Paris, I gave the names and addresses of the girls attending my Bible Class to the Rev. Edward Forbes, who agreed to find some lady to continue the class. Mrs. Forbes wrote to me as follows:

"229, FAUBOURG ST. HONORÉ

March 7th, 1862.

MY DEAR MISS LEIGH,

I had hoped to have seen you ere this, but shall try to call upon you before you leave. Truly sorry am I

that you are so soon leaving us and very thankful that you have so kindly assisted us.

Though strangers to the place might imagine that it was but a slight matter to collect a few names, I, who know the difficulties of the task, fully appreciate your activity and zeal and thank you most sincerely in my own name and that of Mr. Forbes.

I hope that when you return to Paris, we may have added a few more stones to the work begun by you and that then you may be able to continue the Class you so wished for.

Yours very sincerely,

JULIANA A. FORBES.

MISS LEIGH,
chez Mme. Woolley,
49, Avenue Montaigne,
Paris."

Upon returning home, we broke our journey after a visit to my Aunt in London, and it was my great privilege to meet the late Miss Emma Robarts, a godly, earnest, and refined lady, and to visit her at Barnet. She interested me in her " Prayer Unions for Young Women," which sowed the seed of " The Young Women's Christian Association." After becoming a member myself, I kept up a correspondence with her until she passed to her rest in 1873.

Years after at her request, my card of membership for our girls in Paris was linked with her Y.W.C.A., as a confirmation of her real interest in my work.

Meanwhile the members of my Bible Class at Collyhurst had collected money towards a Class Room for our meetings and had furnished it as a Welcome Home. It is wonderful how their interest had been maintained during my long absences and how each girl tried to introduce another.

Meanwhile the cotton famine broke out in Lancashire. A meeting in Manchester was called by the Mayoress to see what part ladies could take to help. I offered my

services as Honorary Secretary; the late Mrs. F. W. Jardine joined me later. We proposed raising funds to restore the bedding and clothing which had been pawned during this time of stress, and were kept very fully engaged all that year, 1862–3. Thousands of women and children were helped, and the dumb, patient endurance and fortitude of the Lancashire operatives of that day called forth the admiration of all who witnessed their sufferings—calmly borne though prolonged and acute!

Mrs. Forbes wrote me from Paris, saying that they had found no lady to interest herself in the girls whose names and addresses I had given so that nothing was being done, which troubled me much, although it was only possible for me to write of my deep regrets.

Visiting at Collyhurst for our Mothers' Meetings, the Rector's wife, Mrs. Clarke, and myself became aware of the awful conditions of the tenements in which some of the women lived. We were frightened, and dreamed of all kinds of obnoxious things, wondering what could be done to teach the laws of cleanliness and of fresh air.

My Mother had for years subscribed to a Ladies' Sanitary Association in Manchester which published tracts on sanitary matters—all very dry and uninteresting. It seemed to me that what was needed was practical teaching given to the women by one of themselves—a Mission Woman who would go to their homes, sell soap at a very low price, lend and show how to use whitewash brushes, and practically to interest mothers in matters of cleanliness for the sake of their children's complexion. Upon offering my services as Honorary Secretary, I wrote to the Manchester newspapers for help to try one Mission Woman, signing my letter, "A Believer in Woman's Mission to Women."

There was a perfect paragon of cleanliness attending my Collyhurst Class, Mrs. Nichol, and it was proposed to try her. Her work proved so successful that we had soon six Mission Women working in some of the lowest districts in Manchester—our old friend, the late Dr. Grace Calvert,

supplying us with barrels of carbolic powder, soap, etc., and writing to the chief Manchester newspapers in our favour, which helped to make the work known.

Supported by my dear friend, Mrs. Edward Trotter, I accompanied Mrs. Butterfield, the Mission Woman, to introduce her to her district. Armed with sweeties for the children—upon whose features a smile would struggle out of the hard lines with which they appeared to be indented almost from their birth—and disinfectants for ourselves, on turning up the street, we were quickly recognized, each woman calling the attention of her neighbours to us, and the encouraging exclamation fell upon our ears :

" Here's them Nuisance Leddies agin ! "

Whereupon some would disappear as if we were unwelcome apparitions ; others stood in their doorways, arms akimbo, expecting to be asked if they had used the whitewash brushes yet ? The children, however, were not shy and followed us ; it was not the day of chocolate creams, but the " acid and horehound drops " did their " bit " most loyally !

Some of these women may still have dim recollections of the meeting held in a hall near one of the lowest quarters of Manchester, where Mrs. Trotter and myself were duly peppered with disinfectants before mounting the platform. It was a meeting greatly to be remembered and lasted two hours. Mrs. Trotter spoke like one inspired—the subdued sniffling from intent listeners—uneasy expressions which flitted across the hardened faces of unkempt and ragged figures—betokened an awakening other than that of their every-day experience.

Mrs. Butterfield and I tried to lead the singing—the thin, acrid sounds and hoarse efforts to reach a note from voices more accustomed to be heard in imprecations, screams, or some low muttering in language which blushed to be understood impressed us painfully—could any responsible human being fall as low as woman ! Still, there was life—and a faint ripple of awakening—therefore Hope !

Soon after this meeting the information came to my eldest Brother Fred—who was "shocked at our goings-on"—that at one of the thieves' rendezvous in Manchester our names were inscribed as being "likely, if called upon!"

Curiously, about this time a pale, good-looking girl entreated to see me at Newton Grange. She greatly impressed me with their want at home—"if only a loaf of bread could be given!" To such a plea a refusal was not possible; so quickly making my way to the larder I extracted and gave her a good-sized loaf. After her profuse thanks upon accepting it, my fancy seemed to capture a merry twinkle in her eye—so watching her down the drive, after a short distance I beheld the loaf held up over her head and being waved in triumph. Sending our coachman to make inquiries we learned that she had won a bet!

Truly my home life was full of interest, with vistas opening of increasing usefulness, when my Sister Augusta had a slight return of her nervous affection; and my Father, being particularly anxious for her again to have the advice of our old friend, Dr. Matthew A. Castle, under whose treatment she had previously been, wished me to accompany her to Paris and stay with Mrs. Woolley. Later we were to join some friends in Paris and to winter in Rome.

Never was I more unwilling to leave home, being responsible for the salaries of six Mission Women, besides my Bible Class at Collyhurst! It seemed almost impossible, and the wrench too great. However, my Father expressing so decided a wish settled the matter. Attending a farewell garden party, I aroused the sympathy and help of six of my friends, each promising to adopt one of my six "Sanitary Mission Women," and either to pay or collect the forty pounds a year for their salary.

But what of my Bible Class? At that date, the early autumn of 1868, the names of four hundred who had attended since my return from Paris could be counted on the fly-leaves of my Bible as "My Bible Class for Jesus."

Some were married, others passed to a better Home, but there was always a crowded room on Sunday afternoons and Monday evenings.

My Collyhurst girls felt this rupture keenly and presented me with an Album containing their photographs, and also a Church Service.

CHAPTER III

"ONE WHO CARES FOR YOU"

WHEN I mentioned to our family doctor at home the interest which British girls in Paris had awakened in me, he told me that upon the records of the Mansion House in London there would be found a detailed account of six British girls of good family, who were brought from Paris by four French doctors in such a condition that they were only fit to be placed in a lunatic asylum. His words made a deep impression upon me, although at that time it was impossible for me to understand their full meaning.

In the intervening time, since we left Paris in 1862, a lady, the Honourable Mrs. Trotter, hearing of the terrible straits to which many British governesses were reduced in Paris, gave a lady, Miss MacIntosh—a most devout Christian worker whose name is still honoured in Paris by those who knew her—ample means to work amongst and befriend all whom she could find. This must have been about 1865–6.

Upon our arrival in Paris, one of my first calls was upon the Rev. Edward and Mrs. Forbes, who told me that a Mission to English governesses had been started and was then connected with the church in the Rue d'Aguesseau and under the care of a lady who had an apartment above theirs at 229, Faubourg St. Honoré. This work touched the governesses who came—a very limited class—not those who had so greatly interested me, who had yet to be found!

It was well to know of this effort, and that it would not

interfere with my looking up the girls known to me years before and whom I at once sought. Alas! only one could be found, and she had married a French perfume merchant and lived on the Boulevard des Italiens. She told me such sad stories that I could not sleep. The conditions under which our young countrywomen worked could scarcely be believed to-day.

A girl, not wishing to work on Sunday, or desirous of spending her Sundays as she had probably been brought up to do, was not allowed even to remain in her room—this refers to the cases where the girl was sufficiently fortunate to be allowed accommodation on the premises where she was employed.

She had to vacate her room early in the morning until a late hour at night, with no meals in the interval. This threw a young, penniless and friendless girl—with nowhere to go, bewildered, with awakening instincts—open to the subtle influences of the gay boulevards of Paris. With the pulses of life beating full and fresh, having her liberty but often powerless to use it with discretion, so that Sunday—instead of being a day of holy rest and healthful relaxation—became one of temptation. Her very hunger paved a way for the unwary—to how many has the acceptance of a good meal opened the door to a path from which there was no retreat! Her wish to do right led to sundry experiences which she, from her ignorance, was ill-prepared to meet. If, on the other hand, she consented to work on Sunday, at 8 o'clock there was a free pass for the theatre at night—the entrance for women being *libre*.

My heart was greatly stirred by these revelations, as nothing appeared to be attempted to meet their obvious need. Meanwhile the Countess Cowper invited me to her house in the Faubourg St. Honoré, and told me of the difficulties during the previous year, that of the Paris Exposition in 1867, even of finding a room, to which the British girls employed there could have access in their hours of leisure. It seemed that the first practical step was to

provide for Sunday at least one substantial meal—but where?—and how to get the girls?

Meanwhile our friends arrived whom we were to accompany to Rome, and went to an hotel in the Cour des Coches, begging us to join them, which we did, it being both quiet and central. With rooms adjoining, we were a happy party anticipating in different lines of thought our activities in Rome: Marie—dreaming of architecture; Emilie—yearning to see the Catacombs of which she had read; Augusta—to visit studios; whilst the Vatican absorbed Miss Haworth! For myself, with distracting thoughts, I began writing little notes, inviting each girl we could find to come for tea on any day to our hotel, and on Sundays in the early afternoon, when they could be provided with a more substantial meal. Not having the name of a single girl, my notes began "Dear Young Friend," signing myself "One who cares for you." It was the signature which brought the girls—they wanted "to be cared for"—so to devote myself again to girls in Paris seemed to be an open door. I carried many little notes in an envelope, and enquired for the English girls at the shops—taking care never to speak in French, but to speak English so rapidly that nobody but an English girl could understand. Coming down the Rue de Luxembourg one day, I called at a tea and coffee shop, where there was an English girl, who told me she knew of others. As I stepped into the street, two English girls crossed my path; one of whom was just saying in a defiant tone:

"And I don't care what becomes of me!" In a moment my hand was upon her shoulder, and I said most earnestly:

"But I do!"

She looked at me in surprise, and said:

"And who are you?"

Feeling very small and having nothing to say for myself, but giving her one of the little notes out of my pocket, I said, "Come and see me!" She came. Almost her first words were:

" I thought it was very rude of you to talk to me in the street, but on reading your note, seeing that you signed yourself ' One who cares for you,' I recollected that no one had ever cared for me since my mother died "—and bursting into tears, she added—" No one ! "

Emma Douglas was very young when her mother died. Her father was bailiff to some Scottish laird near Aberdeen, and probably thought he was doing the best he could for his child when he let her come alone to Paris at the age of twelve to be apprenticed to a French dressmaker. After serving her time at dressmaking, she was for many years in a good French family as maid, and became engaged to a French dentist. After she had given him all her savings, to prepare for a future home and for an early wedding, he disappeared. Even the silver and watch which the family had given her he took on the pretext of having her initials engraved thereon. Having obtained all he could from the girl he was nowhere to be found. An illness followed. Naturally the family with whom she had been employed, had in the meantime made other arrangements, and although she met with some kindness from English friends in Paris, upon her recovery life had to be faced again —not only under difficulties but with a crushed spirit—which found its expression in the words, " I don't care what becomes of me."

I was grateful for her confidence, and we soon became friends. Seeing how earnest was my desire to look up English-speaking girls, Emma Douglas was a warm and ready helper. Indeed she took me to " garrets " and " cellars " which could never have been found by me and brought me into touch with suffering, patiently borne under circumstances which were little short of tragedies.

My little notes were delivered by myself, and many stairs were climbed—often in vain. In response to my usual query to the concierge, *Je cherche une anglaise*, frequently the reply would be, *Pas ici !* But in cases where one might be found, very often the wrong staircase was

mounted. There were usually four back staircases to each court. It was not the day of the lift! Sometimes thirty visits only found three or four girls. Whenever there was one, a note was left.

Writing to my friend, Mrs. Clarke, of my experiences, she replied, "*On fait de bonnes visites quand on monte l'escalier en priant.*" Truly it needed the courage which only prayer could give, when, upon my venturing up to the entrance of a fashionable establishment, a liveried footman would appear and treat me with deference, asking what department I wished to visit. But in answer to my query, "Is there an English girl here?" on finding that it was only a working apprentice for whom I was inquiring, with an air of sublime dignity he would say, "She might be found at the *ouvroir*," and would close the door with a bow. These occasions had an extinguishing effect, and roused many moments of self-recollection.

Some of my notes had curious histories. One, before the Franco-German War, was left crushed up in the back of a drawer in a lonely bedroom—probably pushed out of sight by some one intending to refer to it again. Four years later the same room was occupied by a timid English girl fresh from home. Frightened by her surroundings, feeling the intensity of her first loneliness, she sat down in despair to realise her position. For want of an occupation after opening the *armoire* and unpacking her belongings, this crumpled note attracted her curiosity, and upon reading it she came to look me up: this letter proved her salvation! Truly when an over-ruling Hand guides, nothing in life is small.

One artist-student (by no means the only one) slept on a shelf in her *atelier*, and was very glad to make her *déjeuner* of the crusts the other girls threw away after cleaning their drawings. Another girl had a tiny room, barely visible on ascending *le grand escalier* of one of the most fashionable milliners in the Rue de la Paix—a tiny keyhole marked the spot where a small, well-hidden door opened, the little room

making the s[illegible]re of the winding circular staircase. One had to let oneself in, and close the door before the folding bed could be spread. The girl who slept here came at the age of sixteen. After an apprenticeship of about two years, she stooped—the freshness of youth was gone! She was not paid during the term of her apprenticeship, and it was a great concession for Madame to let her have this room on her premises. Some—many, were neither lodged nor paid, but received two scanty meals a day. It was pathetic, nay, roused indignation, to note the bloom of youth in these girls from country homes droop day by day and the sickly pallor with hard lines which settled upon their young faces.

In another well-known, fashionable shop, the workroom was underground. All the busy hands here toiled by reflected light in close, vitiated air. One of these highly-advertised firms owned to having one English girl apprentice. Soon after, one of these workers coming from the underground workroom to climb up the winding staircase to the top of the house for her *dejeuner* upon a hot day, fell into a dead faint, and of necessity had to be sent away for a rest. Upon being interviewed, she said, instead of there being only one English girl, there were in that establishment over forty British and American girls. The best-looking of these were dressed up in the newest fashions for the Races, at which many decided their future and did not return! The costumes worn in this manner were well advertised in the fashionable papers.

As my knowledge of the surroundings of these our young countrywomen, increased, so grew the longing to know them personally and to give them a special invitation to come on Sundays. The afternoons at our hotel, especially on Sundays, were a great attraction to the girls, and moreover these little hospitalities helped to break reserve and awaken a feeling of home, and made the girls feel that I wished to be a personal friend to each one. Above all, there was the longing to be of some higher value to them on Sunday, and to win them to a higher life than that which

they were leading during the week, and the thought struck me that to have a Bible Reading for them in church would be the means of bringing them there.

Upon my naming my desire to the Rev. Edward Forbes, he kindly gave me permission to use the upper gallery of his church, between the morning and afternoon services. This arrangement was soon circulated amongst those girls whom I knew, with an invitation to meet me there; so, upon my first Sunday, November 1st, 1868, I awaited the seventeen who had promised most faithfully to come. No one came!—although some turned up for tea at the hotel later with various excuses. On the second Sunday I again sat alone; also the third, although they promised and promised, and on the fourth Sunday the girl who slept in the corner room of the milliner's *grand escalier* in the Rue de la Paix—whom I met as I was returning to our hotel—said she had tried to come before, but could not find the way to the Rue d'Aguesseau. Out of nine Sundays, I sat alone on six. Again turning to the help of Emma Douglas and inquiring the meaning of so many unfulfilled promises, as even she had not come, I learned that they were afraid of being asked to read, that they did not know their Bibles or Prayer Books and could not find their places. This difficulty was soon met, and the average attendance at this class grew from thirty-six to forty-eight during that winter.

One Sunday, when anxiously awaiting some fresh arrivals, leaning over the staircase of the church listening for their coming, I suddenly heard one of them say, "Come along, girls, come along; let's hear what Old Leigh has to say to us!" A moment later, on arriving at the entrance to the gallery, in they came and greeted me with a profound bow, which caused me some confusion!

The winter passed very happily, we dividing the work; the interest increased as we became more acquainted with the girls individually, and scarcely an afternoon passed without guests for tea. Meanwhile it was time to return home. Having over a hundred names in my book, we were

anxious to invite them all to a Soirée, and asked the Rev. Edward Forbes to come and address them on the evening of Easter Monday, March 29th, 1869.

The night was unpropitious, the rain coming down in torrents. Still we counted eighty-nine in our three rooms, which opened one into another. Mr. Forbes spoke to the girls very forcibly from the first words of the twenty-eighth chapter of St. Matthew, which tells of the women seeking Jesus. He was amazed at the number present.

All had departed and we were settling down, each in our own room, having closed the intermediate doors, when about midnight there was a knock on my door. Three young women stood there, strangers by sight, though they might have received one of my little notes or had evidently been told of me. They just said :

" We have nowhere to go, and no money, and we dare not pass through the streets to-night."

These words went to my heart. In they came. They were hungry, but our coffee and cakes had disappeared. One slept on my sofa, another asked for an easy chair, and the third lay down on the rug. In the early morning they had a good breakfast, after which they left. It seemed so little only to give them good advice, and to invite to come again—but, we were so soon leaving !

This revelation of what might so easily happen to British girls in Paris awoke many thoughts—how to meet such cases, how to prevent despair, how to obtain employment for them ? It seemed as if a great organization were needed. Alas ! that we had to return home with so many interests awakened.

Opening my heart to Lady Cowper, she listened intently, and said in her usual sweet and gracious manner :

" Go home ; God will surely find a way."

So it was as great a wrench to go home as it had been to come.

Soon after the Soirée at our hotel, the Rev. E. Forbes called, saying how greatly he had been impressed by the

number of young women who attended it, and wondered how they had been found! His daughter had watched the attendance at our Bible Readings from the vestry and had seen how the upper gallery of the church was full Sunday after Sunday. Asking me if I would not like to return to Paris, he reminded me that when my Bible Class at Mrs. Woolley's was left before no one had been found sufficiently interested to carry it on. He also added with marked earnestness:

"*Now*, if you leave this much wider work, it will scarcely be possible to revive it."

He then reminded me of the notice on the church doors of a "Mission to English Governesses," and said the lady who was in charge was resigning and that a lady with private means was needed to carry on the work.

With a throbbing heart warmed by the crowded attendance at our Soirée, I asked if the taking up of this work would prevent the continuance of our work already begun, and was assured that it would rather forward it, as Mr. Forbes promised still to give me the use of the upper gallery of his church for my Sunday Bible Reading also that I should be quite free to visit my girls. My only wish was to gain my parents' consent, so he offered to write to my Father and said that Mrs. Forbes would write to my Mother. Naturally I also wrote pleading with my parents, and persuaded my Sister Augusta to do the same.

CHAPTER IV

MY FIRST FRANC

LATER in the year 1869, Mrs. and Miss Forbes proposed to visit us at Clarence House, Manchester, and my parents gladly assented, and soon after we had the pleasure of entertaining the Rev. Edward Forbes. As he spoke of the girls in whom I had been so warmly interested, and especially of the Soirée he had attended at our hotel on Easter Monday, my Father listened very attentively as my work had been brought very little before our home circle.

So the last Sunday in October found me again in Paris, in the little apartment over the one occupied by the Rev. E. and Mrs. Forbes.

Here, taking out my own servant, I worked very happily, though finding the double-bedded room a very insufficient accommodation as a home. My Bible Readings were recommenced in the upper gallery of the church and were well attended by the class which had first interested me, and all were invited to my Monthly Soirées, which were crowded.

In May, 1870, my parents wished me join them in London, at the Westminster Palace Hotel; they usually came up in that month for my Father to read papers at the different meetings connected with scientific bodies with which he was associated, and two of us used to accompany them. They found me well, happy, and able to enjoy the change, and naturally asked me to return home with them. Having foreseen this, I had left my chief trunk in Paris, having faithfully promised the girls to return, which I did, and remained until the Franco-Prussian War broke out.

This seemed to put an end to all my efforts, except that of keeping up a correspondence with as many of the girls who could be traced, many of whom had fled from Paris.

Early in 1872, the way seemed to open for me to resume my interest in Paris. I wrote very fully my views to Dr. and Mrs. Forbes, with whom I had kept up an occasional correspondence, as to the need of a real Home to replace the double-bedded room, and also to represent the wider interests of our countrywomen in Paris generally. Mrs. Forbes invited me to come and stay with them in Paris for a few days, which my parents permitted me to do. Later I returned to my old friend Mrs. Woolley, where another of my sisters joined me; she was shortly to be married, and wished part of her trousseau to be made by the British girls known to me in Paris.

It was then proposed to me to write an Appeal to circulate amongst my friends (it is still in my possession), appealing for a "Home" which would cover the wider interest. This was done with so good a result that upon March 29th, 1872, the Rev. Dr. Forbes opened a small "Home" of eight or ten beds at 69, Avenue de Wagram, which to my joy were very quickly filled.

In May my parents again wished me to join them at the Westminster Palace Hotel, and on my return to Paris Dr. Forbes met me at the station and drove me to the Home. As I was getting out of the cab, he said that "I should find some alterations had been deemed advisable"—(words which of course I did not understand); but on entering the Home it struck me there was a chill—very different from the welcome I anticipated. Indeed, the place seemed empty! It was only on going through the rooms that the cause became evident. Instead of the rules agreed upon between Mrs. Forbes and myself, others had been put into every room, under the title of an "English Protestant Governess Home." The inmates were to pay a week in advance, and only to be allowed to stay a fortnight, except at the discretion of the Committee.

A sleepless night for me followed. In the morning, my friend, Madame Des Graz, called, and told me she had been invited to attend a Committee Meeting which had been held at the Home shortly after I left, but she had declined to be present. My amazement can scarcely be imagined, and upon going to see Mrs. Forbes for an explanation, she assured me that " All would be just the same ! "

It was impossible for me to go on, as the limitations expressed in the rules were not consistent with my appeal, in response to which this Home had been opened. Moreover, instead of the crowded Home I had left, there were but two or three dissatisfied governesses. My resignation was decided, and accepted.

As my parents were not expecting me until the end of July, and had received the Rev. Dr., Mrs. and Miss Forbes as friends, it was against my wish to let them know of these difficulties ; so it was proposed for me to remain until the end of July, and do as I liked. But a shadow had fallen over the Home—it was working in fetters. My only consolation was that I left a Home moderately furnished, with the rent paid in advance to the October quarter—instead of the double-bedded [illegible]n l

Naturally my Bible Class became aware of my intention of leaving Paris, and had to be told that the last Sunday in July would be my " farewell." There was genuine sorrow when I said good-bye. Poor Emma Douglas remained, and in the upper gallery of the church in the Rue d'Aguesseau slipped into my hand an envelope upon which was written :

" A Gift of Faith and Love for a Girls' Home in Paris." Inside was a franc (tenpence). With a heavy heart, handing it back to her, I said, " I cannot take it ; my parents would never consent." Looking at me imploringly, she said, " Who has ever cared for us but you, and now you are leaving us ! Do you know that the Roman Catholic girls have been going to Notre Dame de Lorette to pray the Virgin that your heart may be touched to form a Home for

us. Do you wish us to get up a petition ? " No, indeed—my heart was too sore—knowing hov acutely a real Home was needed.

Feeling somewhat of a coward at her earnest words, the thought struck me that my parents might give me permission to come out for another winter and at least begin a Home upon the lines needed to fill a great gap—so I accepted the franc.

The next day, July 28th, 1872, I went to visit a sick governess at a miserable school at Batignolles to say good-bye, and longed to give her just the rest she needed. Walking back through the Rue Cardinet, which was not yet built up (neither was the Avenue de Wagram)—I heard a curious noise, something flapping in the wind. Looking up I saw a sign-board, of which one of the wires was loose, and read upon it *Bel appartement à louer*. Probably the placard would have escaped me but for the noise it made—the thought struck me, why not look at this *Bel appartement?* So entering and speaking to the *concierge*, I was led up the stairs of 77, Avenue de Wagram to the *Bel appartement* which was *au premier*.

It looked out from the windows and the little balcony upon the Arc-de-Triomphe. I went over the rooms. All had been redecorated before the war and now the rents had been considerably reduced. Each *étage* was divided into two *appartements*. Making a calculation that the two *appartements* would accommodate twelve beds, I asked the *concierge* if he would keep them for me until the late autumn, and that I would take both *appartements*. He looked at me inquiringly, and said, " *Je suppose que Madame aura son père et sa mère avec elle?* "

Then I replied, " *Non.*"

" *Ainsi que ses frères et ses sœurs?* "

" *Je ne le crois pas.*"

Looking at me out of the corners of his eyes, he demanded with great seriousness :

" *Peut-être, Madame, va se marier?* "

I answered him with a surprised air, " *Cela n'existe pas.*" Only I was very indignant at his thought.

With a dignified warning to ask no more questions, but to make the necessary arrangements speedily, owing to my immediate departure from Paris, I put a *lc ·-d'or* into his hand. This proved a very effective incentive to silence as well as to loyalty—which he unfailingly showed during the more than twenty years he was in the service of our Homes ; indeed, he and his wife were more than servants—friends !

Naturally, I at once informed the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Forbes of this venture, who said that there was doubtless room for a Home on the lines which my appeal had outlined, and wished me all success.

After the war, friends were not allowed to enter the station to see each other off unless they were travelling. My Sister was already in the carriage, and just as I was joining her some one dashed through the station—the gendarme following her—fell on me sobbing, clutching my shoulders with both hands, saying :

" You are going—all is going ! "

It was poor Emma Douglas who was sobbing aloud with her clutch still on my shoulders. I felt like one arrested—Yes, thank God—I was arrested ; and if ever it were possible to be indifferent to the needs of my young countrywomen in Paris, the sensation of Emma Douglas's grip would be recalled. She laid on me a burden of responsibility which will be borne to my dying day.

The train was going—I was almost too unnerved to mount the carriage—these words came from me to soothe poor Emma Douglas :

" The *appartement* is taken, and a Home will be opened by Christmas ! "

Being surprised afterwards how the words fell unconsciously from my lips, I mounted the carriage, greatly perturbed.

Poor Emma Douglas threw in after me a tiny bouquet of Tom Thumb roses. I had never ' such a gift before,

and each rose seemed to me to represent a life! Indeed, the gift to me was sacred, knowing that the money which it had cost Emma Douglas she had needed for food.

The roses were kept for years—until they became dust. Her little gift was laden with precious thoughts which begat prayer for guidance.

CHAPTER V

A PROBLEM SOLVED

HOW to get back to Paris for Christmas was a problem—it seemed to be impossible. I waited until the wedding had passed off happily, and upon broaching the subject, my Mother said, " Not to think of it "; she and my Father would never consent to such an adventure. Of course, to mention the *appartement* at 77, Avenue de Wagram was impossible, and my Mother's conclusive words were, " Say no more ! "

Evidently my parents saw a great gulf between my doing a work under the roof of the Chaplain and his Wife and one upon which I should have to venture alone ; so my Mother's decisive words apparently closed any further appeal and quieted my voice, though my heart throbbed.

It was not the *appartement*—of which I had signed a lease for three years at 77, Avenue de Wagram at a rental of sixty-four pounds per year—which troubled me, but the effect upon the girls who were expecting me and to whom my return to open the Home had been promised through Emma Douglas—who would lose no opportunity of making her touching " Adieu " to me at the Gare du Nord widely known. My heart in secret rose in rebellion at the thought of my promise to open a Home by Christmas, and of being responsible for an outrage to the faith and love of these girls who had shown me such trust.

After some sleepless nights the thought deepened that I should at least approach my Father and reveal to him that my silence concerning returning to Paris did not mean that my desire was eradicated—nay ; no longer desire, but

resolve! There it was—the definite longing to fill a niche beyond the horizon of home.

After an interlude of outward quiet—but great searchings of heart within—while I was vainly seeking for some unconscious inspiration to bring even the name of Paris to the fore again, my Brother Arthur quite unexpectedly received an invitation from our old friends, Dr. and Mrs. Castle, to visit them in Paris. I fortified myself for a desperate effort, impressed with the absolute necessity of gaining a favourable response from my parents to travel with him, being convinced that the only way for my Mother to relent was for me to win over my Father. So as I sat sitting with him one night after all the family had retired, I pleaded for what was upon my heart in every conceivable light, but my arguments were met with :

" You know what your Mother has said, ' Think no more about it ! ' "

At last, I turned the conversation round to happiness in life, and my Father's consent was won to many of my platitudes. Then—perceiving it was nearing two in the morning, and my Father was wishing me a hurried " good night "—in my desperation I blurted out the words :

" Nothing will make *me* happy, but going to Paris and caring for those girls ! "

My Father was touched, and said very gravely :

" I meet a great many people trying to be happy, yet they are not. If going to Paris for *the winter* will really make you happy, you have *my* permission, but I don't know what your Mother will say ? "

When I appeared the next morning, my Mother expressed her amazement that my Father had given his consent ; so, fearing that it might all come to nothing, with some temerity I asked :

" What is there wrong in my caring for these girls ? "

" Well, my dear," replied my Mother, " nothing is wrong. It is evidently a very good work and one which needs doing, but it should be done by a proper person."

I ventured to ask, " Who is a proper person ? "

My mother's reply was, " A widow, my dear, a widow ! "

Silenced, but not convinced, I urged my Brother Arthur to put in a word for me, seeing that my only hope was to travel with him to Paris. I told him that in the first instance my dear old friend, Mrs. Woolley, would receive me, to whom, with Dr. and Mrs. Castle, my plans were already confided. The thought deepened that something very serious was before me, and my sisters came to the conclusion that my proposed adventure was rather questionable.

Mrs. Arthur Henry Heywood, was my next confidant. I wrote to her of Emma Douglas' " Gift of Faith and Love " (of one franc) for " A Girls' Home in Paris." In a very touching but practical letter, she asked me how the Home would be furnished ? My reply was that I should spend my " franc ! " By return of post she sent me a cheque for a hundred pounds to place beside it, with an invitation from Mr. Heywood and herself to come and stay with them at Elleray, Windermere ; this I gladly accepted, having previously been their guest on several occasions. Here I could speak without restraint of all my hopes and fears, and met with most wise and helpful sympathy ; Mrs. Heywood offering to become my Treasurer and Mr. Heywood my Honorary Secretary for Manchester. Certainly if No. 77, Avenue de Wagram was not born at Elleray, there it was cradled !

These true and staunch friends naturally influenced my parents and secured their reluctant permission.

With the consciousness of having evoked a new atmosphere in the home circle, and broken the family traditions of generations by stepping out into an unknown path impelled by an impulse which it was beyond me to question or explain, I strove to concentrate all my forces upon " This *one* thing I do," and passed the days—silently now that my parents had assented, and to myself solemnly—in the knowledge that I was taking a step beyond recall.

The day came for me to leave home, my Brother Arthur

having already gone to pay a visit at Brighton, was to join me at Newhaven.

The morning broke dull, drear and laden with mystery when the " good-byes and blessings " were spoken as I left Clarence House, accompanied by my Father. It was this last farewell and his affectionate embrace which broke me down.

I looked back as the train rolled out of the station ; he was still waving his hat, and I realized from how close a link of loving care and protection I had willingly separated. Would my relations to him ever be the same after this independent step ?

All the way up to London tears fell unbidden, and upon arriving at my Aunt's, I was not fit to be seen.

For days my face bore the marks of my deep weeping, till the time arrived for me to leave and meet my Brother.

My Aunt sent her maid with me to the station ; she saw me and my hold-all safely in the railway carriage. I dismissed her, and my thoughts naturally wandered back to my home. Was this a mistake ? the impulse which had moved me to leave it a mockery ? To turn back or to go on ? I pictured the home circle, how pleased they would all be to see me return ! My parents would gladly forgive my mistake and welcome me.

Under the impulse of this thought I stepped out of the carriage, dragging out my hold-all—for the home tie was very strong and the wrench from it, which my tears had aggravated, was still fresh and unhealed.

Another thought came—was it a Voice ? " If it be a mistake, *then God knows it and God will never mock me.*"

The wave [illegible] but momentary—yet momentous ! A life's work [illegible] in the balance. Again the echo rebounded :

" *God will never mock me, and He knows all.*"

Breathlessly seizing my hold-all, I sprang back into the carriage, almost as the train moved.

CHAPTER VI

77 AVENUE DE WAGRAM

MY Brother Arthur met me as arranged. His bright cheery words, " Going to Paris at last ! " were a help, as if the victory were already won. Little did he dream of the cost of the battle or how nearly lost !

Our arrival in Paris was greeted by Dr. Castle, who saw me safely under Mrs. Woolley's care ere he claimed my Brother as his guest.

My friend, Mme. Des Graz, offered her help towards buying the furniture for the Home, and for days we spent hours in unfashionable quarters to purchase comfortable beds for weary-footed girls at reasonable prices, which was only possible by her practical help.

Ere leaving home a Manchester friend gave me an introduction to Messrs. Rylands, in whose firm several members of my Collyhurst Bible Class were employed, so all our house-linen, including red and white bed-quilts to make our Home look cheery and give it an English touch, was purchased under the best auspices.

All worked in harmony. I could not but realize that the difficulties which had been anticipated owing to inexperience, had been cleared for me by the One who went before !

The Home could have been opened in October, but was only officially opened by the Rev. Dr. Forbes on December 20th, 1872, as I waited for that special day, which was the first ever set apart for Prayer for Missions, and thus the house was called, " Mission Home for Young English and American Women in Paris." What a time that was for

consecrated thought, watching lest anything should intervene which might prevent a blessing ; and how abundantly all our prayers were answered ! Only they who knew the atmosphere of Paris in that day can appreciate a work so greatly needed for the protection and good of our countrywomen.

The twelve beds were already tenanted. Alas ! ere it was opened the Home was too small. Several had already been refused.

Upon opening my little Home, I knew there must be rules, but my determination was to have none which could not be accepted for myself, nor to ask any question that could not be asked of myself ; to keep no girl waiting outside until she repeated her creed, nor even to ask her creed or her faith in the Unseen for fear of not being told the truth.

The impressions of the different characters with whom I was brought into contact during the day were my study at night—people of whom one had only read seemed to become real ! living personalities who might be helped in so many ways.

Generally the latest arrivals were invited to sit near me during prayers, which all were invited to attend. One night found me praying between a Jewess and a Roman Catholic—the one repeating her Jewish devotions, and the other her Ave Marias. Upon rising, and seeing each one alone, my question was : Would it not be better if when we all knelt together to " Our Father " who gives us all things and therefore is called " ours " we joined in the One Prayer, and when alone in their rooms each one repeated her own prayer ? This simple suggestion of " Our Father " gave the unity of thought for which I longed. Also, when taking our prayers from the Bible, we repeated the fifty-first and other Psalms kneeling.

At night, having felt the loneliness of having no one to say " good night " to me, I went around to each in her bed to see if she were comfortable and tucked her up ! Some

smiled at this attention, others burst into tears, several took my hand and pressed it to their lips.

As the Home grew larger this became impossible—then the arrangement was to have the latest comer sleep in the room next to mine, to enable me to obtain some personal knowledge of her. One night, as I tucked the latest arrival in her bed, she burst into tears. Fearing lest her feelings were hurt, I asked, Was she comfortable? Could anything more be done for her? The reply was:

"No, I have never been cared for like this before!"

In the early morning, about two o'clock, I heard a continued sobbing. Going again to her room and offering my help if there was anything to be done, she said:

"Oh, I am not unhappy; it is like Heaven to be cared for like this."

My reply was, "If you think so much of the little I have done for you, you must think a great deal of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done."

"Jesus Christ?" she repeated, "I know nothing of Him!"

"Come to me in the morning, and I will give you a Book that will tell you all about our Lord Jesus Christ."

So in the morning Rebecca received a New Testament, which she simply devoured. In the early morning she was up close to the window before dawn, reading it. Several times during the day she came to me to ask,

"Is this true? But did He really cleanse the leper, raise the dead and give sight to the blind?"

Needless to say, she was soon baptized into the faith she had accepted.

At the Home the housekeeping difficulties were great, the apartments being destitute of either gas or water. Indeed all water (save the *eau de Seine*, which had to be pumped up in the yard) had to be bought by the pail within the circumscribed hours of 8 to 10 a.m. It required some calculation to decide upon the necessary requirements for a Home which had many calls upon it of hospitality, as

THE MOTHER HOME

77, AVENUE DE WAGRAM

well as much patience to have to re-pass continually numerous pails of water, waiting their turn to be used, down a very narrow passage, especially when the household grew to one of thirty-six. However, these inconveniences were usually borne as humorous incidents.

It may readily be imagined that my inexperience of life led to many mistakes—to learn that things were not always what they seemed, and that what appeared to be true could not always bear investigation, were hard lessons and often costly. Then the loneliness of my life was at times oppressive, yet indeed a great blessing in disguise. It often brought me to my knees to unburden my heart to the only One who knew it all before.

One of my most serious anxieties occurred one night when two of the girls came down from the next *étage*, saying:

"We don't know what to do with Miss S. She appears to have been drinking!"

Returning with them, I found Miss S. (a very clever, able-bodied woman) wandering about the passage in a highly excited state. She—indignant that I had been called on the scene—struck one of the girls, to whom I apologised, expressing the hope that she was not hurt. She replied:

"Oh, don't mind me—my father drinks!"

Never having witnessed such a scene in my life and scarcely knowing what to do, my thought was to take Miss S. to my own room, So taking her by the hand, I said, "Come with me!" She was speechless. On arrival in my room, I made her lie down, and she was soon in a deep sleep.

Wondering what the next scene might bring forth and what was the right thing to do, I spent my night near to her, sitting in a chair, somewhat stunned by this unlooked-for experience. When she was sobering down and lying on the bed in the morning partly awake, I knelt and prayed by her side. She sobbed aloud, having evidently expected reproaches, and the tears flowed. Soon she recovered a

little and was able to rise ; she knelt by my side, and we prayed together. Parting from me in a truly sober state of mind, she said :

" Never again ! "

Later, when the Home increased, she took the post of housekeeper and was well worthy of my confidence, bringing her accounts to me every night. When I had to leave, according to my promise to my parents (my Father having written in July that he did not know " what kind of weather we had in Paris, but that the winter had passed in England," thus reminding me that my leave in Paris " for the winter " had expired), and was preparing to return home, my most touching farewell was with Miss S. Indeed, she was the last one to whom I spoke. Scalding tears fell on my hand, as she pressed it to her lips, saying :

" You saved me that night ; God has taken away the love of drink from my heart, and He will keep me true to you ! "

I left the Home in charge of Mrs. Harwood (one of the Mildmay Deaconesses), who soon wrote to me that poor Miss S. seemed to pine away and was evidently in a rapid decline. Until her strength quite failed she did her housekeeping accounts, and on the last day she was able to write them out, left her purse to be given to me. With her failing breath she kept calling out for me, and upon being told that my return in time was not possible, she muttered :

" Tell her I kept true, and tell her I loved her ! "

Such was her message before becoming unconscious. This was the first death in our Home at 77, Avenue de Wagram.

Thanks to the many experiences of the first year, 1872–3, at 77, Avenue de Wagram, there was no time to feel lonely, although I was working alone. Indeed volumes might be written to describe my awakening to the varied needs of the friendless and, alas, too often helpless position of my countrywomen in Paris. Frequently bewildered in my own mind as different facts dawned upon me, what impressed

me deeply and with sadness was the cruelty of Fashion and its power! The hideous alternative which faced the young apprentice who dared not complain but must obey or walk out. Then the fascination to the uninitiated of the foreign language and manner, especially to those for whom a pure French accent meant success in their career—at what a cost acquired! Who thought of the cost and who dared draw the veil that hid the terrible realities which faced the young and inexperienced?

One, quite a girl in her teens, whose clothes were detained at some hotel, and she herself locked out, because she did not have money to pay for a night's lodging, had given the last franc to some agent to put her name on the books, afterwards being told that it being the dead season, nothing could be found for some months. Having so deposited her last franc, she innocently asked for it to be returned, as there was no possibility of work for three months; the reply being that the franc was charged for writing the name on their books and could not be refunded! She, bewildered, perceiving the mark of luxury on every side, with "no room in the world around her for such an item as herself!" as she expressed it to me, especially when "every door appeared to be closed against her," at once went to the river and sprang in! Mercifully, she was saved by some fishermen and brought to me; her nearest relatives were in South Africa.

Another, also quite a girl, handsome and well educated, with some means, intending to perfect her Parisian accent, put up for the night (knowing of no other place) at what appeared to be, and indeed was, a respectable second-class hotel. Never having slept out of England before, so suspecting nothing unusual, she was awakened by an ominous thud and a groan

Startled out of her senses in the middle of the night by the scuffle of feet which followed, she dared not open her door—though trembling with fright and conscious of a tragedy—to inquire the cause, but heard the next morning that

behind the thin partition which sheltered her from her neighbour was a desperate man whose soul had entered Eternity unbidden.

A few weeks after the opening of our Home, in the early and cold morning, my bell rang. I went to the door; there was a poor gentlewoman who had called on me previously, to ask if I could find her pupils for Latin, or sell her embroidery (which she did very beautifully) of Priests' vestments. Having paid two francs every night for her room at her hotel in a little street leading out of the Avenue de Wagram, one night, not having the money after a hard day's struggle, she passed the bureau without paying and crept up to her room. Soon after midnight a knock at her door:

"Quel qu'un n'a pas payé sa chambre. Est-ce que c'est vous?"

Truly she had not paid and confessed it. The door was opened, she was summoned to rise out of her bed and, evidently not having the money to give, was turned out into the street—this in the early morning! Not knowing what to do or where to go, the snow lying thick on the ground, she walked up and down to keep herself warm, fearing that if she sat too long on one of the benches she might fall asleep. Once she sheltered in an unfinished building but she was quickly searched out by a gendarme and had to move on. Whilst telling her story, this poor thing was literally starving and chilled to numbness. Truly powers of endurance had woven indelible lines on her face.

"Why did you not come to me at once from the hotel?" was my query.

"Ah, Miss Leigh," was the reply. "I thought if I were seen entering your Home at such an early hour in the morning it might give it a bad name, because you know your Home has a reputation to keep, so I walked up and down until it was later."

In a few minutes she was tucked up in my warm bed. Alas! there was no food to offer her; the little three-

cornered cupboard in the wall was used as our housekeeper's store, our food being only brought in from day to day, and naturally the demands of the day had left it bare.

The accomplishments of this lady were to teach Latin and embroidery—on this, in spite of her perseverance, she starved; and yet in happier days, indeed for many years, she had sat at the head of her Uncle's table, and administered his charities with a liberal hand, he being a prominent member of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, well-known for his benevolence. At his death she was homeless.

Another case was that of an American young woman, who had had her fare paid across the Atlantic to suit the convenience of some family and to render them service *en voyage*. They, like herself, lacked knowledge of French. Finding themselves isolated from being unable to express their wants, they did not ask her to accompany them to the south of France, but left her with a sixty franc note to find a place for herself. Coming to an end of her slender resources, not knowing a word of the language, bewildered at the position in which she found herself, she called upon one of the friends of the lady who brought her over, who lived in a spacious hotel in the Avenue Kléber and asked for the lady by name.

The polite footman admitted her to a seat in the entrance-hall, but, on inquiring, found the family were preparing to leave for the Opera, so asked her to call again. She pleaded for only one word with the lady, but having given his message there was nothing for the well-trained servant to do but to open the door and bow her out.

Where to go—hungry and penniless—the gaiety of a south-western boulevard contrasts mocking her loneliness—she plunged down to the river from the bridge near to the Cour de la Reine but fortunately was rescued by a boatman, and an American gentleman who had witnessed the scene, brought her to our Home and left her with our *concierge*.

Upon my asking her, "What made you do that?"

" Ah ! " she moaned, " It was not that I wished to die, but that I did not know how to live ! "

She knelt at our prayers, and when the others rose was still on her knees. On touching her head it fell back—there was a pool of blood on the chair.

" Has she attempted her life again ? " was my thought, and quickly sent for our honorary physician, Dr. Bishop, who eased our alarm, saying what had frightened us was owing to the shock of her plunge into the cold river and want of food. For days she lay between life and death and refused to see the American clergyman, the Rev. J. P. Morgan, D.D. She allowed me to pray with her, although affirming her belief that there was no God.

One night, four children whom we had rescued from being " Models " began of their own accord to sing—one would not have been surprised had they attempted some low ditty ! but to our astonishment they sang hymns—correctly and in parts. This woman listened : They were singing, " I came to Jesus as I was."

" Listen ! " she said. " Let them come and sing to me ! "

Delighted, the children were brought in and we went out. They sang and sang until she slept. It was my turn to watch by her that night ; she seemed to be dozing, and then spoke in her sleep. I bent to listen, she was repeating the words which the children had sung :

I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad ;

" Why "—she started up, repeating ' Weary, worn, and sad '—" that's me, that's me ! " Gazing at me she asked the question :

" Tell me, what did He do, what did He do ? Fill it up, fill it up ! " So I filled up the verse which tells what our Lord Jesus Christ does for the weary, worn, and sad.

She paused—and I prayed. By and by, with that searching look which dying people give, she asked :

" Is that true ? "

" It is true," was my reply.

" Did you ever go to Jesus, did He give you rest ? "

" He did."

" Then," she said, in a voice full of meaning, " do you mind my coming very close to you ? It would be easier to go to Jesus with one who has once been to Him, than to go to Him all alone ! "

It was one of the most solemn nights of my life ; the morning was just breaking, and here was this weary soul entering into rest.

When I inquired from these children who had been rescued from such surroundings, where they learnt their hymns, they told us :

" We were taught them at the Ragged School in Gray's Inn Road, by some young men."

These young men did their work well, for the children sang very correctly, and were used by the Providence of God, in a way of His ordering, to accomplish that which we had been powerless to perform.

Perhaps it is not too late for some of them to learn the result of their teaching which our Lord so distinctly owned and blessed ?

CHAPTER VII

HOW THE FRANC BORE FRUIT

WORK and responsibility seemed to increase on every side. One day, when out visiting girls, I learned that no fewer than seventeen had called on me, only to find me not there!

I wrote to my friend, the Rev. C. D. Marston, asking if he could not find a young lady to come and help me; he and Lord Radstock arranged with Miss Caroline Ord Moon to join me before Christmas, 1873. The evening of her arrival I was steeped in work, and listening to stories each sadder than the last. Then a young lady entered, looking so bright and beautiful, that I wondered what could be done for her. In answer to my query, she said:

"I am Miss Moon." Delighted—it seemed my burden had already been lessened—I arose and embraced her.

What Miss Moon was to the work during the nineteen years in which she took charge, returning for a vacation to her own home for three or four months each year, Eternity alone will reveal! Her calm judgment, sense of justice, grace and dignity, and charm of manner, united to unswerving loyalty, made her a very attractive personality.

The Home of twelve beds had grown into one of twenty-four, and then into one of thirty-six. It would be difficult to realize what it meant to feed and care for thirty-six daily where the accommodation was barely fitted for twelve. Each meal had to be served three times, as in the small dining-room it was impossible to seat more than twelve. As we were without gas innumerable lamps had to be trimmed each day; all water had to be bought by the pail

in limited hours—during critical times we were often found without! Along a narrow passage one had to shield one's skirts against the fifteen or eighteen pails of water needed for that day on the way to the little kitchen (about the size of a good-sized table), where perpetual motion was practised in the smallest possible *fourneau*. The lack of the conveniences of life at 77, Avenue de Wagram called for unwearying patience—indeed language fails to describe the difficulties, which increased as the Home grew larger. A lady presided at all the meals; this had a wonderful effect in controlling the conversation and behaviour of the girls, amongst whom the unity was remarkable; religious discussions amongst themselves were discouraged, as there were many too ardent for their own particular creed.

My next worker at the close of 1874 was Miss Amy Gurney, whose gift of shorthand as well as languages was most valuable to me in my heavy correspondence.

In a short time, however, her love of work, and the swiftness with which she accomplished it—which were quite beyond my power of control—outran her strength and compelled her return, though for many years she remained our Honorary Secretary in London and occasionally helps us still. Miss Gurney is now the only survivor of my first lady helpers.

Meanwhile my Father wrote to the Rev. Dr. Forbes, asking him now that the Home which he had given me leave to start was established:

"To find some lady to carry on the work which would still have his support, but that he and my Mother did not wish quite to lose their Daughter Ada and feared that her enthusiasm for her self-imposed work might lead to her absorption in it."

Dr. Forbes gave me this letter, which, as he remarked, "honours both you and your parents," with his reply assuring my parents that their "Daughter Ada was doing nothing of which they would not fully approve," and begging for the work of the Home, which was now settling

down under good auspices, not to be disturbed. So my permission to remain was again lengthened, Dr. Forbes giving me my Father's reply to read, to which I exclaimed:

"Why, fire and water could not stop me!"

I wrote again to the Rev. C. D. Marston, of the work that was being done. He replied:

"You are being blessed—never move from a place of blessing."

Difficulties, however, increased, chiefly from lack of accommodation. Girls arrived at different hours, each expecting to be admitted. Alas! we were more than full and were being watched!

"Is this a fraud?" asked one indignantly upon being refused admittance.

Another, who had walked eight miles clad with the scanty remains of her clothing, absolutely penniless, standing with her back to the wall, refused to move: "Every one told me to go to Miss Leigh, and now I've come." Another (now married to a Baron) was content for several nights with pillows for a mattress laid on the floor of a narrow passage, "Where I can at least rest and know where I am."

Our perplexities were deepened when our faithful *concierge* told me that he had only just prevented my being arrested on suspicion of being connected with some forgers of bank-notes, who were supposed to be women aliens.

Upon my surprise as to what in my conduct had given rise to such an idea, he reminded me that about eleven every night when my little lamp with a green shade was lit, some one watched me across the Avenue, when I was seen with my head bending intently upon some mysterious object!—and the light still burned until the early hours of the morning. He assured the Inspector who called "that Madame was only writing letters after a busy day, which were given him to post in the morning." In truth, there was no other quiet time in which to write or to reflect upon

the many events, some tragic, some ludicrous, which had happened during the day.

The Inspector was told that " Madame l'Anglaise " did a work of *bienfaisance* for her countrywomen, and this led to the admission that there were thirty-six beds when the number should have been twenty-four, also a number of girls who crowded the stairs daily ! This brought a warning that such efforts among foreigners in rented *appartements* were contrary to Law ; and only upon our *concierge's* assurances that " *Nous étions très respectables et comme il faut* " were we left with the warning that upon no account were we to exceed the existing thirty-six beds. For some time the watching continued and our visitors were counted in and out, with the warning that only three days' notice would be allowed for us to quit. Murmurs also reached me from six or seven other *locataires* in the same building, who objected to the constant meeting of " *les étrangères sur les escaliers*."

To this was added the burden of refusing many applicants, and on looking over my books, to my sorrow I learned that in about sixteen months 118 girls had been refused. Then came the awakening which gave birth to an irrevocable decision. One day four were told that there was no room ! As usual, to each I gave a card with the address of our Home and rooms in the Faubourg St. Honoré, where we gave our free dinner on Sundays—a pencil-mark underlined the hour when these girls would find me there. Not one came —but three or four days later a gendarme did, bringing one of my little pink cards damp and discoloured with the pencil-mark still legible, and asked what information could be given. Too well, alas ! the pencil-mark was recognized, but not the name of the girl, as that afternoon four cards had been given away. The gendarme then explained that this card had been taken from the pocket of the dress of a girl whose body had been found in the river ! To identify her was impossible !

The agony of self-reproach which pierced me and the

bitterness of my helplessness cannot be described. How could I go on and keep refusing these girls, especially when the gendarme remarked that " many of the bodies found in the river were those of English girls." The idea seized me, " Why not purchase the house ? "

My first thought was to consult our kind friend and solicitor to the British Embassy, R. O. Maugham, Esq., who remarked in his usual terse way, upon my rehearsing the various grievances which were gathering round us :

" Just what I expected ! Why don't you purchase the property ? The English possess nothing here. Find out if you can buy—and be free."

Then Dr. Bishop was told ; he was most sympathetic and encouraging. I conferred with the late Mr. John Arthur, who proved himself a loyal and true friend to our Association up to his latest day, and fought for us against overcharges by *entrepreneurs ;* he offered his services.

Upon making the inquiry it appeared that not less than £10,000 would be needed to pay for and convey the purchase. A voice within me questioned :

" If this work be God's, is ten thousand pounds too much for Him to give ? " And my rejoinder was :

" If the work be not God's, let it come to nothing."

My resolve was taken.

Later, I went to London to confer with the Rev. C. D. Marston, who gave me my first drawing-room meeting in London, and told me he had had a curt message from Lady Lyndhurst, wishing to see " Miss Ada Leigh without delay."

Naturally I hastened, and was most kindly received. She asked :

" Pray, what are you doing in Paris ? "

" Looking after English girls."

" Have you a home of your own ? "

" Yes, I have."

" Parents living ? "

" Yes."

"Then," said her ladyship, rising, "go back to them. Paris is no place for you."

Leaving, bewildered, I wondered why she was so interested.

A short time after, the Rev. C. D. Marston again summoned me to go and see her ladyship, which I did, with mixed feelings.

"Are you returning to your own home?" was the first query.

She was tall and commanding; it required a little courage to say, "I am not."

"And why?"

"Because I believe God has given me a work to do in Paris."

She appeared to be touched. After a pause, during which it was difficult to know whether to stop or to leave, she said, "I cannot help you much, but I shall ask my niece, the Baroness Alphonse de Rothschild, to be your friend." And with a "God bless you!" she put a cheque into my hand. This was my introduction to a loyal and most generous friend.

One of my little "notes" of 1868, signed "One who cares for you," has still a tale to tell. I was sent for by a dying girl, who gazing at me, said:

"Do you remember giving me a note, inviting me to your Bible Reading and hotel? I heard you had formed a Home for us, but knew it was not for me. I hate Christian people."

The hectic flush on the cheek deepened.

"Yes, hate them!"

"Why?"

"Because they build fine institutions for us when we are lost. Who will build one to prevent our being so?"

This poor girl was living, or rather dying, upon her pledged clothing—rent, everything was due—and there she lay, a helpless wreck! All that could be done was done. Nurse Newman was in constant attendance, but it was evident that the sands of time were speeding—the great

matter was to bring the sense of Divine Love to this starved soul! For some days she lingered. Upon my asking:

"What more can I do for you?"

"Let me die on something of yours," she muttered; "the pillow upon which your own head rests."

It was brought. We raised her; she turned and pressed the pillow to her lips before burying her face upon it. Again she was raised and pointed to the only One Who could truly give rest and the light of His Presence as one passed through the shadows of death. Never shall I forget the smile which seemed to tell me—as we commended her soul to the One Who alone knew and could efface her past—that she had found her Saviour.

Alas! her poor body had no Christian burial—in vain was my appeal to the Clergy, since no name could be given to the dead—nor could I even tell her creed!

We, Nurse Newman and myself, were the only mourners. We strewed the nameless pauper's coffin with flowers and —knelt.

The revelation of this case intensified my resolve and impelled the purchase of 77, Avenue de Wagram.

Had a doubt arisen in my mind as to the wisdom of making this venture, it was crowded out by the pressing needs of each day, followed by the burden of helplessness at night, with a yearning for "What-might-have-been."

Acting upon my resolve to go forward, *coûte que coûte*, I called a meeting of the chief gentlemen in Paris. In those days ladies did not count in business matters, indeed were scarcely expected to do anything! More than once had the typical and proper young gentlewoman been quoted to me—"that her name should only appear in public papers when she was born, married, and departed." So Mrs. Forbes, Miss Moon, and myself were the only ladies present; the Rev. Dr. Forbes being a willing chairman for a "strictly business meeting."

Naturally my difficulties were first expressed. I was

warmly supported by our honorary physician, Dr. Bishop, and my views met with general acceptation. Mr. John Arthur, who was present, spoke of the well-dressed English governesses calling at his office upon their arrival in Paris for advice, which was readily given; later, not looking so bright, looking shabbier than ever when they called, then—disappearing! He offered his services for the purchase of the property, which he said he would take care to arrange for under the best auspices. Considering the position of the house and the arrangement of the different *étages*, which could so easily be worked into separate homes, he thought it difficult to find a more suitable property.

So, three resolutions were passed.

The first: The absolute necessity of such a Home.

The second: That the price asked was very moderate, and the house most suitable.

The third and last being: "That Miss Ada Leigh shall alone be responsible for the ten thousand pounds"—signed by the Chairman, Edward Forbes, on the 28th of July, 1874.

The agent, after naming a day to meet the French *notaire*, Monsieur Durand, of 64, Faubourg St. Honoré, asked which of the gentlemen would accompany me to witness my signature for the purchase?

No one replied.

I thought from the ready sympathy with which my statements as to the acute need of this Home had been received, that from a sense of chivalry there would be almost a dispute as to who should come with me. So when the question was repeated and there was still a dead silence, the words dropped from me:

"I shall go alone."

So the 11th of August, 1874, saw me alone at the *notaire's* office meeting the vendors.

It will always be a matter of surprise that my signature was accepted to pay that large amount within nine months without the question being raised:

"Who will find the money for the purchase if this lady can't?"

Not a question was raised—for myself, my heart was too full of thankfulness that the property at 77, Avenue de Wagram was legally secured by my signature as a Home for our young women in perpetuity!

Directly I had signed the deed agreeing to the various clauses, the notaire and vendors rose and congratulated me as "*Madame la propriétaire.*" Receiving their congratulations with as much dignity as I could assume, and making *mes adieux*, I left with a joyous sense that my great object had been accomplished—to be free to carry out the necessities of our Home and daily increasing work.

As I toiled up the Faubourg St. Honoré alone to the Home under a broiling sun, one thought filled my mind:

GOD WILL DO GREAT THINGS FOR US.

Yes and HE DID! The whole of the ten thousand pounds was gathered six weeks before it was due!

This accounts for the white marble tablet over the entrance of 77, Avenue de Wagram:

"ASKED OF GOD, 11TH OF AUGUST, 1874."

"GIVEN OF GOD, 5TH MAY, 1875."

That the girls might realize that this Home was God's Gift, the text was added:

"SURELY THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE."

CHAPTER VIII

MY FIRST £10,000

SOON after signing my name for the purchase of the Home, whilst waiting in the Place Pigalle for an omnibus which did not run very often, to fill up the spare moments I went to the nearest house and asked:

"Were any English girls there?"

"*Mais oui, Madame, il y a une au sixième qui va mourir.*"

In a moment I was bounding up the stairs. There in the attic, where one could scarcely stand upright, lay the wreck of a girl in the last stage of consumption, with little clothing and very scant bedding, the only visible sign of food being a crushed egg-shell and a dry crust of bread. Soon making friends, I asked if she would come with me NOW and be cared for. The sick girl looked as though one spoke in a dream, while the tears slowly gathered.

Calling up the *concierge*, all that was due was soon paid up, also the price of the blanket to cover her; we lifted her into a cab and she drove with me to 77, Avenue de Wagram.

Dr. Bishop was sent for, and said her case was hopeless.

Her story was that through a step-mother she had left home for a situation in Paris, but her health had failed. Upon my telling her that I was going to England, she pleaded to be taken that she might have her father's forgiveness.

We left, after several vain efforts in which she nearly collapsed. At the station, one of the porters who had watched her said she would not be allowed to make the journey to England in that condition. Upon my insistence to be allowed to pass, saying how grave the necessity was, he advised my taking a ticket for a nearer station and

keeping the one for England, and then having passed the barrier to get into the train for Dieppe. I followed his counsel, and at Dieppe she was carried on board and was mercifully revived by the sea air in the crossing to Newhaven.

As she lay motionless in the carriage to London my thoughts were busy reflecting upon the numbers of our young countrywomen who left their families and home through some hasty word or (very likely) well-deserved reproof. Was it a sign of the times? And how few seemed to come to Paris with a definite purpose!

Then, how often was the surname dropped and a fancy name assumed. This certainly was encouraged for those who spoke English in the shops. Her English name probably was unpronounceable, and to adopt the name of a flower (Marguerite, Lillie, Myosotis, Mignonette, Tulip, Rose, etc.), was conceived to be more poetic.

Alas! when from lack of nourishment or other unforeseen circumstance the "English Miss" was taken ill and sent to the hospital, who remembered her real name? How many have never been traced whose illnesses ended fatally!

In the matter of this sick girl there was no concealment; and, in one of the wonderful weavings of an overruling Providence, when I made her case known at one of my meetings, a young lady came forward to claim relationship to her and offered not only her services as a volunteer, but to pay for her board in one of our Homes, where she toiled with devotion for years.

Upon arriving in London the girl asked to go to her Aunt, and I drove her there; but she thought it better for me to leave her at the door, and after a night's rest she would go to her Father—a man in good business with a flourishing shop in Fleet Street. Being anxious for news of her I drove the next day to the Aunt's, who told me that she had left to see her Father and would not return there. Indeed, she had "no accommodation for sick people!" Going on to her Father's shop in Fleet Street, and finding him, I asked if he had seen his daughter.

"My Daughter!" he exclaimed with indignation. "My Daughter! If you mean that wreck of a woman who has just been here, I don't recognize her as my Daughter!"

Looking earnestly at him, I said:

"All she wanted from you was your forgiveness—as you have dealt with her God will with you."

Inquiring of one of the men in the shop where she had gone, he said "to an old school friend," and gave me the address in the Strand. Taking a hansom and arriving there first, I inquired if she had been there. The friend was upstairs. As I was there, this poor thing tottered in. I held back, wishing to see how the friends of other days met. After saying how ill she was, that her Father refused to speak to her, and that she only wanted a place to die in—her life was nearly spent—her friend, though affectionate and kind, said:

"But you could not die here!"

Sinking on a chair she said in a tone which still rings in my ears:

"Only Jesus is left to me now!"

Truly no one else cared to claim her.

Almost carrying her down, we lifted her into the cab, wrapped in the eiderdown and the pillow with which she had travelled from the Home. We drove from hospital to hospital—apparently dying cases were not eagerly accepted—until remembering a friendly Doctor at Guy's, we drove there and he admitted her. Her life was fast ebbing out. It was impossible for me to remain as my Aunt with whom I was staying in London already wondered at my strange conduct, mysterious delays, and telegrams deferring my return home.

Such an unanticipated experience of broken reeds begat the longing to come into touch with Eternal Strength. So the next day found me attending the noonday Prayer Meeting of the Y.M.C.A. in Aldersgate Street. Not many were present, but the refreshment was real; some left early to attend the funeral of one who had been an eminent supporter.

As I was gathering up my thoughts so as not to lose their

gains, one gentleman, ere he left, asked me as to the welfare of my Homes in Paris; briefly I said that we wanted ten thousand pounds.

"Then," he replied, "you will never get it. I have been asking for a far less sum, and can't get anything out of people!"

His words stunned me. "What a comment after a Prayer Meeting" was my first thought!

A lady present, who had overheard, noticed my confusion, so asked me to tell her some of the details of our Homes, of which she had never heard, and taking a note-book from her pocket, wrote them down, saying:

"Money I can't give, but perhaps my pen will help you!"

This was my introduction to Miss Anne Beale, whose articles in *The Sunday at Home* and *The Leisure Hour* were of the greatest value, and Miss Beale came herself to see the Homes and so wrote verified statements. To the last she remained our staunch friend.

When my Father met me upon my arrival in Manchester, naturally some explanation was expected of my telegrams and delays.

Realizing that a surprise awaited them in my purchase of the Home, it was a relief to have my Father alone, to enjoy his loving care after the bleakness of my Paris experiences; to hear myself called by my own name again was in itself both a rest and strength.

When his inquiries about the Home began, the conviction that the critical moment had arrived inspired me to tell him of my dying girl who had journeyed with me, and her Father's hard words in dealing with her, also of my anxious drive in London ere gaining a resting-place for her to lay her weary head in peace for the few hours in which the sands of time were hastening her to Eternity. Truly she was homeless!

As my Father listened attentively the tears gathered in his eyes, and I ended my story by saying:

"And I have purchased the House for ten thousand

pounds ! " and something made me add, " And we must pay it in nine months ! "

My Father looked as if he read me, and asked :

" And have you made yourself personally responsible for that amount ? "

" I have."

" And how do you think you will get all that money ? "

Very simply I replied, " I don't know ! "

My Father never said I had done wrong ; still, to my mind, he looked a little grave when he asked me to accompany him the next day to join the family at the sea-side.

This was declined with a feeling of responsibility, as I wanted a quiet time to think out my Father's serious words, " all that money ! " So the next morning, Saturday, he left and I was thankful to be alone, repeating to myself mentally, " All that money "—and not quite nine months in which to find it !

Once alone, as I thought over my friends, Mrs. Edward Hardcastle, the wife of the member for Salford, appeared to come uppermost as one likely to help me—so, to the other end of Manchester (Prestwick Park) I drove, and was most fortunate in finding her at home and alone. Mrs. Hardcastle was delighted to listen to my story, saying I had done quite right, and expressed herself charmed with my earnestness to do something for girls !

Inquiring how she would advise me to begin my begging, she suggested I should write a paper (*then* to have spoken in public would have been a shock), and ask some gentleman to read it at a meeting in the Town Hall, Manchester ; also, to write letters to the chief newspapers in Manchester, which I did. The editors gave me capital leaders, putting forth the urgency of our needs in Paris for the establishment of a permanent Home for our country women who went there, either to acquire some advantage or to fill some position for their livelihood, etc. Also she proposed my asking the Bishop of Manchester (Dr. Fraser) to preside. Upon this Mrs. Hardcastle laid great stress.

Realizing that this was a practical suggestion, full of the thought I drove away; turning out of the Park gates just as Mr. Hardcastle drove in, I stopped to tell him what we had decided upon, and begged him to put in a good word for me to the Bishop, which he readily promised, saying it was a capital move!

A few more remarks brought out the fact of my personal responsibility.

"And have you actually signed for that amount?" asked Mr. Hardcastle.

As to my mind it was the proper thing to have done, perhaps my reply was a little too jubilant:

"I have . . . and it is to be paid within nine months."

He shook his head rather gravely, saying, "A good thing that you are not a child of mine!"—so rather sobered but not convinced, I drove back to Clarence House, thankful to be at home and alone!

My Mother returned with my Father the following Tuesday. How thankful I was to have secured the interest and sympathy of Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle, and also of old friends of my family, Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Jackson, of Basford House, Whalley Range. That I looked well and in good spirits showed that this ten thousand pounds did not overwhelm me.

My paper was read before a well-filled room by the late Mr. John Thompson, of 37, Todd Street, Manchester. The appeal sounded poor to me, after my very vivid experiences, and as not doing justice to the great cause which they had inspired of acquiring the building of 77, Avenue de Wagram as a Home for our young countrywomen which could never be taken from them, in fact in perpetuity!

When good Bishop Fraser arose, his first words in his deep and manly tones were a query—which query, looking round the room, he repeated:

"*Pauvre, jeune, seule, à Paris—que deviendra-t-elle?*"

After a short speech the Bishop very practically sent round the subscription list. One of my friends gave £500,

another £200, until over £1800 was promised, when the paper was returned to the Bishop. He looked at it, then at the audience, remarking that there was a great deal of wealth in that room—more than was usual at such meetings—and he was hoping that knowing Miss Ada Leigh, and why she had made herself responsible for that large amount, they would allow her to leave the room with the whole amount subscribed; so he could scarcely accept that paper as representative of the meeting, and must send it round again—the result being that Manchester friends were responsible for over £3400! (My thought was, what a capital Chairman the Bishop is—if he could only come to all my meetings!)

Mrs. William Miller gave me my first meeting at Brighton, over £500 being gathered in the room. The Rev. C. D. Marston my first in London, and acted as Treasurer. My second meeting was given in Grosvenor Gardens by the Rev. G. H. Wilkinson, later Primus of Scotland, and to the last a staunch friend.

A widow lady and her daughter at Nottingham gave me their first meeting; each invitation was carried to save postage and that with prayer—the result being that over £200 was collected from people of very modest means, of whom some subscribed annually. So my friends were not idle, but helped me greatly in obtaining meetings, and the money flowed in from many quarters. Certainly I worked hard, and was full of hope, finding how little people realized the conditions under which "French *was* acquired in Paris."

Meanwhile the first payment of one-third of the purchase money became due on Monday, November 9th, 1874. It was necessary that the cheque should leave London on a Friday to be in time for the payment at noon in Paris the following Monday. Upon arriving at Mr. Marston's house with the cheque ready for him to sign, I found that he had been called away most unexpectedly and that his return was uncertain. I waited in fear that he might come too late for

the letter to be registered before six that evening—it was a relief when he appeared, just five minutes ere it would have been too late! All went well at our meeting before the *notaire*, Monsieur Durand, 64, Faubourg St. Honoré. Each party congratulated the other.

In France, as the husband and wife can hold property apart from each other, both were present and each signed the receipt. They returned home satisfied and later dined heartily.

After dinner, Madame was observed to doze and then to sleep heavily with her head inclined—a sleep from which she never woke again!

So had there been any delay in this first payment, which Providence had permitted to be so closely consummated, the purchase would have been null and void and we should have had the heavy cost of re-conveying the property to the party to whom it was willed.

A Mansion House meeting in London was my next concern. The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor informed me that such meetings at the Mansion House were only held for some sudden catastrophe, an earthquake or famine in India, and that before granting one he would require a Petition to be signed by the bankers and chief City men. Accordingly my Petition was signed by thirty-seven of the chief men of the City requesting such a meeting.

My friends, R. C. L. Bevan, Esq., and Frederick Bishop, Esq., accompanied me to the Mansion House to lay this Petition before the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor (Alderman Stone) of London, who in acceding to my request said that I was "the first lady to be honoured with such a meeting!"

So my meeting came off on April 5th, 1875, my paper being read by Mr. Bishop and supported by the Earl of Shaftesbury and the Rev. Dr. Forbes.

My paper set forth:

"How little was realized of the conditions under which our countrywomen obtained their situations abroad, or to

what divers countries they wandered, to which Paris was the key, and the grave differences between English and foreign law.

Coming alone and friendless on to a Society of which she was wholly ignorant, she was at the mercy of the first person who accosted her!

Alas! her school knowledge of French almost mocked her—perhaps neither she nor the one to whom she spoke could comprehend each other—but her loneliness betrayed her and was too quickly interpreted by the one under whose influence she might chance to fall for good or evil!

The house is admirably adapted for the purpose for which it has been purchased, and has been branched off into separate homes for those in different classes of life who may be within its walls. Each separate compartment is under the supervision of one of the voluntary lady helpers of the Home, so that as far as is practicable an individual influence is maintained, and that great longing of the human heart in all ages, lovingly sought for in each personally satisfied—'some one to care for and want me!'"

The two remaining payments for the Home were met to the day and hour in Paris.

How truly had our need been met by the One who had heard and answered Prayer!

Immediately our repairs and adaptations began, and the joy of putting in water and fixing up baths may be imagined, also that of admitting gas now that they were "Permanent Inmates!"

The adaptations were considerable; the three shops on the ground floor were formed into a Refectory where all the residents could meet and where their meals were chiefly served; it was well heated; an *ascenseur* communicated with the kitchen, which had its separate divisions.

The porch which led to the entrance of the Home had in its compartments on either side Texts printed, chosen by the chief donors to the purchase, my Mother's being:

" Be thou faithful into death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life," and my Father's :

" But now abideth Faith, Hope, and Charity, but the greatest of these is Charity."

My delight, however, was soon shadowed by the sudden death of my dear Father. It has always been an intense satisfaction to me that he knew that my venture of Faith in signing for the ten thousand pounds had been honoured by the One who had inspired the Faith.

My Father paid all my travelling expenses. One of his chief injunctions to me when I began working for the ten thousand pounds, was never to touch public money for any personal matter; so upon calling at his office in the old Town Hall Buildings, Manchester—leaving for Paris rather unexpectedly—I handed him the account which he had requested me to keep for him. He asked if every item was down, and upon my assurance that it was, said with his fatherly smile :

" Well, in case you have forgotten something, I will add ten pounds." Soon after he remarked :

" When God has a special work to be done, he raises up special instruments," and very gravely he added :

" I know all that you had to suffer at home through this work in Paris, but God had a work there for you to do."

How little I thought those were his last words to me. I was his only absent child when the telegram summoned me to his deathbed.

* * * * *

What this absence meant to me can never be expressed in words ! Many of our girls, having lost their Fathers, understood how bleak life was when the love of Fatherhood was no longer a presence—to shield and to advise—and freely offered their sympathy. This eventually took the shape of a memorial tablet to his memory, parallel to that which I had already erected when dedicating this Home to the Rev. Canon Hugh Stowell, of Manchester.

CHAPTER IX

DIFFICULTIES SURMOUNTED

WE were most anxious to secure the property at 77, Avenue de Wagram, which God had so wonderfully given into our hands, in perpetuity, so it could never be diverted from the purpose for which the money had been subscribed, but certain unforeseen complex difficulties of the French law confronted me, out of which it seemed almost impossible to find a way.

I accepted an invitation to spend a few days with my old friends, Mr. and Mrs. William Miller, of Sussex Square, Brighton, who listened to my anxiety with great sympathy and shared the problem which confronted me. Mr. Miller thought that the British Board of Trade would give protection to the cause so near to my heart and make it possible for the property to be held as a Home for British and American girls in perpetuity.

Eventually it was suggested that our Association should have the protection of the Companies' Act of 1862–7, and be registered with limited liability, but without the addition of the word "Limited" to the name of the Association, which practically gave us unlimited powers. This had effect, and our Association was the first corporation to have this privilege in France, largely owing to the suggestions made by Col. the Hon. Frederic Stanley, whose interest in our work continued for years afterwards.

Our Association was formed under date of October 10th, 1876, as "The British and American Mission Homes and Christian Associations in Paris," the first directors being: F. A. Bevan, Esq., who was also our treasurer; Frederic

Bishop, Esq.; Thomas Bishop, Esq., M.D., of Paris; Captain Robert Peel Dennistoun, later Admiral; Evan Arthur Leigh; Thomas Allen Leigh, and myself. The registered office was at 9 Serjeants Inn, Fleet Street, London.

Our Council in Paris was inaugurated on February 7th, 1877, for advice and general supervision of the Homes, but without personal financial responsibility. Its members were: Thomas Bishop, M.D., our honorary physician; R. O. Maugham, Esq., solicitor of the British Embassy, and John Munroe, Esq., of the bank of Messrs. Munroe & Co., Paris; Mr. James Sloper, of the same bank, being the honorary accountant and later one of our directors.

When it became generally known in Paris that the purchase of the Home was completed, an address was presented to me by Bishop Piers Claughton, then our Bishop for Northern and Central Europe, who upon his annual visits to Paris constantly visited our Homes, and usually presided at one of our meetings there. The address was one of "Congratulation upon having established a permanent Home for our young countrywomen in Paris, whose pressing need and distress were frequently so urgent and grievous." This address had the approbation of our Majesty's Ambassador, Lord Lyons, who was patron of the Home, and was signed by all the British Embassy staff, also by one hundred and sixty-five of the leading British residents in Paris.

(Copy.)

"PARIS, *April 19th*, 1881.

Nine years have nearly elapsed since Miss Ada Leigh commenced her self-imposed and benevolent work in Paris. Almost single-handed she has successfully organized most important Institutions for the shelter and relief of unprotected and distressed English and American women and British orphans. Her friends think that the time has arrived when they should offer their warm testi-

mony to the unwearied energy and singleness of heart with which she has inaugurated and superintended so many Establishments directed to one object—*Philanthrophy*.

Only those who have followed her enthusiastic labours, step by step, can fully estimate what she has accomplished in the face of difficulties which would have been overwhelming if they had not been lightened by the hearty sympathy of numerous friends here and in England, and her inner consciousness that her work was *good*.

The undersigned, in the strongest manner, desire to express their entire confidence in Miss Leigh, and they hope that she may be blessed with health and strength to complete the onerous task which she has undertaken, viz. the formation of LASTING INSTITUTIONS for the benefit of those who may come within the wide sphere of her charitable exertions."

Here follow the signatures of one hundred and sixty-five of the leading British residents in Paris.

Nor were the residents of our Home behind, many of whom had never known its history; they wrote:

"77, AVENUE DE WAGRAM,

April 25th, 1881.

DEAR MISS LEIGH,

We are anxious to unite in testifying to you at this time the blessing and happiness we have experienced at the 'Home' and the thorough appreciation of the work in all its 'Branches,' especially the latter, which has proved to many of us a great help and comfort.

The 'Home' stands alone, the centre of the work which has been carried on for eight years, and in which we have every comfort necessary to daily life, while the sympathy so willingly held out to all who come under its roof, enables even the loneliest to feel that here they have a 'Home!'

To many who have received special blessings from the work the 'Home' will always be held in sacred memory,

while *all* unite in affectionate wishes for its present and future welfare. To yourself, as the organiser and head of such a work, we would wish to express by the accompanying words, our deep appreciation of the time and labour expended to make this place what it is, and in expressing our appreciation of the 'Home' we wish to demonstrate our affectionate respect to yourself, to whose efforts we are indebted for this Happy Home."

Here follow sixty-six signatures of girls, then residents at the Home.

We were in debt! How, it is difficult to remember. But there was a deficit of £500, which might have arisen from one of my leaps in the dark without watchfulness.

Our annual meeting was held at 77, Avenue de Wagram, on January 6th, 1881, attended by many loyal friends, and presided over by Dr. Bishop. He spoke of our work, "All had gone well, but the usual shadows which appeared to follow and clog every effort for success were across our path and a big deficit had to be faced, £500, 'a huge mountain even for Faith to remove.'"

The words had scarcely been spoken when a telegram was put into my hand from our treasurer in London. It read:

"R. sends 500 pounds to cover deficit.—BEVAN."

Breathlessly suppressing an exclamation I passed the precious message on to our good Chairman, who read it aloud. His expressive face, controlled by emotion, spoke more than his words. The thrill over the meeting was electric; soon questions besieged me as to "who was R.?" To reply "I did not know" only increased the curiosity. Certainly that meeting begun with prayer ended in praise.

Later on, when we were talking over the result of the meeting, to my surprise even Dr. Bishop thought I must have had some inkling as to the personality of "R.," and

said, "It was all so well-timed!" I assured him that I was as ignorant as he himself.

The anonymous "R." wrote as follows when enclosing his cheque:

"Your appeal for help added strength to an intention already formed by my Wife and myself to send a cheque for £500 to your bankers to relieve you of all anxiety."

It was many years later that "R." revealed himself to me as Sir William Robson.

At the eighth annual meeting held on January 10th, 1882, at 77, Avenue de Wagram, are two points worthy of note in the Annual Report of that date:

1. "The necessity for and the reality of the work.
2. "The small cost of its administration.

"Whilst other institutions are favourably reported when the cost of administration is under 10 per cent, that of the Association of the Ada Leigh Homes in Paris is under 4 per cent. This is due to the voluntary help of the lady workers and to the fact that they all pay their own travelling and other expenses, so that all money subscribed goes directly to the object for which it was intended."

At the close of an interesting speech, Dr. Bishop, the honorary physician, added:

"It has been absurdly said and believed—I hope by very few—that Miss Leigh receives a large grant from the English Government. Yes, she does receive a grant—a grant from God who blesses her work, and will bless it, and those who try to impede her put themselves in God's way."

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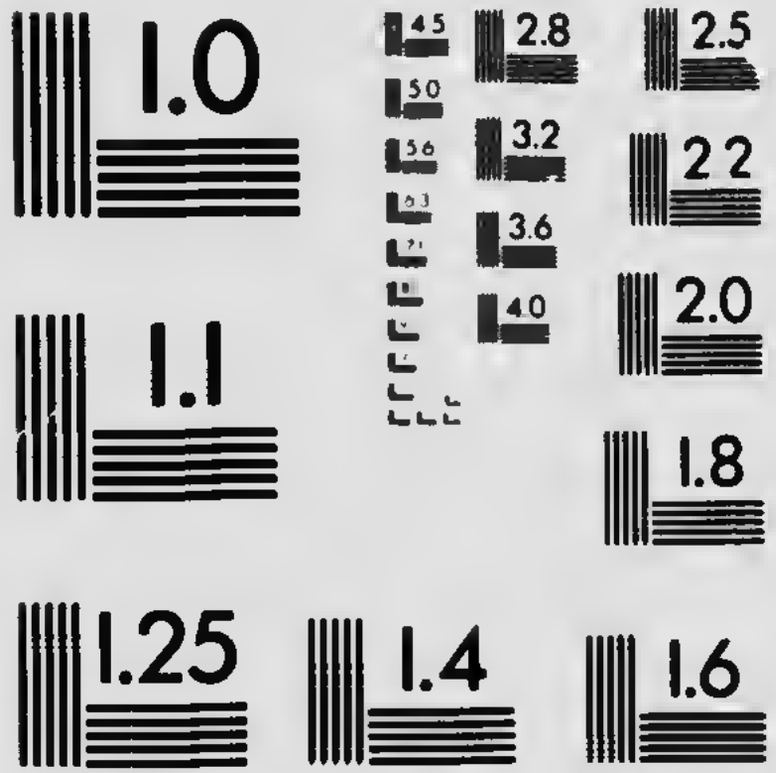

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CHAPTER X

WORK AND WAGES

ONE of my first efforts at 77, Avenue de Wagram, was to open a "Free Registry," and although it was "*au dessus de l'entresol*," the attraction of bright rooms and clean surroundings, and of being dealt with personally, was a welcome change to the large number of our countrywomen who for days, weeks and months before had thronged the crowded, dingy and ill-ventilated waiting-rooms of agents who charged unmercifully on the first year's earnings of successful applicants, too often for situations where no honourable woman could stay. On Mondays and Thursdays my *salle d'attente* was crowded with applicants; turning over the pages of the daily visits which it was my endeavour to register, some days fifty to sixty-five may be counted.

Madame Thiers sent from the Elysée for a lady companion to speak English with her. The Princesse Mathilde and the Princesse Clotilde came themselves to inquire for their lady's-maids. Looking into the *salle d'attente*, being late, after returning from the hospital to visit a dying girl, I recognized the Princesse de Ligne (whom I had previously met in my younger days when with Mrs. Woolley) sitting among a group of all sorts and conditions.

In reply to my question, "Would Madame like to see me now?" she said, "No; I am enjoying it! I never knew there were so many English in Paris!"

Each applicant was interviewed personally—indeed, there *was* only myself.

Listening to the divers experiences of each one, striving

to realize the struggles, failures and necessities of each, the possibilities for the future, awoke many latent ideas (almost kaleidoscopic) and forced the question—which was the real life—as I had hitherto known it? or this—a fantasy? What had been supposed to be fiction became grim reality—indeed, one seemed to have touched life at every point within the limits of a day.

"You must become a Catholic for a work like this," said the late Duchess de C——. "I should never have changed my religion, but there was nothing but Faith and no Works!"

"I am both Catholick and Apostolick," was my reply. She looked at me inquiringly. I showed her our Creed—"And I believe in one Catholick and Apostolick Church"—and said:

"It is your Creed also, but you have gone beyond it. We remain with the Apostles!"

She smiled rather sadly, continued to be a friend and subscribed to our work till the last.

It is to be regretted that at this time, the late autumn of 1873, it was impossible to keep the books of visitors in detail, as I was alone. For days my only airing was on the little balcony where my little Arab maid, a veritable tyrant! would close the window and shut me out, declaring that "*Madame est sortie.*"

"*Mais je l'ai vue sur le balcon.*"

"*Oui, Madame,*" she replied, "*il faut que Madame prenne l'air,*" and not until she thought I had taken sufficient outdoor exercise was the window reopened for me!

It was my practice to rise and greet each visitor with a welcome ere asking what service could be rendered?

A searching look, as if she had not heard aright—gush of words long pent-up—flood of tears which could not be controlled—were often the reply. One lightly touched my brow with her lips, with a smothered, "God bless you! You were never tempted!"

The confidences poured forth, the fears and hopes, the

unburdening of many hearts—indeed, even sympathetically listening to the sorrows of lonely lives seemed to beget a healing power—at first appalled, then consoled me with the thought that my heart was but evolving a question of centuries ago, " Who is sufficient for these things ? "

Often the work gave me great searchings of heart. One day a poor lady came in great perplexity; her husband, having occupied some position at a distance from Paris, had not found the success he sought. There were six children. Unable to pay her rent, she had left Paris with merely the rolls of bedding for her children, taking shelter in a kind of double hut some miles from Paris. There she had left them to come to our Free Registry and seek employment. Asking for what position she was best fitted, she told me that her Father had been a dentist and that she had not only acted as his secretary in taking notes, but had cleaned up his most delicate instruments.

" Could I find her anything with a dentist ? "

Alas, no dentist had ever applied ! Telling me she had left her little children without food, I promised to send some back with her, and asked her to kneel with me and put her position before the only One Who could send what she needed. She burst into tears as she knelt with me, and said :

" I am always praying ; indeed, I prayed all the way I came to you."

It touched me greatly to think that there was nothing to propose save that she should go and have some food herself and leave well-equipped with food for her children. There was a speaking-trumpet into the kitchen from my little *salon*, which then was used as many as seventeen times in one day, asking for food to be sent up for those who evidently needed it although they did not ask.

She had scarcely left me to enjoy her meal, when in came an American dentist in great haste, using almost the very language of what he wanted, as she had, in offering her services ! How thankfully I told him his need could be

supplied. He offered an ample salary, but she was there at 8 a.m. and could not leave till late. I promised to send her at once. The poor lady, having stayed her hunger, went, and returned to tell me that she was entering upon her duties on the next day. It was winter. The train she had to take every morning left at six. To be in time it was necessary for her to leave her children asleep, with their food prepared, and when she returned at night they were again asleep.

She never saw them that winter by daylight, but she gave satisfaction and did credit to her position for months, until her husband was in circumstances to receive them. On saying good-bye her tears of gratitude fell hot in my hand, as she said, " But for coming to you, my faith in God had failed me."

Food, such as we could offer, was accepted with avidity, impressing me with the fact that a meal, though ever so humble, with a few words of welcome, was to the hungry a forcible exponent of Christianity.

One, whose father had driven his carriage and pair down the Champs Élysées, had for nights slept on benches or inside unfinished buildings; educated, wishful to earn for herself, but quite unable to turn the lock which would open the door of employment from the lack of knowing how to handle an opportunity. Another, piteously opening her ulster, revealed a bare breast—the scantiest of underclothing covered her—all her *linge* being retained by the *blanchisseuse* until she was able to pay a fabulous price for very simple underwear. One such note was " brought " to me, showing a demand of nearly £2 for laundry which in England would have been covered by a few shillings. It was not unusual for warm underwear to be parted with for food by hungry girls whose appetites became sharpened by change of atmosphere.

Another day there was but one nursery governess left whom two ladies wanted for the country during the long vacation. It was like an auction, the small monthly remunera-

tion offered going up from point to point, seeming most interminable, until one lady called out, "*Et du thé deux fois par jour!*" and obtained the prize.

Our Free Registry—the first in Paris—witnessed many ludicrous scenes with French ladies, in their eagerness for their children to learn English. "*Je veux que mes enfants apprennent l'anglais, 'le vrai Cockney,'*" insisted one lady. It would have been quite impossible to convince her that "*le vrai Cockney*" was not the purest English.

Another—indeed many—questioned the right of the English "Miss" to half-drown her child in a bath every morning, surely a "puff and powder" were better? reminding one of the difference between a Frenchman and an Englishman—the first rarely bathed but always put on a clean shirt, the latter never missed his morning bath and then clothed himself with his shirt of yesterday!

In some situations where the lady did not interest herself in household matters, but entrusted a certain sum to her cook for a certain number of *plats*, half a franc extra was all that she allowed to be spent for the "English Miss" in addition to what was left at the table. Sometimes the choice of expenditure of this half-franc would be offered by the *cuisinière*, should it be spent for a *côtelette* or *gâteau?* The governess was not admitted to the table of the family, but was served alone in the office, which usually had a glass door! Indeed, the refinement of cruelty was marked in many ways and severely felt by educated British women who accepted these positions with the object of acquiring the Parisian accent. The slightest demand for amelioration was met with an eight days' notice, as "Miss could very easily be replaced"; in fact, the number of educated English girls striving at any price to cultivate the French language was appalling. It was a common saying in those days that all the English girls in Paris were either Scotch or Irish!

How ignorant were those responsible for these girls, who came from Great Britain and Ireland often still in

their teens, of the conditions under which they found themselves in Paris; as apprentices, they were neither lodged nor paid, just a scanty two meals a day, at 11.30 a.m. and at 7 p.m., with their instructions in the mysterious art of dressmaking or millinery for at least two years. One whom we know was kept making pockets by hand for six months, until she made them perfect to a thread!

It must not be supposed that the experiences of my new life were all tragedy—even amongst our inmates. Two earnestly desiring private interviews, occupied the same bedroom. The one asserted that she could not sleep for the continued snoring of the other, and thought she had a perfect right to keep waking her up! The other rebelled, although she might snore "just a little!"

My decision was that upon one night the first had a right to wake up the snorer, who, however, the next night might snore uninterruptedly. There were no more complaints from either!

One of our outside cases was that of an affectionate father who came to claim his daughter's trunk and belongings. She had been found dead in her room, and her letters from her father should have been sufficient to have identified him, but the *Administration des affaires* thought otherwise. We gave him our sympathy with every possible help willingly, and thought we had succeeded, when the poor father came to unburden his farewell complaint—that after three weeks' expenditure and worry he was leaving Paris without his daughter's belongings and with only six "sows!" in his pocket!

The correspondence of those days was also curious. A gentleman, young, evidently in a good position, wrote from Canada, giving the clergyman and others as referees, asking me to find him a wife amongst so many cultured and orphaned girls, promising that he would pay her passage and a certain sum for a Paris trousseau, and that his clergyman (whose name was given) would receive her as his guest for a month—one week in which to recover herself from

her journey and to look round (and also for him " to win her ! "), and three weeks for the necessary banns to be published. Then, giving a picture of the girl he wanted, her height, complexion, colour of hair and eyes, age, etc., he added, " be sure to send out one according to sample ! "

In later years, after the quarter to five o'clock gong had sounded for the *concierge* to take our mail for England, and our workers came into my little *salon* for tea and relaxation, we used to recount our various experiences of the day with the unanimous conclusion that it was the comical incidents which enabled us to brave the tragic !

Nearly all my first inmates were the orphan daughters of professional men, in many of whom was great untidiness —frills and flounces were the fashion in those days and were frequently found torn or pinned together, and this with an air of nonchalance, as if it did not matter !

One, thinking that Parisian fashion meant an accumulation of ornaments, had two buckles, three feathers, black and white [illegible], besides flowers, piled on to her hat. Giving her an address for a situation, she agreed to a reduction to one single ornament. It must be owned that contact with French neatness, which is truly the secret of French fashion, has had an excellent effect upon the appearance and dress of our compatriots.

Another case was that of a young governess who was persuaded by a French lady to leave a good and well-paid situation in England in order to perfect her French in Paris.

She came, agreeing to remain [illegible] year, paying her own travelling expenses to Paris, and to make herself " generally useful," to find herself the only domestic of any kind kept for the lady, her husband and a child of seven, to whom she was supposed to be *gouvernante*, at a salary of £12 a year.

Certainly her duties were varied ! She was rung up at 6 a.m., and the first was to attend to about sixty birds in an aviary and to distribute amongst them different kinds of

seed, then to prepare and serve the *petit déjeuner* for Monsieur, Madame, and the child ; dress the child, go to the market with Madame—which was supposed to be a lesson in French and to help her to acquire the Parisian accent while Madame bargained with women who expressed themselves in patois, otherwise Madame spoke to her in English ; bring back the supplies from the market in the usual string-bag which adapts itself to all sorts and conditions of food regardless of size or weight ; cook and serve the *déjeuner à la fourchette* under Madame's supervision ; and when its remains were cleared, dress and walk out with Madame and the child on the Champs Élysées.

Upon her return from the promenade, prepare with Madame's help the *diner* and serve the *café noir* later, for which friends often joined them, dress in her best and only silk, sing and play to the admiring company, and at midnight retire, only to be aroused the next morning to appease the appetite of the birds—often the bell which woke her found her dressed in her best silk garment of the previous night at 6 a.m. !

After six weeks' experience, finding her only walking costume and evening dress losing their freshness, to say nothing of shoe wear, and not venturing—being over-powered by the politeness of Monsieur and Madame—to ask for her monthly salary, she resolved to escape ; so, packing her chief belongings into a small compass and leaving her good trunk locked behind her to give the impression that she intended to return, when aroused at 6 a.m. to feed the birds, she walked to our Home, 77, Avenue de Wagram, leaving them unfed and Monsieur and Madame *sans café au lait*. Alas ! even the Parisian accent had not been acquired.

The " walking and talking " lessons deserve to be recalled. How often have delicate gentlewomen walked two or three miles from our Home to some wealthy house to take out a couple of rough boys or girls, walk and talk with them for one hour for the sum of one franc, with no offer of rest ere

returning on foot, too weary for other work! At times, upon arriving, the "walking and talking" could not be carried out, so the franc was not earned!

In my presence one day at our Free Registry a lady, dressed *à la mode*, with gracious and condescending mien, offered fifty francs a month for a two-hours' daily "walk and talk," Sundays included. Yet the struggle for life was so great and the number of unemployed British and American girls so many, that this offer found an acceptance, nay, was even envied by bewildered unsuccessful applicants!

> That narrow raft!—'tis but a little space
> And each one eager for a place
> Doth thrust the other in the sea!

Directly my first worker, Miss Moon, joined me, just in time for our first annual meeting, December, 1873, we began our Workers' Prayer Meeting *daily* ere taking up the part allotted to each one. This continued for over thirty years almost unceasingly; indeed, its need was realized in dealing with the lives of those about us and the confidences with which we were privileged, which often meant the turning-point of a life.

"Which situation should I accept, the one in Russia or in Turkey?"

How were we to guide in an unknown path! Often this avowed ignorance led to prayer for decision, and one who was so led to a very lonely part of Russia, there to stay for twenty-four years, continued to send her thank-offering to the Home at 77, Avenue de Wagram, up to the beginning of the war, 1914.

For years in Turkey we placed English governesses in the different households where they resided—the only woman! The Turkish Ambassador sent and gave his credentials as to the position offered, for which we chose the most highly cultured of our countrywomen, realizing the grave importance and influence in such an atmosphere of the well-bred Christian lady!

Not long before the war (May, 1914), a Turkish gentleman called upon me at 241, Knightsbridge, and, in effect, said that he had long wanted to tell me what a blessing to him and to his brother the English lady was whom we had sent as governess some thirty years ago to Constantinople.

" It was a revelation to us boys to meet a lady so refined, capable and accomplished, her movements so dignified and graceful, and awakened many thoughts, whilst our Mother was kept in the solitude of the harem and rarely seen ! "

That we might be kept in remembrance of our constant dependence upon the wisdom which " God giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not " a card, illuminated by one of the Mildmay workers, was placed over the desk of each worker :

" WHAT WOULD JESUS DO ? "

After the completion of the purchase and furnishing of the Home, at our first annual meeting the chairman remarked :

" What can you do with this large house and its seventy-two rooms. Let it in apartments ? "

" No ; it will soon be filled."

He replied, " Why, I don't suppose there are more than two hundred British girls in Paris."

He turned to one of the correspondents of the *Manchester Guardian* who was present, and asked the question :

" How many British girls do you suppose there are in Paris ? "

His reply was :

" Curiously I have just come from the Prefecture where I was inquiring, and they tell me there are over two thousand."

" Do they give much trouble ? " was the next inquiry.

" No, but are often found in distress."

It must be remembered that at this time there was no place to which a girl could apply when in distress, save to

the police. Paris did not then even possess the *Hospitalité de Nuit*, which offers three nights' hospitality to strangers on the condition of some work being done.

The usual procedure when a friendless girl asked a gendarme for advice was :

" Have you any friends ? "

" None."

" Employment ? "

" No."

" Money ? "

" No."

" Come with me," and she was taken to the nearest Police Bureau, where her couch was a sloping bench and her food bread and water until she could be taken to the Prefecture, where she would be remanded for probably six weeks in order to see if a charge of any wrong-doing had been preferred against her. If not, she was returned to England, but before being sent away she was given the opportunity of choosing her life *à la carte*. To my knowledge, this has been accepted without its real meaning being understood.

CHAPTER XI

ON THE BOULEVARDS

TOO often has personal intercourse shown me how little might save a girl from ruin. A few words of caution kindly spoken, timely help quietly given, a look of sympathy, or, as one [illegible]eased it, "If only a dog had touched me, I would [illegible]e back!" may turn the tide of a life for good. [illegible] there is a turning-point which faces each one, and it is only, perhaps, as the secret springs which influence life are traced that one is able to realize by how many hidden impulses the human heart is swayed and how dependent it is, though often unconsciously, upon the word, look, or action of another. They "who know the heart of a stranger" can easily conceive the mighty power and influence for good a welcome brings, especially to a girl in a foreign land thrown for the first time upon her own resources in a city whose reckless gaiety mocks the loneliness of her isolated life. Probably she is the victim of some unprincipled agent, or comes over to a situation already filled or grossly misrepresented, or she is discharged at a moment's notice by a capricious mistress within half an hour of midnight! and, unacquainted with the locality, scarcely knowing a word of the language, she is debarred from the sympathy of speech, every man and woman seems to her an enemy, whilst she sees around her almost the only thing which bears the mark of success in Paris, "what you call, 'sin' only pays," and hears its echo.

An English girl whom I was seeking in one of the fashionable shops in the Rue de la Paix, looked at me rather curiously, and said:

" And so you are the young lady who believes in souls ! I don't, although a minister's daughter. I have learned to believe as other people believe," and snatching up a beautiful piece of lace, she said :

" The people I have to do with believe in lace, not in souls. However, I wish you good luck."

Another at a fashionable shop, when I invited her to come to my hotel on Sunday, replied :

" Thank you very much, but I go to the country on Sunday," returning me my little note. " I advise you to go to the girls who have just come. *I* should have been glad of a friend then ! "

" But when you don't spend your Sundays in the country, come then ! " (I thought that she might have an odd Sunday when she did not go.) She replied, colouring slightly :

" Oh, I am *protected !* "

For a long time the meaning of these words was not understood by me. A few years later, when the man whose guest she had been in the country was getting a little tired and wished a fresh attraction, this woman, in return for a villa at Passy, sent her niece of sixteen to him ! Such is the hardening process of familiarity with vice.

Perhaps of all girls a British girl is the least able to cope with the emergencies of such a position. The attractiveness of sin too well hides its ghastly contrasts. The homely simplicity of her early days, the want of practical education and knowledge of life, render her an easy prey to those into whose hands she may fall for good or evil.

Another of our young countrywomen I found working upon a beautiful wedding-gown in a little attic. I tried to press our little invitation to come to us on Sunday, but she never looked up from her work. " She was too busy, Sunday found her needle in hand."

" Perhaps she had some other friend. Would she like to bring her friend ? " She shook her head.

" Could I bring her some books to read ? " Again a shake of the head, never looking up from her work.

Seeing that all her thoughts were apparently concentrated upon the wedding-gown which she was so beautifully fashioning, I began to admire it. With almost a moan, she muttered:

"Oh, if she but knew how my touch defiled it!" She was thinking of the bride who would wear it amid an admiring crowd and never dream of the ghastliness which lay unfolded in the beauty of its wonderful fit. Surely this girl had been worth saving!

How many there are whose daily life is so sheltered by the loving influence of ome, the restraints of education, and the luxuries and refinements of the day, that they can never realize the power of the trials and temptations which beset so many of their humbler sisters.

Surely the power of prevention, so easily wielded, must be one of the greatest powers in the world!

Another, apprenticed to a very fashionable milliner in the Rue de la Paix, arrived with a tiny trunk and pointed to have it taken up the *grand escalier*, when Madame appeared and ominously put forth her finger, exclaiming, "*Pas ici!*"

"Where am I to go?" the girl asked.

"Where you will; *cela ne me regarde pas!*"

When the girl, trembling, looked as though she scarcely had heard her right, Madame continued:

"You make your hours with me from eight in the morning till ten at night, afterwards '*vous êtes libre*' (do as you please)." More than bewildered, a French apprentice was called to explain the meaning of Madame's words to the uninitiated girl of fifteen just from the North of England, who still wondered where she was to go after ten o'clock at night! After showing the few sous left in her purse after paying the *cocher*, well might she question "Where?" But Madame was quite equal to the occasion:

"*Il faut qu'elle soit protégée*," was her next venture, which was faithfully rendered to the English girl, who innocently remarked:

"Protected!—Is that a Society?"

I had not then realized the meaning of the word " Protection." How dare such a word be used to cover such a meaning ? Eternity will alone reveal to how many it has proved a fatal lure !

One girl—an elegant figure, well-proportioned with a dignified bearing—arrived each morning at one of the fashionable dressmakers in the Rue de la Paix in her own clothes which were soon discarded, when she was "*bien coiffée, sa toilette bien faite jusqu'à ses petits souliers, habillée comme grande duchesse pour se promener dans le salon pour faire voir les modes dernières.*" At night putting on her own clothes, she went—where ? Richly dressed, well fed for the day, but not paid ! " It distracts me," said the ' English Doll.' . . . Is this what I was made for ? "

My life was full of an awakening to the varied needs of the friendless, and alas ! too often helpless, position of my countrywomen. The cruelty of fashion and its power, the helplessness of the apprentice who had no hours. After midnight, one Sunday, as I was passing up the Faubourg St. Honoré, I saw more than one shop open with our young girls serving. In the milliners' and dressmakers' shops it was no uncommon rule for them to work all night before the chief races.

At one fashionable chocolate shop on the boulevards where the English girl seemed to be, and was always being changed, I ventured to ask Madame at the desk upon what terms the girl who spoke English was received ? " Twenty-five francs a month," was her reply, " and two meals a day."

" Do you think she can honestly live upon that ? "

" Oh no," said Madame, surprised at my question, "*Mais, Madame, que voulez vous, c'est la vie, c'est la vie !*"

Stunned, not knowing how to reply, I walked back to the Home, trying in vain to shake off thoughts which appalled me. Who could fight against such a tide of evil ? Soon the tide of evil fought against me, as one who so disturbed the business methods which had for so long prevailed, and questioned whether in the interests of the British community

my presence in Paris was even desirable? "Enemies abound!" wrote the good Earl of Shaftesbury, who honoured me by writing of me as "Our well beloved and enterprising Ada" in one of his many wise letters of warning not to be too venturesome. Dr. Bishop, who was unwearying in his help, wrote:

"This enemy is hydra-headed, prevent what you cannot cure." All pointed to the blessed word, "Prevention."

In one of the fashionable *tailleurs'* shops in the Rue de Rivoli, where we were most courteously informed that not one British girl was employed, there were forty-seven American girls. The most attractive of these girls were chosen to don the latest and most daring "creations" at the races, where the fashions formed so prominent a part; several never returned, having played their rôle too well.

Upon one of my visits to the St. Lazare Prison, one of the Resident Sisters asked me to go to the "*deuxiéme* section" to comfort a girl who could not speak French and was continually sobbing.

This was my first visit to that part of the Prison. The girl was one of the forty-seven brought from New York, where this firm had a shop, to the one in Paris.

Repeating words, alas! too often accepted under the delusion of the vaunted value of the wages of sin, she told me she had tried that delusion at the Races and found how soon it failed, being left at what she called a beautiful house, of which she gave me the address, where she believed she would be the sole mistress. She never saw her betrayer again! He it was who sold her, leaving her where she was herded with others "like a common chattel."

During our talk a very fashionably-dressed lady came in with a dainty basket of fruit and flowers. The Sister, who had called me to go to the girl motioned me aside, and retiring where I could listen, I heard this creature saying in broken English: "He is so sorry that this happened and sends you this (the basket). He adores you. It will never happen again; he would come and see you but it is

not allowed. His carriage, however, will be waiting for you when you are cured." She then left. Turning to the Sister, I asked her why she allowed this evil influence upon a wrecked girl? she replied that the girl belonged to the woman, was one of her set, and that she held a first-class licence.

At that time the late Lord and Lady Dalhousie were interesting themselves in cases of this kind, and an appointment with Lady Dalhousie at her hotel in Paris awaited me.

As I was determined to claim this girl, I described the scene to Lady Dalhousie, who gave me the name of friends in Norfolk who would be willing to train her for a nurse when she had regained her health—as it was essential for her safety and my own that her early departure from Paris should be planned—she left me with a well-marked Prayer Book. To-day, in my possession is one of her letters—from a changed woman with a changed heart—telling me that she now had charge of a wing of the hospital where she was received and trained.

One evening when I was saying "good night" to some of the people coming out from our Mission Hall Service, a little roll of paper was thrust into my glove. It read as follows:

"If you care to save a girl, call at . . . Be there about six o'clock, and ask for Miss . . ."

Going there the next day, my amazement was to find myself in an American bar surrounded only by young men—certainly there were sixteen girls busy serving, all dressed attractively. Thinking there must be some mistake, so keeping near to the door, I lifted my eyes furtively across to the girls to see if anyone was expecting me, when a girl timidly approached. I asked her to show me a certain street, and she came outside as if to show me the way, when my first words to her were:

"Why are you here?"

"Oh!" said the girl, "it's a hell, it's a hell!"

"How long have you been here?"

" Three weeks."

" Do you care to come out of it ? "

" Oh ! indeed, yes. Save me if you can ! "

Not daring to keep her too long, I asked her to write to me fully, which she did. Her parents had answered an advertisement in New York for a " girl to speak English in a Paris shop." Without many inquiries, or with such as satisfied them through a well-trained agent who knew his business, she had crossed the Atlantic with their permission —a girl of sixteen years—to speak English in this " shop ! "

" We have no wages, we live on tips," the girl wrote, " and if we don't please the men they don't tip us. Sometimes they drink the champagne and laugh without paying us, and we have to make up the money. They don't find us in food ; some days we can only buy bread, at other times men take us and give us a good meal. There are sixteen of us here, and there is nothing sold but drink. Our hours are from 3 p.m. in the afternoon until 6 a.m. in the morning ! "

My reply was that " upon leaving to-morrow morning at 6 a.m." to drive to me, not to one of our Homes but to an old governess who often let me hire a room upon like difficult occasions.

As she was American born I at once communicated with the Rev. J. B. Morgan, D D., but as she had no birth certificate with her she could not have her passage paid back to the United States by the American Charitable Fund in Paris, so the Rev. Dr. Morgan kindly bought her ticket himself ; and we, after communicating with her parents saw her off to New York, with joy that " one girl had been saved ! " But what of the fifteen left behind ?

The American vocalist, Miss Kellogg, wrote pages of warning to her countrywomen against venturing upon the slenderest thread and hope of success which attracted them to Paris. We met, alas ! many of these failures—often too late !—with wrecked health and shattered hopes.

On one of my very hurried journeys to and from London, taking the night mail via Calais, and feeling the need of the

few hours' rest ere reaching Paris for an important engagement, I determined not to be drawn into conversation with any travelling companion; so, resolutely folding myself in my rug, prepared for the sleep which was already asserting itself upon tired eyes. When the train was on the point of leaving and my comfort seemed assured, a lady flung herself upon the opposite side of the *Dames seules*. She was evidently a stranger and had to be guided. However, my resolve was fixed, my fatigue great; my eyes closed with determination, but—sleep did not follow!

My fellow-companion was weeping. Should I rouse myself to comfort her? No; perhaps she had parted from friends and her tears relieved her. We passed Boulogne, and although my eyes were closed, I was really awake and my rug more firmly attached to me than ever, but my resolve not to speak prevailed.

The weeping became sobs. Perhaps she is hysterical, was my next thought, as decided as ever not to disturb myself. Then a brief interval of quiet intervened, which seemed to commend my wisdom!

We rolled on; the next stop would be Amiens, which we passed—then Paris. Was it the jerking of the train which impeded my sleep, or the fact that my ears were strained to know if my hysterical companion had so far controlled herself as to sleep?

Her breathing after a time became laboured and then appeared to stop.

Her silence was ominous and made me listen more intently—when a deep-drawn sigh arrested my better self. I cast aside my rug and knelt at her side: she was in a deep faint, her forehead cold, fingers even stiff. In a moment I was administering a restorative which she attempted to put aside, as if to warn me that my attentions were too late! The conviction of my utter selfishness made me redouble my efforts, but unhappily I could do so little.

Drawing her near to me, I soothed her like a child to win her. "Had she any friends?" I asked. Feebly she

replied, " None nearer than New York." " Did she know anyone in Paris ? "

" Daughter dying. They told me to ask for Miss Ada Leigh ! "

Conscience-stricken the words came forth, " Be comforted. I am Ada Leigh ! " She looked in my face as if to question the truth. Could her unmovable fellow-passenger, who had maintained silence when her sobs and sighs must have been heard, be Ada Leigh ? I took her into my arms like a child, and after she had somewhat recovered, she told me that her daughter was a singer and had come to Paris to take some part in an opera when severe lung trouble had developed and she had been unable to perform her part. This poor lady, upon receiving the cablegram—" Daughter dying," had hastened to get on board the first steamer, forgetting the need of money ; had just caught the train from Liverpool to London, thence the mail to Paris ; and had not tasted food since she left Liverpool. Indeed, all her resources were like herself—spun out ! The agony of that journey may be imagined : her daughter dying—perhaps dead—whilst I was wittingly silent.

Under the assurance that I would not leave her until her daughter had been found, hope did its share in reviving her. Upon arriving at the grim and dark, though welcome, Gare du Nord, we drove to the Hôtel du Louvre where her daughter had been staying, only to find that she had been very ill, at death's door, and, being unable to pay her way, had been removed to a Pension in the Rue de Constantinople, whither we went.

The meeting between the mother and daughter was pathetic. I would not have intruded, but the poor mother wished me to assure her child that the 340 francs due at the Hôtel du Louvre would be paid and her clothes restored.

I had the happiness of seeing mother and daughter leave for New York, and the money advanced by me for the Hôtel du Louvre was returned later with gratitude.

These and other varied experiences pointed to the urgency of my giving information upon that side of the Atlantic where Paris is chiefly known as "The Paradise of good Americans." The friendlessness of American girls who came over, some for the study of music or the language, others for travel and amusement and to have a "good time," with but little or no knowledge of the language or of French law, could only be gauged by remembering that it was not the silver streak of the English Channel, but an ocean that divided them from their nearest kith and kin.

At one of my meetings in London a Bishop rose to his feet and said that he had not long come from Paris (1878), and on crossing one of the beautiful bridges which arch the Seine, he and his friend had watched some men hauling what appeared to be a human body into their boat. Curiosity impelled them to follow till they arrived at the gates of that first resting-place of many of the dumb tragedies of Paris—the Morgue. They asked the official the supposed nationality of the girl just brought in, and with a shrug of his shoulders he exclaimed, "It is only an English girl!" as if it were no unusual thing for English girls to be found under such circumstances. On their questioning why such a hasty conclusion was come to, the man pointed to the disarranged clothing, or rather shreds of it, which barely covered the poor bruised body, and to the dishevelled hair, and replied:

"*Une française ne voudrait pas qu'on la trouvât dans un tel état; elle ferait une toilette même pour la mort—une pose poétique n'est pas sans valeur! Du reste, ce n'est pas une habitude française de se plonger dans l'eau froide.*"

At the close of the meeting, the Bishop, to whom owing to my late arrival from Paris I had not even yet been introduced, came to me and said:

"There is no work for our countrywomen which needs to be done more urgently than what you are doing. I will subscribe to your work, preach for it, and speak for it whenever I can."

And with these words came my introduction to the Bishop of Ontario.

Soon after my marriage, in 1889, we had been greatly honoured by a visit of their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Wales (King Edward and Queen Alexandra) at 77, Avenue de Wagram. They made a lengthened stay and went over several of the *étages*. Queen Alexandra remarked to me :

" When I heard of your marriage to the Bishop of Ontario, I said, ' That naughty Bishop, he will repent ! Who will care for our English girls now ? ' "

With an amused look, King Edward asked me :

" Has he repented yet ? "

Upon my venturing the assurance that I did not think he had repented, he said :

" Ah ! but he is not here to speak for himself ; that's the pity ! When he comes to England bring him to me at Marlborough House, and I will ask him if he has not repented ! "

My reply was that he had not yet quite taken me from my work, but was a very old friend and would help the Homes in many ways by supporting them, and would do what I could not do—preach for them !

Captain Robert Peel Dennistoun was very truly a friend in time of need. Soon after our Homes were opened he would call two or three times a week to ask what " disagreeable service " he could render ! Upon one of his visits, I had just received a letter from one of our governesses who gave lessons in English to a French art-student who stated that a young English girl had just been introduced in his studio as model ! " Only one life is open to her," she wrote ; " can nothing be done to save her ? " How thankful we were when Captain Dennistoun proposed interviewing the artist himself with a view to rescuing this girl. He did so, and found the story only too true. The difficulty of interfering with a paid model presented many difficulties which could only be overcome by my calling upon the Préfet of the Police.

Having been elected a member of the Prison Committee in Paris, in 1874, it was easy for me to have an interview with the Préfet, who received me most graciously and listened to all the particulars, and asked me if I wished to save this girl. "Certainly," was my reply. He asked me to call again, giving him time to inquire into the case. I did so, and it appeared that it was not only this girl, but that four children, aged from eight to thirteen, had been bought by an Italian in London, one for £6, another for £8, and the third for £10; the fourth, slightly deformed but with a very sweet face, had been put into the bargain for nothing! These children were hired out as artists' models, the Italian making from 40 to 50 francs a day. Meanwhile they were miserably lodged in the Rue Sainte Placide, a miserable back-street, near to the Bon Marché.

"But there are four children," said the Préfet; "do you wish all four to be rescued, or only one?"

"All," was my reply, telling him of my Home in the Avenue de Wagram.

"See," said the Préfet, rising and bringing down his fist upon the table, "I don't believe in God, or heaven or hell—or souls!" with a sneer, "but I would have a retreat to save these girls' bodies! The English should have had one fifty years ago."

The rescue was well arranged. At the end of the week, when the Italian came to collect his ill-gotten gains, he was arrested just as he grasped his money.

Another time Captain Dennistoun rescued a child whose screams were overheard when she was being beaten into a tiger's skin for performing purposes, which she loathed. Upon giving her up, the man exclaimed, "It will be easier to get another child than another tiger skin!" When each day thrilled with adventure such records might be multiplied.

CHAPTER XII

A WAVE OF BLESSING

ON Saturday afternoons a weekly Prayer Meeting for Workers was commenced, which was held regularly, with rare exceptions, for nearly forty years. Here again volumes might be written of what undoubtedly might be called the romance of prayer. Indeed, a lower level than that of spiritual power had no place for the sake of those whom it was my privilege to lead to submit the details of their lives to Him Who cared for us as He Who marked the fall of the sparrow, and Who could crown the meanest life with glory! Who, when we lay unconscious for the night, neither slumbered nor slept!

It was this human thought of the care of our Heavenly Father which seemed to strike home to the hearts of many a lonely girl and awoke an interest hitherto untouched—even the finding of our Home when in despair was traced to the unerring Hand of Love. It was my endeavour to feed this awakening—as one expressed it, "Something I never saw before!"—and to make the hidden life a great reality! Certainly there was response, even when least anticipated. Underneath many a gay exterior lay an unspoken longing which only needed an opportunity to reveal itself. Only after the words of encouragement were spoken and the ice broken was the heart relieved of some temporary burden. Truly, there is no power which gains the stronghold of human affection as that of spiritual sympathy—TO KNOW AND TO BE KNOWN. There was no rule for attending our Morning and Evening Prayer, but nearly all came, and often some one would linger wanting "to know more,"

with whom there was whenever possible an individual prayer. Indeed, each girl's name and need were brought before our Lord as she entered and left the Home, so that the time spent there might prove to be one of blessing. The bundles of letters which are still in my possession after forty odd years prove that the seed sown by many waters was not in vain.

We had a Mission Service every Sunday evening, and another on Thursdays, which were usually crowded, and later a Prayer Meeting after the Evening Prayer. Upon one occasion thirty-eight remained behind, some sending in requests for Prayer and for Praise! A book was kept that this record of how our Heavenly Father both heard and answered might not be forgotten.

One night, when bidding good night at the close of one of these meetings, a girl said to me wonderingly:

"Oh! Miss Leigh, you tell God everything!"

"Why not?"

"I thought you told us that He knew everything."

"He does. I might know something which troubled you, but if you consistently hid it from me, although you had many opportunities of telling me, my sympathy would be blunted! So our Heavenly Father likes us to tell Him *all* without restraint. He betrays no confidences and so is the only One to Whom we can pour out our heart without fear. Moreover, as a Father, He wants to know *from ourselves* as His children all that troubles us."

Turning to that wonderful human picture in Exodus iii. 7, when the Lord said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people . . . and have heard their cry . . . for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them," I assured them that "He changeth not," but is just the same to-day as then, and that we had greater privileges in the human sympathy of our Lord Jesus Christ, born of human suffering.

Another question when bidding good night was, "Miss Leigh, did you ever know the Comfort of the Holy Ghost?"

My heart bounded to say, " Yes."

" Then it is a great Reality ? "

" It is."

Another girl, who was leaving the next day to be governess to a family in England, said, " I shall ask to have Family Prayers if they have not, and to pray for this Home." She kept her word, and finding that Family Prayer once a day was the rule, asked that our Home might be remembered.

The lady of the house was touched, never having heard of them before.

" Do they ever want money ? " she inquired, and scarcely waiting for a reply sent all the spare money she had in the house in bank-notes (£110) anonymously, with the words, " In answer to your prayers."

It was not until some years had elapsed that this governess told us how this surprise had been inspired, so that we had no clue to thank our unknown friend, but surmised, thanked God.

Our Evening Prayer was a precious time, looked for by the girls after their toilsome day as one of refreshment ; many a grip of the hand bore silent testimony that it had been one of blessing.

The services were often taken by our friend and chaplain, the Rev. Canon Maunsell, of the church in the Avenue Marbœuf ; the attendances were full and regular, and the girls themselves helped to prepare the room to seat eighty and sometimes more, and practised the hymns.

One Sunday night, when the service in the crowded room had exhausted him, I exclaimed :

" Just one more service, Canon, and then you can go home ! "

He looked at me and at Mrs. Maunsell appealingly, but when I opened the door for the next service he saw a comfortably spread supper-table. He said smilingly :

" I could but wonder what other service ? You do not forget that we, too, are human ! "

The Annual Report of 1875 closed with the words :

" Going forward in the strength of His conscious Presence, one can but speak of Praise with His loving, gentle dealing, and trust Him to carry the burden, which else must cause human hands and hearts to fail.

" And surely Praise brings an echo, a Voice which seems to ask, ' Believest thou ? Thou shalt see greater things than these ! ' "

CHAPTER XIII

GOVERNESSES, ARTISTS, AND BALLET GIRLS

IT was soon apparent that our Home at 77, Avenue de Wagram, was too far away for any organized work amongst our British and American girls employed in shops, who appeared to think themselves shut off, if not forgotten. I was so occupied with my new venture that it was impossible for me to visit them. So they appealed for some attention; also, when possible, sleeping accommodation.

With a credit balance of two francs in hand and one quarter's rent paid in advance, a Home and Rooms specially for Sunday guests were opened, February 9th, 1873, in the Faubourg St. Honoré, just opposite the Élysée Palace, which delighted the girls, as they could see in the courtyard all the happenings of that historically interesting epoch.

This Home began our Y.W.C.A.—associated with that revered lady, Miss Emma Robarts.

There were many inconveniences—neither water nor gas; the bedrooms like closets and the kitchen a box; the two front rooms, with doors between, alone being inviting.

Soon they were crowded, and were evidently too small!

The Honble. Jane Hoste came to my rescue as Lady-in-Charge, contenting herself with the soft bed in the *salon*.

On Sunday afternoons we had Bible Reading, and after tea a Service of Song until time for the Evening Service at the church in the Rue d'Aguesseau, or for those who attended the Rev. Baron Hart's Chapel, 23, Rue Royale.

This venture in the Faubourg St. Honoré brought me

in touch with two who proved themselves to be true helpers, one an English girl in a baker's shop in the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, who told me that many English-speaking women came to take the shreds of bread sliced off loaves sold by weight, which were given away. Some would hide what they took under their circular cloak; others immediately ate with avidity! She took my cards and New Year's letters, and herself brought other girls too timid to venture alone. Another, who made herself known to me and had tasted something of the sorrows and relentlessness of a great city—the playground of every nation and the responsibility of none—longed to help. She thought she could visit and look up girls; and would like to be able to nurse them when sick. So, after having some training at the Middlesex Hospital, Nurse Newman returned to Paris and was a true helper as Mission Nurse; she used to carry a little basket of eggs and Brand's Essence—"Oxo" being unknown in those days—which she freely distributed to grateful recipients.

One Sunday, with guests crowding each room as our evening meal was just ready to be served, we had a surprise. Two ladies arrived, who insisted upon Miss Hoste and myself sitting at the table and for themselves to be our sole waitresses! To the charm of mystery they added that of true sympathy and endeavour to further and strengthen our work. As their visits were renewed, they revealed themselves as Adelaide, the Countess Spencer, who became my first Honorary Secretary, and the Lady Sarah Spencer.

Later we were able to move to a larger *appartement*, 26, Faubourg St. Honoré, where, although taxed for the carpet upon the front stairs, we were bidden all—except Madame la Présidente and her friends—to take the *escalier de service*!

Madame la Concierge, so unique in looking after her employers' interest as well as her own, one New Year, my usual *reconnaissance*, naturally of financial value, being

somewhat *en retard*, she greeted me, " *Mais, Madame, il ne faut pas perdre une bonne habitude.*"

On May 10th, 1878, the late Earl of Shaftesbury opened our Governesses' and Artists' Institute, these ladies finding their need not only of a Sunday Home, where they could sit at leisure, but where they could have their meals and meet each other; and also for reading, study, or piano practice.

These rooms were on the ground-floor of 30, Rue Chaillot, where we had the great advantage of a garden, and many pleasant evenings were spent. Sometimes one hundred would be present at different times during the day. The lady who devoted herself to this part of our work was Miss Davidson, who, with characteristic sympathy and energy, divined the requirements of the lonely governess and student.

The need for a Home for this special class was soon apparent, so we removed, where we could combine a Home with the Institute, to a very good *appartement* in the Rue de la Böetie.

At that time there was a curious by-law, which did not permit any *locataire* to have more than a certain number of persons present in a private *appartement* without special permission. So, in signing the lease for this *appartement*, we had agreed that those present should not exceed this number and that upon leaving they should be required to give a certain password to the *concierge*. The *appartement* suited us very well; it was near the Champs Élysées, most central and very bright, and we were careful to keep to our agreed number. However, one evening after we had had a most successful Soirée, I waited until all had gone, and thinking that I should not count as the *appartement* was taken in my name, when asking the *concierge* to " *Tirer le cordon, s'il vous plait*," thoughtlessly I gave the password. The next day the Commissaire de Police called, giving us three days' notice to quit! Nothing daunted, Miss Davidson looked out for a larger *appartement*.

We moved to the Rue Bastiat, where we did not attempt the impossible, and this time we had considerably over two hundred members.

Here, too, we had an adventure, when leaving for still larger accommodation. One of our lady workers, not liking the paper which covered the walls of her room, at considerable expense to herself had it re-papered. Upon vacating, Monsieur le Propriétaire exacted " the previous condition " of this room, although so evidently improved by the superior papering, and we had the cost and the humiliation of returning it to its previous state!

Upon my congratulating one of our students that she, out of over two hundred other competitors at the École des Beaux Arts, had won the Grand Prix, which entitled her to a course of three years' study at Rome, she threw her arms around me, saying, " Oh! it was the beef-tea that did it! I owe all to the beef-tea; without it I should not have had courage to make the attempt! "

From the Rue Bastiat our Governesses' and Artists' Institute and Home was moved to 153, Faubourg St. Honoré, and, finally, to 18, Rue de Milan, which, out of compliment to our American friends, was named " Washington House." Both of these changes took place under a very practical worker at that time.

Later, the late Miss Eliza Ayerst took charge and gave us, as she said, " a seventh part of her life," during which the spiritual interests of those who frequented the Homes were her first care.

The first mortgage we have ever had upon our property is at Washington House, only one portion of the purchase price being paid, the interest of which has been a heavy burden to us for over thirty years. Like the " pound of flesh "—it well-nigh saps our vitality.

And how often could we have sold it at a much higher figure than we bought it! Then what of the girls whom we should have to turn adrift from where nearly nine thousand found a welcome?

I received a post-card from a friend of my early days, which ran thus : " About forty English ballet girls have left to-night for the Theâtre Française. Can you do anything ? " On going to the theatre I was assured that not an English girl was there. Giving a coin to the *concierge*, I said I would wait for a friend, and considered what to do. After some minutes two English girls came. I at once spoke to them. They said they were already late, and asked me to write what I wanted. They then flew up a back, circular staircase, and I followed them and soon found myself behind the scenes of the Theâtre Française. The curtain was so drawn that all I could see was innumerable legs and feet being trained in the way they should go, while a dancing mistress screamed instructions.

Waiting for some minutes to see if there were any possibility of speaking to any of the girls, or finding the two to whom I had spoken, I returned to the *concierge's* lodge and wrote a letter inviting them all to dine with me on Sunday at 77, Avenue de Wagram.

Over twenty came ; we dined alone. The earthquake at Ischia had just happened, so our conversation centred upon it and begat confidences as to how they were situated in Paris. It appeared they were lodging in a *maison meublée*, and were engaged to dance twice a day, Sundays excepted, and were to receive a pound a week each. They expected this would be paid in advance, but had received nothing. Some of them knew a great friend of mine, the Rev. Prebendary Glendinning Nash. We sang some hymns, in which some of them heartily joined, and after our evening prayer it was time for them to leave. When this suggestion was made, several of them burst into tears, and said, " Why are you sending us away ? Can we not sleep here ? We'll give you no trouble." It was difficult to impress upon them that this Home could not meet their needs, being too far away from their theatre as well as already overcrowded. Then they said, " Why can't you have a Home for us. We are wretched where we are ? " Indeed, to look at these

girls, so trained to be attractive, so exposed, so lonely, begat an inspiration to help, so I promised to do what was possible ere they left and to call for them next Sunday morning and take as many as wished to church with me before dinner.

Meanwhile I wrote to *The Times*, stating the facts, and to my great delight about £200 was sent in response to my letter. An *appartement* was taken near to the Theâtre Française. Next Sunday morning I called at their *maison meublée* and took them to our Children's Home in crowded carriages. About thirty were ready to come, and most of them begged for the seat on the box with the driver, who, smilingly taking in the position, made room for three beside him, whilst two or three of them relieved the driver of the reins and drove themselves. That we attracted attention is putting the facts mildly. The girls looked what they were —a show! The only deduction which could be made was that we were out for an advertisement!

I meekly drove in the last carriage, and it was a relief to my mind when we landed safely at the Boulevard Bineau, for these young " daughters of Jehu " drove furiously!

After a comfortable dinner we sat in the garden, where they had tea. They were full of delight upon hearing that an *appartement* had been found near to their theatre, and that ere the next Sunday came round there would be thirty-six beds ready for them.

This Home was opened upon the 8th of August, 1882, by the Bishop of Huron, with a dinner of roast beef and plum pudding, which the girls enjoyed as heartily as if it had been Christmas Day, although it was a very hot day! The Home was quickly filled, and to my great satisfaction a bright, capable worker, Miss Daniels, undertook the management. Often the girls did not return from the theatre until nearly two in the morning; still, supper always awaited them and they had breakfast in bed every morning.

It was not until six weeks after their arrival in Paris that

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the overdue payments for their salaries were made; when, instead of receiving a pound, or its equivalent, twenty-five francs, for each week, which had been promised in advance, according to their agreement, they had a "napoleon" (16s.) given them. Being paid in gold it was not until they returned to the Home that they knew the difference in value between a sovereign and a napoleon!

Immediately we thought it right to protest, as their agreement clearly stated "one pound weekly in advance." The girls got up a round robin, asking for the difference to be made good. The manager used unspeakable language, but when confronted with the agreement, paid it. After this, severe fines were inflicted for trifling irregularities. Once in a butterfly dance, when some of the wings which were screwed on to their shoulders went wrong, the whole lot were fined for spoiling the poetry of the movement.

Their Sunday with me at the Orphanage was their last free Sunday; two performances were now required on that day, although their agreement stipulated for no Sunday performances.

To keep these girls from making outside and undesirable acquaintances was a problem. My instructions to the Lady-in-Charge were that no visitors at the Home were to be received without my written permission. Needless to say, many carriages with apparently wealthy occupants called with an invitation for a drive in the Bois de Boulogne. One of these ardent admirers managed to convey a boy's suit to the theatre for one of the girls to don upon leaving instead of returning with the rest. She did so—and disappeared! This had its effect among the girls and gave a sense of insecurity as well as of impending danger. One and another began to realize what their position must have been without a Home. Talking to them one night, the question was put, "what would they do when their dancing days were over? How earn a livelihood?" This made them think, especially when, with the frequent fines, they saw the impossibility of paying their way in the Home,

even with their seven days' work. At times they only gained eight francs a week.

Reading the agreement again, under which they had left England, they began to revolt at the two performances on Sunday; and another round robin protest was sent, accompanied by myself, which was met by the most abusive threats and language. As the agreement had been broken, I asked the manager if he would pay their way back to London, to which he, with a storm of threats, consented, saying he did not bring out girls to be looked after and would pay their fare to leave on a certain day. Most of the girls were delighted. The day came, cartloads of their costumes arriving from the theatre in time to be registered with their tickets, for which we advanced the money.

It was not well until we had seen the twenty-eight girls who wished to return comfortably seated in the train ready to start that the agent from the theatre appeared with the money for their tickets; so, had not the money or the fares been advanced and had there been no "Home," these girls would have been that night stranded in Paris!

This little effort for a "Home for Ballet Girls" roused considerable interest in London. It was an inspiration for a similar "Home" in London, Macready House.

We had two other temporary homes for ballet girls who came for the season, and closed them when they left Paris.

CHAPTER XIV

OUR MISSION HALL AND WORKMEN'S HOME

THE Mission Hall, 79, Avenue de Wagram, came into being through the young women of my early days having married, some of them to husbands who "went nowhere" on Sundays. We could not invite them to come without their wives to our Mission Services at the Home, and they needed a place where they might meet during the week-nights: so, one of our energetic workers, Miss Shield, proposed a Mission Hall for Mission Work, also in which Mothers' Meetings could be held.

The Christmas of 1875 saw this wish fulfilled. Over the door was inscribed:

"HAVE FAITH IN GOD."

The hall was filled with chairs and tables, and would seat at a crush about one hundred and twenty, although more have been counted there. We opened with a real English Christmas dinner, and gave out a series of meetings for mothers in the week-days and for men specially on Sunday evenings.

The Sunday meeting for English coachmen had its origin in a remark made by a coachman when his wife was invited to attend the Sunday evening service in the Mission Home. As he opened the door to show us out, he said, "So salvation is for women; nothing for us men!"

A meeting was suggested, to be held on Sunday evenings in the Mission Hall, and a second meeting was afterwards arranged, at the men's own request, on a week-day, to practise the hymns, one of them remarking, "If anything

will make a man a Christian, it's singing Sankey's Hymns." Some little time afterwards a third meeting was suggested for prayer.

A characteristic of these meetings is that there are constantly new faces; on no two evenings is the same class present. There are names in the book of five hundred and fifty men who have attended within the last three years.

During the year 1886, when staying at Saratoga, I was interested in the Indian section of a fair which was being held. Some daintily worked baskets of many colours attracted me, especially one of particularly fine straw, but it was beyond my means as I had already made many purchases. Upon giving my name and the address where the goods were to be sent the Chief exclaimed, "Why, lady, I was sure I knew your face. It's Ada Leigh, of Paris, where we went to the Mission Hall on Sunday nights!"

"When?"

"Why, the year of the Grande Exposition in 1878, and you gave us each a Testament, when we told you we were returning to America, with a prayer written inside, 'O God, give me Thy Holy Spirit, that I may see the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour!'"

"I am a missionary now," he went on, "and I speak to my tribe on every Lord's Day!"

Looking back, I recalled those Indians who came over, as he said, for the Paris Exhibition.

Upon my arriving at my hotel and opening my purchases, there was the tiny basket of beautiful workmanship, to which was attached the Chief's card, and written under his name, was the one word

"RECONNAISSANCE."

Miss Shield did not remain long, joining some hospital in England, and the honour of truly working up our Mission Hall belongs to Miss Margaret Carmichael.

All our workers paid for their board at the Home, and other personal expenses, remaining for about nine months

in the year and then taking a long holiday. For twenty-seven years Miss Carmichael never missed a Christmas dinner in the Mission Hall, her name being honoured amongst the British working class as a household word. Besides the Mothers' Meetings, which were crowded and for which bales of goods were sent from England (when we always obtained a pass to exempt them from duty), there were Children's Sewing Classes, Blue Ribbon and Church of England Temperance movements, as well as a night school. In my possession to-day are the rolls containing the signatures of over two hundred "Blue Ribbon" children.

Miss Carmichael had several helpers, but her right hand was Miss Edith Mitchell, who came so bright and young to share her burden that mothers and children were attracted by her simple goodness and unswerving efforts. When H.R.H. the Princess of Wales, now Queen Alexandra, visited our Mission Hall with the Prince, one of our Sunday-school children was given a bouquet to present to the Princess, but turned from the royal lady to give it to Miss Mitchell, much to the amusement of Her Royal Highness. Later, Miss Mitchell tided our Home at 77, Avenue de Wagram over several difficult times in the absence of other workers, and was always loyal and true, and toiled on with great self-abnegation. To her belongs the honour of initiating our Members' Union in 1892, connecting those who have been resident in the Home who are now in different parts of Europe and the English-speaking world. This has enabled us to stretch forth our hands to help numbers of our countrywomen during the war.

A flourishing Sunday-school was also held at the Mission Hall; indeed, the room was scarcely ever void of some Christian effort being made within its walls. The Christmas dinners usually numbered nearly three hundred, beginning with children at noon, and later on women and men. To prepare for this, Miss Carmichael and her helpers were busy at 6 a.m., leaving the puddings boiling before they attended the Christmas Day morning service.

Miss Carmichael had a wonderful influence upon men. Our records, *Echoes from Paris*, which were then published every month, tell many an interesting incident, and her letters which she wrote most conscientiously during my temporary absences from Paris were full of thrilling stories.

After our own Sunday Evening Mission Service at 77, Avenue de Wagram, sometimes I stepped in to her Sunday Evening Meeting, which did not close until 10 p.m., beginning with tea and talk at eight. One night my sense of humour was roused, although controlled, while watching the incoming guests sitting near the partition when the tea was being made. Miss Carmichael was piling in teaspoonsful of tea into the urn; a very practical worker was helping her who rather chided, thinking less would do, when Miss Carmichael remarked as an excuse that "the tea was a great attraction and brought the men within the reach of the Gospel!"

"If that is so, and it helps to save their souls," replied the other, "pray let us use it with great economy, as there are so many souls to be saved. Why all that we have would not nearly go round!"

One Sunday night I counted over eighty men, to whom Miss Carmichael, looking beautiful with inspiration, was talking. There was evident Power working that night, and as they were singing the well-known hymn, "Jesus paid it all," tears were starting from several faces. So I simply told the men in closing the meeting that if they would like to take their hymn-books with them to refer to that hymn during the week, they might. Nearly every man pocketed his; one in particular I noticed who stood by a pillar in the hall, with the tears streaming down his cheeks. I spoke to him, and he said with sobs:

"Will JESUS pay it all for *me?*"

"He will if you ask."

"Ah! mine is a big debt!"

"Nothing is too big for Him to pay if you will only ask Him."

"But you don't know all, Miss. Why—I killed my wife! Yes, killed her!"

Indeed, we *did know*. His wife was the niece of an earl. This man, after serving as a well-paid jockey, became a riding-master, and in giving her lessons persuaded this girl of seventeen to marry him. So, early one morning they were married in Berlin, where she was studying and in the care of a German family. She, disowned by her relations, had an allowance, which he gambled away, then drifted to Paris. Though he was not aware of the fact, we knew his wife and child well. Being found in deep distress and want, she was tended in her dying hours by our Nurse Newman, and her child rescued.

Through us her little girl was adopted by a childless lady and gentleman whose brother's shooting-box in Scotland adjoined that of the earl. So this child, through the beautiful weaving of an Almighty Hand, unconsciously played beneath the shadow of the trees where her mother had spent her young and thoughtless fairy days.

It was this man's last mission service. Missing him the next Sunday, Miss Carmichael sought him, and found him in the Hospital Beaujon—a changed man! When delirious, the old love, strong in death, lingered. He would fancy himself dealing out the cards, making his bets and losing! "Who'll pay?" was the query, as he had nothing left to pay with. Then the hymn, of which the words had sunk with conviction, came back to him; and with the assurance, as his drawn and ghastly features lit up with a smile, he gasped: "JESUS paid it all!"

Our Mothers' Meetings were likewise crowded and blessed. More than one of the mothers said it was the only church they were able to attend with their babies!

Added to Miss Carmichael's widely spread efforts for the good of our countrypeople, was a soup kitchen opened during the winter months. The distress among the British poor was very great at that time, the British Charitable Fund of that day having very inadequate means, which

were mostly dependent upon the yearly Charitable Ball given at one of the leading hotels in Paris.

Tutors teaching many languages and holding university degrees for a time appeared to be comfortably paid, but when the cold winds began to sweep along the boulevards and avenues and their pupils went south many were left destitute.

Pitiable scenes have been witnessed when well-born and highly cultured men, with wives and baby children, have been found bereft of food and fuel; to such our soup kitchen three times a week was a God-send! Proud men amongst their fellows has hunger made equal; the common need touched all alike. After a hearty meal themselves large cans of soup—so substantial that they might be multiplied by three—have been grasped gratefully by delicate hands and taken home to their dear ones with *bons* for coal, meat, milk and bread.

The soup kitchen closed with a short service, which Miss Carmichael or myself would take; it was not obligatory for anyone to remain, but many did. For the first time the soup was given to every one who came in without questions, later each case was visited and reported upon.

One day in the depth of winter, quite a ladylike girl stepped in, scantily clad in summer clothing, and shyly took the first seat near the door, and immediately on the plate of hot soup being given to her thawed her chilled fingers over it. She waited for the address and listened attentively, but being near the door glided out before her name and address could be taken. She never came again. We asked a little dressmaker to try to trace her, and found where she lived, a tiny room *au sixième*, where she had been for about six weeks "looking for tuitions," the *concierge* said, giving her name as Mademoiselle Rose. She paid the first month for her room in advance, the second was overdue; she had not seen her of late. Mounting the stairs with the *concierge*, she knocked at her number; there was no reply. Upon the door being forced, Mademoiselle Rose

was found, having fallen on her face upon a bundle of clothes which she was evidently taking to the Mont de Piété to provide means for food, of which there was no sign in the room ; now—she had passed beyond the region of want !

Going myself to meet the *médecin de mort*, who came there to examine her body, I asked for permission to look over some of her letters so as to glean some information as to her friends. He asked me :

" Are you a relation ? "

" No ; I am a friend."

" Stand aside ! "

Alas ! that friendship could do so little.

Later all we heard was that the body was removed, where was not known !

Another case was that of an elderly woman, a constant visitor at our Mission Hall, to whom the soup was sent, as she could not come for it. Upon its being taken the next time, the portion left two days before was found still outside her door. The latter was opened, and she was found to have passed where hunger and thirst are no more !

Old women, and sometimes young, were found dead in their rooms from hunger and cold. Indeed, tragedies were not unusual during the winter months, in which pure want played its part.

No Home was more urgently needed to meet them than that of the Victoria Home for aged British Women, which our friend the Baroness Cloquet inspired with a generous gift.

In 1884 Miss Carmichael had a great influx of British workmen attending the services in the Mission Hall, some forty or fifty men who had been brought over to build the American Church of the Holy Trinity, Avenue de l'Alma, now the Avenue George V, for whom no accommodation, either of lodging or reading-room, was provided. These men were well paid, and only asked for suitable surroundings ; they did not know a word of French and were at a considerable loss for lack of guidance. They wanted

simple homely English fare to be provided for them, instead of the more *recherché* and varied dishes at the restaurants.

One evening twenty-six of them came to see me with a petition signed by over forty, headed by their foremen: the petition to me was a request to make a Home for them. Upon my declining, our Chaplain, who was present, promised the first £25 if I would relent. It was impossible to refuse. Upon my attempting to do so, one of them asked rather pointedly, "Is salvation only for women and girls, Madam—nothing for us men?"

So again I wrote to *The Times*, and the response quite justified my taking the *rez-de-chaussée* and *entresol* of 12 bis, Avenue MacMahon.

This Home was opened by the Right Rev. Bishop Titcomb, D.D., and the household arrangements were under the management of an excellent man and his wife who had had previous experience in England, the rules being drawn up by our Chaplain and a sub-committee of the men. They arranged to have what they called "something social" every night in the week up to Saturday.

The indescribable comfort and blessing of this venture can only be gauged by going over the records of those days, and the gratitude and trust of the men—some of them placing large sums of money into Miss Carmichael's keeping that it might be safe till they returned home—were touching.

All worked very happily and the Home was crowded. We had just put in an *ascenseur* from the kitchen to the dining-room to save labour, when an unforeseen and untoward incident occurred. The men invited me to one of their Social Evenings—it was interesting to mark the variety of talent brought out upon these occasions—and to give me a welcome, they put outside the entrance the British and American flags! Immediately we had notice to quit! My feelings when the gendarme came in to the meeting and demanded to see Madame *la propriétaire* may

be imagined. In this building, of which we rented only a part, were divers nationalities, and a foreign flag was an infringement of the law! How thankful I was not to be fined and also not to be obliged to remove the *ascenseur* when vacating.

This unsuspected visitation scattered our men, but not until they had entreated me to get them a Home of their own, "like the girls had," several of them saying that a Home near the Gare St. Lazare would be a great boon to men upon their first arrival in Paris.

Immediately I was on the look-out for another Home, and a house near the Gare St.-Lazare was recommended to me, 18, Rue de Milan. Upon inquiry I learned that the house and ground were to be sold for £20,000; a wealthy gentleman had built it twenty-five years ago upon the birth of his son at a cost of £25,000, apart from the land. He had passed away and his widow could not be persuaded to return to it. This house presented many advantages: the rooms were beautiful; age had mellowed the decorations with a touch of autumn, creating an atmosphere of that indescribable, undefined past born of happy days in which the very silence seemed to leave an echo.

When I went over the property, providentially the only son of the proprietor was present, so I spoke with him. He told me he had just come of age (twenty-five years). Upon my asking why he and his mother were parting with the property, he said that his mother would never return, and that as there was stabling for only six horses, whereas he wished to keep eighteen, he wanted to sell.

"If I were rich, I would give you the money . . . but," I rejoined, "it has all to be collected—a difficult task. This house is wanted for those who ask for only a bed, table, and a chair, whilst six horses are not sufficient to make you happy: you want to keep eighteen!"

The young man seemed touched, and, after a pause, said: "If my mother will consent, we will give you the house and you shall pay only for the land; in other words,

you shall have the house thrown in for the price of the land, if my mother will assent." Upon my asking him to make that offer in writing, he called the *concierge* to bring pen, ink, and paper. I noticed the beautiful mirrors and chandeliers in the *salon* and asked him to include them in the house, to which he assented, and wrote accordingly.

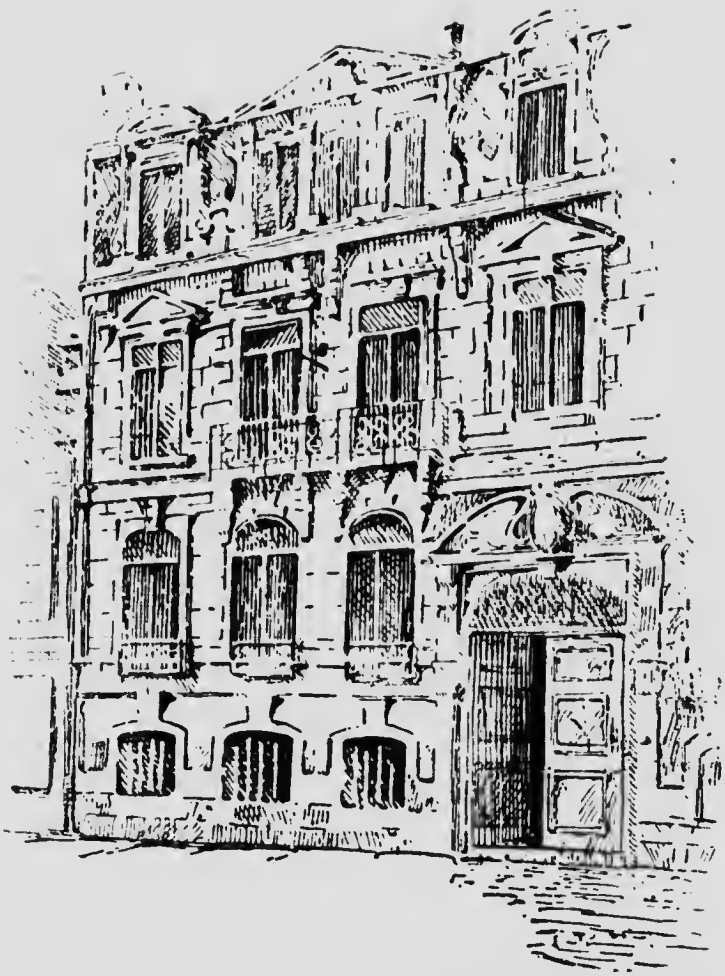
He read over this offer to me and gave me a copy to refer to our Council, and agreed to consult his *homme d'affaires*, and to meet me at the house in a week's time. On my side, the bargain was for immediate possession, the need for our men being urgent.

In a week we met again; his mother had assented and had proposed that, as the money had all to be collected, part of the purchase money should remain upon interest. With the house thrown in we only paid the value of the land which with the cost of conveyance came to over £12,000 apart from equipment.

As we were led to this effort among men through the building of the American Church by workmen from England who came to Paris without any provision being made for them, the late Mr. John Monroe, who for many years was a member of our Paris Council, thought it was very fair that the purchase of this property should be the American gift to our Association which from its earliest days had opened the doors of its three Homes to, and had included the interests of, American women with those of their British sisters in Paris.

Moreover, after the incident of finding with what ignorance girls crossed the Atlantic "to speak English in a shop," and how few came with their certificates of birth to prove their nationality in time of need, it had occurred to me more than once to visit the United States for the purpose of giving information which would lead to some organization being taken upon lines which would at least give publicity to facts!

I communicated with my kind friends, the Hon. A. A. and Mrs. Low, of New York, who had several times visited our Homes in Paris and subscribed most generously, and



THE "ADA LEIGH" HOSTEL FOR ARTIST AND GOVERNESSES, WASHINGTON HOUSE, 15 RUE DE MILAN

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they at once encouraged this plan and invited me to come and be their guest. So, after taking possession of the house at 18, Rue de Milan, I sailed for New York on the 7th August, 1886. The kindness and warm welcome which my hosts gave me at their charming house in Newport will never be forgotten. The morning after my arrival I found a cheque for $1000.00 under my breakfast plate, which amount through Mr. Low's influence and introductions soon increased fivefold. Considering the urgency of making known needs too well realized by me—for these young women came from all parts of the United States—in as wide an area as possible, the most practical way appeared to place them before the Bishops of the American Episcopal Church at their Triennial Convention at Chicago; so thither I went and my appeal was received with sympathy—several of the Bishops having visited our Homes. The Rev. Phillips Brooks, D.D., offered to preside at a meeting for me at one of the chief churches in Chicago, which I accepted, little dreaming that it meant a full choral service!

The Rev. Dr. Brooks invited me into the vestry and to walk by his side after a fully equipped choir; whilst the voluntary, a triumphal march, was played by the organist, who, it transpired, had once officiated at Christ Church, Neuilly, and wanted to give me a special welcome!

Dr. Brooks placed me with all deference into a special chair facing the congregation. The church was crowded, and I—cowed!

Returning to New York, through Canada, I made our work known in the chief Canadian cities.

The Rev. W. H. Huntington, D.D., introduced me to a very wealthy American lady in the hope of a "generous response."

"American girls," she exclaimed, "American girls in Paris! why I do not believe there are twenty of them there!"

"Madam, would it not be well while I am here for me to write to the American Consul there and make the inquiry?"

The reply by cablegram was :

" There are over eight hundred American girls in Paris, many of them getting their living as artists' models."

This was taken to the aforesaid lady ; her reply was only, " How very wrong and foolish of them ; I shall give nothing ! "

Another lady also listened to my story and when her husband, the Hon. Whitelaw Reid, was called to fill the position of American Ambassador to France, sought out and found her young countrywomen in the Latin quarter of Paris, where she founded " The American Girls' Club " —a work tl oughtfully done with large-hearted and quiet generosity.

CHAPTER XV

BERTHE AND LITTLE JOE

ON January 8th, 1873, upon the steps of the Church in the Rue d'Aguesseau, Miss Ritchie, a lady known and honoured for her wide benevolence, asked me the simple question, " Miss Leigh, will you take in a child ? "

Laughingly, I replied, " There is not a bed ! Pray send one with the child."

She inquired, " Do you really mean it ? "

And the reply was, " Certainly, if you do."

About two o'clock the same afternoon a cab drove up at 77, Avenue de Wagram, on the top of which was a little bed and inside the child. The cab fare was paid and there was no message ! I went down to welcome my new possession, and a dear little child clasped her arms around my neck. I asked her name, and she lisped, "*On m'appelle Berthe !* "

The little cot was put up in my bedroom, the only available place, and Berthe became my playmate. The strange and pathetic coincidence was that at that time I was visiting what was then the Galignani Hospital, where a poor mother lay dying, not knowing what would become of her child. She had left it with some French people whom she could not afford to pay. She pulled her purse from under her pillow—it contained two sous and a little silver medal with the Number 69 on it, the name of that French hospital where her child had been born. She was the orphan daughter of an English officer, married in England to a French officer ; her marriage being repudiated in

France. Upon her description of the child, I felt it must be little Berthe, and offered to bring her with me for her to recognize. The poor Mother knew her child, but want had made such ravages in her face that her child turned away and clinging to me, said, " Take me away ! Take me away ! "

" Yes," said the poor Mother. " Take her away, and bring her up as you would your own."

Later, she made the child over to my care legally. Being anxious to do all that was possible for the dying woman, I asked for a message for her nearest relation. Was there anyone to whom she would wish me to write ?

" No one," in a tone of deep pathos.

" Surely some one cares for you ! "

She shook her head. Venturing again :

" Soon it may be too late—all will be over."

Turning again, with scarcely audible speech :

" You may write to my Uncle ' when all is over ! '—a clergyman in the West of England. He, at least, has learned to forgive ! "

So waiting until " *all was over* " I wrote and found as the dying woman had stated, how truly he had " learned to forgive ! "

Little Berthe and myself were the only mourners. The pauper's coffin, of which the boards hardly met, and the rushed service, shocked me. The child had a new black dress, which her little hands kept stroking, as she said, " *Ma belle robe* ! " and pointing to the coffin, asked, " *Mais, qu'est-ce que c'est que cela ?* "

Who could explain what it was !

Too intensely the narrow rift between the living and the dead—the bare decency of the scanty covering of the body to which I was so close—appalled me ! and yet, I and the child remained fascinated and watching until the coffin was placed in the cemetery piled upon scores of others about a foot and a half below the ground !

Something in me impelled me to say to the grave-digger as he was using his spade to cover it with earth :

" Mark that coffin ! "

The man looked at me, as, giving him a piece of silver, I repeated, " Mark that coffin ! " Taking out of his pocket a piece of white chalk, he marked it with the figure " 3."

As I returned from the cemetery my first thought was to tell the lady who wished to adopt little Berthe, after having had her upon a six-weeks' visit, of the scene just witnessed, and to say that I should never consent to the child's adoption unless the mother were decently buried in a grave to herself which her child could visit and say : " Here rests my Mother ! "

She said : " I will do anything you wish ! "

It was pouring with rain, but we drove to the *mairie*—found that it would cost a considerable sum to have the body exhumed which the lady readily promised to pay—and thence to the cemetery, where the grave-digger quickly showed us the marked coffin, saying that " very soon the bodies there would be destroyed with quicklime as belonging to the unknown."

About a couple of months later, the lady and myself were summoned by the *mairie* to be at the cemetery about 5 a.m., when upon my attesting to the marked pauper's coffin, the body was immediately placed in a more fitting one, and the little procession was formed, bearing the dead to another part of the cemetery to a plot alone.

In that cemetery a simple white marble cross may be seen to-day bearing the inscription :

" *Ci-gît Selina.*"

The lady soon after claimed Berthe after asking me to find a suitable *gouvernante*, als to come and see the provision made for the child's bedroom, play and schoolroom where forethought had provided every requisite and for which my satisfaction was warmly expressed. When Berthe left me in her new clothes the lady sent her with a lovely gold bracelet which she helped her to clasp on my wrist as *porte-bonheur*.

Berthe now happily married came to see me not long ago, and with delight she showed him the corner where she slept and told him how she climbed into my bed in the morning and tried to open my eyes to see if I were awake!

Three days after the adoption of little Berthe, Little Joe was brought to us by two ladies. The child was young, but his history old; and the traces of want had left an expression of patient endurance on his face, which insensibly drew one's compassion. But the clouds which had darkened his life had had a ray of sunshine, and it is cheering to look back and note it.

When deserted by his unnatural mother, an old woman, poor, but rich in faith, took him. Unable to teach him to read, she taught him to pray; and it was owing to her gentle, loving influence that the sorrows of his young life softened and did not harden his character. During the first part of her illness he was her only nurse. It became necessary to move her to the hospital, where she died. Her scanty furniture of bed, table and chair, were due for the rent of her room. They had their commercial value, but a little fellow of seven years old, with an immortal soul, NONE! The *concierge* of the house had not the heart to turn him off the door-mat, which the proprietor had not thought worth while to claim and upon which he sobbed himself to sleep at night, hungry, and with no other possession save the dirty rags which scarcely covered him. Tears have their value; it is not without deep meaning that one remembers the sacred record of inspiration, "Behold, the babe wept." And so, the low moaning of grief in the lad unconsciously touched the very chords which woke up a bright future.

The little bed, which had been taken down when Berthe left, was put up again. When his hunger had been satisfied, the flowers on the mantelpiece in my *salon* attracted his notice, and he asked:

"Are those real flowers?"

The answer being "Yes," he remarked in a tone of reproach, which seemed to tell of a mind naturally alive to the beauties of nature, which had had no fair play in its life of pinching poverty: "I never had a flower!" True picture of many a child's life, where the keen struggle for the stern necessity of daily bread leaves no time for gathering, and perhaps little opportunity for even seeing, flowers.

This outspoken longing of the child's heart was again the unconscious means used by Him Who "knoweth" even a child's "sorrows"; and He put into the heart of a lady the desire to gratify it. She adopted him, and bought a piece of land for him to learn to cultivate, that his hitherto chilled and bleak life might rejoice and be freshened with many flowers.

Berthe is now the happy mother of eight children, surrounded by every comfort; and Little Joe, from his last photograph, 6 feet 2 inches in height!

CHAPTER XVI

THE POWER OF THE CHILD

"BELIEVEST thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these!" were the last words of our Annual Report of 1875: very truly have they been realized!

A trivial circumstance and a commonplace remark, forgotten almost as soon as uttered, have been the web and woof through which Divine Hands have woven

"GREATER THINGS THAN THESE!"

It would need a volume to touch the history, both weird and romantic, of the eighty-nine children received at 77, Avenue de Wagram up to 1876. We can only briefly report that twenty-four still remained and that we had parted with many whom we would fain have kept, lacking the accommodation—as our Home was primarily intended for British and American young women. Of those who had been left in deep distress through the death of both parents in Paris, several were adopted, and some found willing relations in England.

These children were taught by a resident, an accomplished young lady who devoted much of her time to teach them singing. We had many visitors who wondered how so many homeless British and American children could be found in Paris!

One, a well-known London banker, heard our children sing, and tears came into his eyes. He said:

"I won't give you money, but I will keep you in tea and sugar as long as I live!" Which he did—and which I was enabled to obtain free of duty.

How our lady housekeeper welcomed the chests of tea and sacks of sugar!

One day two ladies called to be shown over the Home. When we came to the *cinquième étage* where our twenty-four little children were housed, they remarked how close the little beds were together. They seemed amazed, probably upon finding more children than they had expected. I showed them the little balcony which was their only playground unless we allowed them to play in the Avenue de Wagram, which at that time was not yet built up and so had many vacant spaces. These ladies appeared most interested.

They declined to sign their names in the visitors' book, saying they would call again in a few days. Their names not having been announced, a wave of mystery came over me, and I wondered who they could be as we did not often receive anonymous visitors—indeed, the wealthy banker gave his name, which was revived at every arrival of tea and sugar! However, just as they were leaving, one remarked:

"How would you like the Galignani Hospital at Neuilly for your children? Supposing M. Galignani were to offer it?"

As the name of Galignani had never yet been identified by me as an individual, my reply was:

"Only let him offer it!" I wondered whether the words were a joke or meant seriously? . . . was this indeed the answer to the prayer that had gone up so often that God would be pleased to find a suitable home for these children?

These ladies left; and for a time there was a mysterious silence. Then quite unexpectedly Monsieur Galignani called on me. Upon my greeting him he half apologized, saying:

"It must be your Mother, Mrs. Leigh, I wanted to speak with." I replied that she was in England and had never been at our Home, and he then said:

"I want the lady who is doing this work!"

With no little abashment I presented myself again, had

our children down to sing to him and invited him to see part of our Home. Mons. Galignani was a man of very few words, yet nothing escaped his notice. He accepted our Annual Report, and went, leaving me with the undefined impression that although he had never named his hospital there was something in the wind.

Some days later Mons. Galignani invited me to meet him at his hospital in the Boulevard Bineau. After a few words of welcome, he asked me to go over the building, which I did, my heart throbbing with emotion while I was mounting the stairs, and entering each room—wondering if it were a fairy tale or a reality! As he did not accompany me, my thoughts were unrestrained. Upon my return to him, he asked whether I would like the building as a Home for my little children.

An interview was arranged with his lawyer, Mons. Pourcelle, and with our kind and staunch friend, R. O. Maugham, Esq.

This gift was ratified in a very pleasant manner, when Mons. Galignani invited me to his country-house. Going in very modest attire, thinking it was only to meet himself, I was somewhat perturbed to find a fashionable party assembled, and newspaper reporters.

Receiving me in the entrance hall, Mons. Galignani made quite a complimentary speech in introducing me, saying with what pleasure he had given his property in the Boulevard Bineau for a Children's Home, a work which he knew to have been long needed and which always inspired hope. He said that he had admired Miss Leigh's work from many points of view but most for its economy with efficient administration as well as the broadmindedness which it represented.

For myself I was dumb with surprise, thankfulness, and joy! Mons. Galignani understood and indeed gave me no time to feel any disquietude, taking me in to a sumptuous luncheon at which I was the chief guest and received many congratulations.

Altogether the day was one of surprises, and I longed to have someone to whom I could unburden my heart's joy. When welcomed upon my return by Miss Moon I scarcely knew what to tell her first! This beautiful gift appeared to have come so directly from God!

The cost of the conveyance of the property in perpetuity to our Association was most generously defrayed by Mons. Galignani, the deed of gift stating that it was not only to be a Home for children of British, American, or French intermarriages, but also a Home of Rest for British and American women.

The building was dedicated by Rev. Canon Maunsell, the honorary chaplain of her Home.

This new acquisition brought many fresh opportunities and responsibilities, although it required some time to grasp that it was not all a dream, especially when I realized that it was in the corner of the children's dining-room that I had found and visited the mother of little Berthe as she was passing away—she to a pauper's funeral—the child she had entrusted to me to wealthy surroundings! It is difficult to compress lives into pages; we can only glance at results.

The gift of the hospital for our children had come with such quick surprise that we had no available funds. Christmas was approaching, and the liabilities of some six weeks had to be faced. The thought haunted me, "we shall be burdened with debt," and walking from the Orphanage to the Home at 77, Avenue de Wagram, mentally I resolved upon an urgent appeal. The truth was that the joy of the gift of the property was so great that the necessity of finding means for its sustentation had scarcely been realized.

Adding up the accounts they totalled about £143, as many additions had to be made to cover the needs of children. It looked serious! What to do and how to begin? A sharp knock at the door of my *salon* interrupted my reflections. In response to the usual *entrez*, to my surprise in walked Monsieur Galignani! After kind inquiries, he laid a roll of notes upon my table, saying: "You must have had some

extra expenses ; so, until the English help to bear the burden of the Orphanage, I shall give you £300 a year."

His gift of £300 continued annually for 17 years.

Curiously, Mons. Galignani had been to the Orphanage and had followed me to the Home to place his most generous and thoughtful gift in my own hands.

It was so like a gift from our loving Father, sufficient for my pressing need and a little over, for He never deals with those who look to Him in a mean and scanty way.

Later Mons. Galignani wrote to the Lord Mayor of London that he "looked upon Miss Ada Leigh's Homes as a representative work of the British nation in Paris."

Some years after, the Galignani gift had a most welcome addition.

A French official had just called, and after putting me through a number of queries which I was ill-prepared to answer, went over the Home, inquired the number of children, with other particulars, and ended by saying that a schoolroom must be added and that he would send me a plan upon which it should be built. He left me with a feeling of resentment, of undue interference, the uppermost thought being that if we had to find the money for a schoolroom we should at least be free to choose our own plans ! An unexpected visit from our kind and staunch friend, the Baroness Alphonse de Rothschild, followed. My looks must have betrayed me. Seeing me perturbed, she remarked :

" What is the matter ? You look quite sadly ! "

My reply was : " A schoolroom is the matter ! " and I told her of my previous visitor. She asked, " Have you the land on which to build a schoolroom ? " " Oh yes ; we have the land!! "

Soon she left, saying with her sweet smile :

" Cheer up ! I don't like to see you looking so sad."

A few days elapsed when her footman came with a note :

" If I call this afternoon, shall I find you at home ? "

" Indeed, yes," was my reply.

The Baroness came soon after, and put a note into my hand, saying :

" Here is your schoolroom. Build it well and build it quickly. Dedicate it to my Mother."

Another effort was a crèche and kindergarten. Many of the girls of my early Paris days were married, and it was a problem where to send their children, as the British Free Schools did not then receive children under eight years of age.

The wonderful contrivances in Paris by which what would be a moderate-sized room in England is divided up into a *petit appartement*—the kitchen being no larger than a well-sized cupboard, the blessings of water being nil, all conveniences of life having to be carried up by hand and for which an exorbitant rent is asked—can scarcely be described.

It may well be imagined how children spend the first years of their life in such cramped-up surroundings. The mothers confided their anxieties to us. The dark and winding staircase, being scarcely safe for adults, presented far greater difficulties to the child just realizing the use of its limbs. These children were brought to us at an early hour, when they were dressed in a simple costume, fed, taken to play in the Parc Monceau, brought back for a simple little dinner and taught in the afternoon.

One thing the children were taught daily : a text and a prayer.

" Father, do you never pray ? " asked one of these children when at home. The father told us with tears in his eyes how the question brought back his early training. At six the children put on their own clothes and were ready for their mothers to call. This work continued for many years, until the British Free Schools admitted children under eight. Our books record a daily attendance of twelve to twenty-three.

More than once we were summoned by the authorities for an explanation of our work ; whether it was the name

of kindergarten, which we had given, or mere curiosity, it would be difficult to say. Still the Lady-in-Charge appeared to meet all inquiries satisfactorily. Once, however, I was cited to appear, and, taking our books of attendance with the names and addresses of the parents of the children, waited at the Tuileries for about two hours to see the minister who had summoned me.

Just as I was about to leave in despair, a number of ministers came into the vestibule, fully robed, with their portfolios under their arms. I made an inquiry as to the one whom I sought; he came, listened to my story, and said laughingly:

"*Il est vrai que j'ai vous ai citée de paraître devant moi, mais aujourd'hui ça ne compte plus, car dans deux heures nous aurons tous donné notre démission! Si, par hasard, on vous fait sommer encore dites que vous avez eu une 'interview' avec moi et que tout a été trouvé en parfait ordre!*"

Curiously, we were never disturbed again!

Our kindergarten so grew that we were obliged to hold it in our Mission Hall, and there was great sorrow when it closed. To-day, many interesting incidents can be told of these children, now men and women. At a recent soirée in our beautiful schoolroom quite a gentlemanly fellow played the violin with great skill and charmed his audience. Upon my congratulating him, he said smilingly, "Why, I am one of your boys!" reverting to his kindergarten days! Later he showed his gratitude in a most practical way, when, through the exertions of one of our churchwardens, electric light was being installed in Christ Church, 81, Boulevard Bineau, he did the work as a volunteer!

CHAPTER XVII

CHRIST CHURCH

MY next thought was to provide a church within easy reach for our children and for many of our young countrywomen in schools and families living about Neuilly; my decision being that although the doors of our Homes could be opened sufficiently wide to admit all creeds, it was more than important to bring children up in the principles of a definite one, and having myself been so clearly grounded in the faith of the Church of England, it was quite natural for me to wish them to adopt my own.

We were too far off from the church in the Avenue Marbœuf for many of our little children to walk, and the distraction and inconvenience of taking two omnibuses in those days made Sunday almost a day of toil.

My Father had often told my Mother that he would build a church and have it dedicated in her name, Saint Anne, so in a letter written to her early in 1877, my pen gave expression to what then seemed a dream—"St. Anne's Church will yet be built!" To have this wonderful gift of the Orphanage and to do nothing for the glory of God appeared to be impossible! This thought grew apace, until it permeated every idea and impelled action. I inquired the price of the land adjoining the Orphanage; it was £8000. That seemed too large a sum to give for land only, still my mind was so determined that more than once it was a near venture!

My first confidant in this absorbing resolve was Canon Maunsell, as it might interfere with many of the schools in that quarter who attended his church. He made reply:

"Don't let that weigh with you. I would rather any School attending my church on Sunday came to yours *twice*, than to that in the Avenue Marbœuf, owing to the distance, once."

After a night of great searching of heart, wondering if my dream would ever come true or prove but an idle vision, burdened with many thoughts I walked up the Boulevard Bineau further than I had ever been before, to the Boulevard Victor Hugo, when my eye was suddenly attracted by a man knocking into the ground a sign-post with the words, *Terrain à vendre*, and the address where to apply. This seemed like an invitation to make an inquiry. The position was unique; it faced five thoroughfares. So my way was soon made to the *propriétaire*, who did not live far distant.

I asked the price of the *Terrain à vendre*, and he replied:

"Oh, I bought it to enlarge my garden, but my wife is dead, so I care for it no longer. I would sell it for——" (Naming a price of about £3000.)

Three thousand pounds! And the other *Terrain à vendre* next to the Orphanage was £8000!

Almost unconsciously the words came from me:

"I will buy it."

"Oh," he said, "but it is worth far more than that. Look at the position!"

My reply was:

"Sir, that was the price you named; I have only taken you at your word."

"Yes, but one does not expect to find young ladies at a morning call buying up plots of land!"

Seeing my seriousness in accepting his figure, he gave me the name of his *notaire*, receiving from me the name of our lawyer.

This secured, I hastened to London to tell our kind friend, Bishop Piers Claughton (then Bishop of Northern and Central Europe); Bishop Jackson, of London; and

Archbishop Tait, of Canterbury, and to ask for their approval of my effort, which was very readily given. Indeed, my plea was unanswerable! To accept such a gift as the valuable property of our Children's Home from one, not of our kith or kin, and beyond that not quite of our faith, to care for the bodies of our little children and do nothing to the honour of the great Giver who had inspired the Gift, was impossible to those who believed in Eternity, especially in a city where our faith in the Divine and Unseen is judged by sight.

There were thirty-three Schools or Pensions in the Parc de Neuilly with numbers of our young country-folk.

The Bishop of London impressed upon me to build our church sufficiently large, as at first I had only thought of a much smaller edifice, and all whose advice was valued urged me on; not the last nor the least was Monsieur Galignani. He was also the largest donor to the church, and said as he placed the money into my hands:

"Go on! God is with you. That church is needed."

He desired that his gift should be dedicated to sittings for our children in the centre aisle that it might be seen to be "The Children's Church."

Later, Bishop Claughton held a meeting upon the ground purchased for the church and approved of our plans.

Apart from building a church, as I explained in my interviews with the Bishop of London, we were sorely in need of a permanent chaplain for the spiritual part of our work. Our calls upon Canon Maunsell, whose help was so willingly given to visit our sick and dying, and for our services, were far too frequent.

My dear Mother—who in my early venture had thought that "only a widow" should undertake the work I had in hand—was induced to come and visit our Homes. She was evidently impressed and expressed her opinion that the work was suitably equipped.

On September 13, 1877, my Mother, amid a large gathering, turned the first sod of the church, and Canon Maunsell

conducted the service. Never will his prayers be forgotten that the church might be truly consecrated to the Inspirer and Hearer of Prayers.

Canon Maunsell, the architect, and myself were mapping out the position of the walls and found that about eighteen feet more land would be needed. A house with a garden blocked the way. Wonderingly I made the remark, "If we could only buy this garden or at least eighteen feet of this land?" This wish must have been expressed in French and repeated more than once, for a lady sitting at an upper open window of the house in question called "*Oui, vous pouvez, et je vous vends la maison aussi. Il faut me voir.*"

I said to Canon Maunsell, "Why this house is just what we need for a Parsonage," and went around to the garden gate to see the lady. We asked the price, and were told the sum which they had paid for the land some years previously, also the figure which the building had cost, she added, that as her daughter was soon to be married, they would no longer need it. My heart responded, if not aloud, "It is just what we need!" So the house was bought.

When I went to London to meet our Association, after the usual payments had been voted for the Homes, the drawings for the church were presented for which to the amazement of our members, their adoption was moved. One gentleman after another took up his hat and went quietly out, leaving one, Frederic Bishop, Esq., my friend and Miss Amy Gurney, who was acting as Honorary Secretary. "What must I do?" he whispered to me. As the meeting had not been formally adjourned and as I was in the chair, my reply was, "Propose a vote of thanks" to which Mr. Bishop assented. Then the building of the church was authorized and a special fund opened.

My directors in London were informed of my doings for which I undertook the entire responsibility. Often I toiled, but happily and successfully, being able to meet the payments as arranged for, and may thankfully record that

Christ's Church, Neuilly, never had a payment due which could not be met.

One day as I was walking from the Children's Home to the church, a gentleman, who had been to 77, Avenue de Wagram, asked me what I was building. Upon my reply showing him the walls, he remarked, "You must believe a great deal in God to undertake such a work!"

My reply was: "I do, and this work is no labour but an intense joy!"

"Well, I don't believe too much myself, but I respect those who do," and he put into my hand a 1000-franc note.

One day, however, an unexpected claim came for 5100 francs, for which the *entrepreneur* gave me a week's notice. Our exchequer was empty!

The days passed; but not even a shilling was raised for the Church Building Fund. The evening of the last day the English post arrived as usual, still—there was nothing!

The *concierge* put out the lights on the *escalier*; I retired to my room, and locked my door.

A few minutes later heavy knocks obliged me to open—the *concierge* stood there with the postman, who was full of apologies for having omitted to deliver a letter which he had found tucked away between a loose lining of his bag: he would have delayed his visit until the next morning but had to pass our door and leave his bag at the post office.

When this interruption came my heart was musing "lest, if Thou make no sound Thou hearest not." My voice steadied itself to thank the postman, but I dared not open my letter in his presence lest it too contained—nothing!

Upon doing so a cheque for £200 dropped out from—J. W. Carlile, Esq., of Ponsbourne Park.

In his letter he said that when in Paris he had started to visit our Home one evening, and upon reaching it heard us singing; so thinking some service was being held, would not disturb us, but sent his cheque, with his heartiest good wishes, for £200 for the Church Building Fund.

Our Workers' Prayer Meeting the next morning was one of praise.

It seemed to me that the rest of the amount needed was somewhere within our reach, and the suggestion that the box for thank-offerings at the door of the Home had not recently been opened was acted upon.

We counted out the largest amount ever found, 180 francs, so our payment was secured to the hour, with—a little over!

On May 10th, 1878, their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Wales, laid a memorial stone in the choir of Christ Church.

After the dedication was over, the Princess turned to Lord Lyons and asked:

"Is all the money for the church collected?"

His Excellency replied with a smile:

"Is not that rather an unkind remark? I believe Miss Leigh has it all to find!"

The procession then formed for the Royal party, Lord Lyons giving his arm to the Princess, the Prince to myself, Lord Shaftesbury to my Mother. As we were walking down the aisle of the church, which was lined by our children, his Royal Highness said:

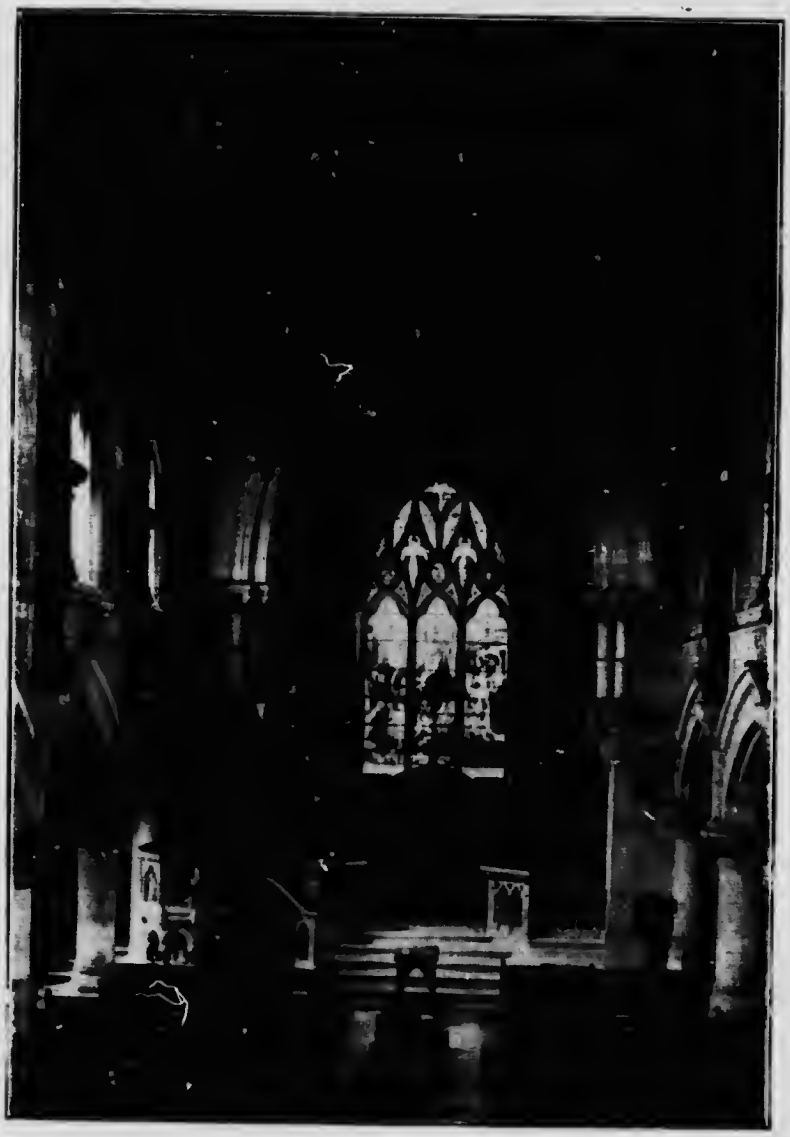
"So these are your little children!" and admired several of the children who had an unmistakably distinguished look. "Is not yours the Home where you ask no questions?" My reply was that I thought it much better to do a kindly act first and let the questions come after.

"I quite agree with you," said his Royal Highness.

Before leaving, the Prince and Princess wished me every possible success, and felicitated the architect upon the designs of the church. A day or two later came a very gracious contribution to the Building fund.

The Church was dedicated by the Right Rev. Bishop Ryan, D.D., acting for the Bishop of London, on June 20th, 1878.

Only six working days a week were allowed for the build-



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CHRIST CHURCH, NEUILLY-SUR-SEINE

BUILT AND OWNED BY THE ASSOCIATION AND ENTIRELY UNENDOWED

ing of Christ Church. The men were impressed that I paid them for the 7th but would not permit them to do the work. Many did not know how to employ themselves on that day but brought their *déjeuner* with them as usual and many a weary man slept within the building. Truly they needed this rest; as more than one of them remarked to me "*que le lundi le travail était mieux fait.*" We tried to impress upon the men that the Law we were enforcing was not human, but divine.

When in London about this time, one Saturday returning after a heavy morning's work to the hospitable home of the Dowager Lady Wolverton at Lancaster Gate, whose guest I was, and had divested myself of my foot-gear for more comfortable slippers, when a telegram was put into my hand, commanding my presence at Marlborough House. Looking at the clock, I saw that I was due in a few minutes. So I breathlessly mounted a hansom, and Marlborough House was soon reached. After settling with the driver through the little aperture at the top, I prepared to alight, forgetting that my foot was only protected by a loose slipper, which dropped close to the pavement, leaving my white stockinged foot hanging out and myself—discomfited! A gentleman who was passing and saw my confusion, came forward, picked up the slipper and placed it on my foot, and so relieved my embarrassment. Before he could even be thanked, he had turned into the lodge of Marlborough House. Following him to keep my appointment—being curious to know who the gentleman was who had acted with such chivalry—upon signing my name in the visitors' book, I discovered that it was Lord Beaconsfield. I hastened up the drive, to thank him, and he, realizing my intention, turned around, and faced me with a smile and most profound bow!

It was my last look at Lord Beaconsfield.

CHAPTER XVIII

ECHOES OF THE WAR, 1914-19

JULY 30th, 1914, found me *en route* for Paris.

When I arrived at Calais, the rumours of war which had been ominously gathering, assumed a definite shape. We were stopped. Only one train for Paris and it crammed. Recollecting that Lord Kitchener had crossed in the same boat, I sent him my card, asking to be allowed to travel in his compartment to Paris. The messenger returned, saying that Lord Kitchener had been recalled and would I occupy his reserved place. This, after weary waiting amid disturbing military surroundings, was a great boon.

In Paris matters looked threatening. The English Government had not yet given its decision to support France. Meanwhile many of our governesses were already in the country on long holiday engagements, numbers of whom were dismissed at an hour's notice without payment. To help all we could to leave for England was the first duty, in which we were helped by the British Charitable Fund (which sat continuously), until our Home at 77, Avenue de Wagram was cleared. 18, Rue de Milan was then the Home for the concentration of our efforts.

Here, British and American women sought us at all hours. Numbers came to us after having found the doors of the British Consulate closed. Many of these only had an hour (after the ringing of the alarm bell in the outlying villages) in which to leave ; hence they could take nothing with them except that which they could carry.

The frightfulness of the conditions in which many came

to us can only be told with a shudder. Some had travelled for days in cattle-trucks with wounded soldiers and arrived bewildered, stunned, and un-nerved from hunger. One well-connected, highly educated girl told us how the slow trains, in which wounded were herded, were shunted at stations for a speedier train of living freight to pass; and how, ere leaving again, the dead were unceremoniously shoved out on to the pavement. A continuation of these scenes, she said, played upon the imagination and but for the irreverence shown, she could have wished herself among the slain!

Each had a different experience of the same terror of fleeing from the enemy—scared, all but penniless and lacking food and clothes. Almost every night, every chair in the Home was occupied by such refugees.

Our funds were soon exhausted and our bank closed. To obtain food on credit was particularly difficult; so to leave for England was imperative.

There was regularly every night at the Gare St. Lazare a solid block of about two thousand persons waiting to leave, it being almost impossible to thread one's way.

A porter recollecting the kindly actions of the *bonne maison* of Washington House, having seen how futile were my attempts to pass through to the train, approached me and said that if I would come to a certain door, where he indicated, at 8 p.m., he would let me in to a train which would leave at 3 a.m. the next day, but added that I must bring nothing with me; so that stated hour saw me thankfully steaming out of Paris.

Our Directors were summoned by telephone to a meeting at the Bank, 54, Lombard St., over which presided our loyal treasurer and friend, the late F. A. Bevan, Esq., and our financial need was soon solved by a bag of gold given to me in exchange for the cheque which had been useless in Paris. That same night saw me returning to that city.

Amid the acuteness of the daily need, and the increasing demands on us for help—we were besieged at all hours

of the day and night—our bag of gold dwindled and soon came to an end.

One night, about this time, I was called up at two a.m. by a shout from a Red Cross Car which had stopped under my window.

"Sixteen blankets and pillows, quick!"

As soon as it was possible to gather them—some from our sleeping inmates—they were thrown over my little balcony, caught below, and the car disappeared.

Our varied experiences might fill a volume. Wives, sisters, fiancées came, thinking that we could find their loved ones, even if dead. Some of them had never before left England and had very little money or knowledge of French; they were almost petrified with shock and uncontrollable grief.

To soothe and try to hush and advise was a privilege, and to help to lead to the only One Who could really deal with the broken in heart.

For many, little could be done beyond the searching for their dead. Our Chaplain, the Rev. H. T. R. Briggs, with unwearying devotion, sought in pits where the bodies had been cast by the score, for the one loved form!

And we were penniless, though rich in untold opportunities for good! Our paying in gold had, however, raised the financial confidence of our *fournisseurs* and they again gave us credit.

Then came a letter from a very unlooked-for-quarter with a cheque enclosed for a £1000! This tided us on, but, alas! quickly melted with the numerous claims by which we were surrounded.

Girls hastily roused in the night from burning surroundings walked scantily clad from Arras to our Home in Paris. Nurses, some gassed, others wounded, arrived at our Homes.

One Armenian girl who had been companion to a lady was left in the streets penniless, and came to us. British and American women who fled from Constantinople, Athens, Budapest, Prague, and from other parts were

welcomed into this Home. Others imprisoned for months and rescued by the Prisoners' Aid Society were helped and seen through Paris by our Chaplain, the Rev. H. T. R. Briggs who was always ready for any act of self-denial. Our Homes, although shaken, were spared the destruction which other buildings suffered. To-day these properties claim attention. The estimate for repairs so increases that to-day it reaches thou[illegible] of pounds. Indeed all the properties of the Assoc[illegible] (*which are held in perpetuity*) bear the marks of war and call for help; one Home also awaits rebuilding.

Miss Olive Hamlin writes :—

"To have known Mrs. Travers Lewis and helped her with her work in France has been one of the greatest joys of my life and I thank God that He gave me the privilege and opportunity of coming to her aid in the darkest period of her work, i.e. at the outbreak of war.

The first time I met Mrs. Lewis she asked me to take her little children away from Paris because of the nearness of the Germans—indeed all who could leave Paris did so—and I well remember my impulsive and unhesitating reply 'I will,' not for a moment doubting my ability to overcome the obstacles before me.

The children had been taken to Washington House, and the first time I set eyes on them they were all sleeping, huddled together on mattresses on the floor, an arrangement made as a safeguard against the falling missiles from the Taube which flew over Paris. One of these missiles fell with fatal results close to Washington House.

Soon these Tinies were toddling along with me to the Gare St. Lazare, like pilgrims venturing to a strange land, the only difference being that we were fleeing to save our bodies instead of our souls! We took tickets for Fontainebleau and after a very slow and tedious journey found ourselves at the station surrounded by soldiers.

These *poilus* were very anxious to help with the children

and one of them procured a waggonette at his own expense, and ordered the driver to take us wherever we wished to go. Thus we left Fontainebleau and went about eight miles into the country, then, leaving the children in the waggonette by the roadside, I set out to find a suitable house where we should at least escape the Taubes.

It was not until my head was on my pillow that night that I realized how near we were to the fighting zone and that we might have to pack and flee again at any moment.

The next day we discovered that wounded and dying soldiers were being brought up the Seine in boats from the battle of the Marne, and that *poilus* were on guard at every bridge and in the high-roads. However, God was very good to us and we came to no harm.

I think our children enjoyed more fruit there than they had ever seen in their lives. Grapes, peaches, and pears were given them in abundance by the peasants. Indeed tons of fruit lay rotting on the ground that autumn, for there were no men to gather them.

When winter came on, we were obliged to return to the Orphanage at Neuilly. For a few months we were left undisturbed by the Germans, then one night—and never shall we forget that first terrific Zeppelin raid—the firing woke us from sound sleep and so frightened were the children that they ran in all directions. At that time they were not trained to run down to the cellars, and to get all safely below was no easy matter; some of the babies, after having been wrapped up in blankets and put ready for the order to descend, crept back into their beds and curled up quite unconcerned.

But we had many of these night-marches after that and an air-raid alarm drill was taught.

On several of these occasions Mrs. Lewis herself brought up the rear of the procession to the cellars and her children appreciating her presence with them would ask her if they might sing their evening hymn—

'God keep us safe this night.'

Indeed, their little voices must have been heard on high, for though houses were blown up and windows smashed quite close to us, our Home remained untouched to the end, save for the roof!"

Miss Wright, Directress of Washington House writes :—

"Life's best joy is in serving others, and it is impossible to think of the Ada Leigh Homes during the 'Great War' without the thrill that endeavours and achievement always bring, and with deep thankfulness for the supply of all needed courage and strength.

We seem to have followed the vicissitudes of campaign—well sustained in work, but with an ever changing scene. The financial and economic difficulties were a stiff problem, sometimes the merest regulation of food, which must be sought for in varying places, sometimes no light, often no fuel, far more difficult to obtain than food. There were times, weeks together, when daily coal must be sought for at all possible depots, and solicited from heads of departments. We well remember one cold Easter Eve with no coal for Easter Day. After trying the outskirts of Paris, at last, after indomitable search, we secured a bag which had to be conveyed at once in a taxi.

Each year brought its special demand on our resources. The first year we received many of those who had lost work and home, often from lands far away, Poland, Turkey, Russia, etc., very depressed and hopeless, neither in mind nor body fit to cope with new conditions.

The second year brought office girls who must have prompt attention, and governesses from the *zone des armées*, helpers from various camps, and some nurses passing here and there, each giving details which always nerved us to fresh endeavour.

The third and fourth years many nurses came to rest a brief interval, or having been compelled to evacuate devastated areas, to wait further orders. Thirty-seven arrived late one night, having walked sixty-four miles, so

glad to find a safe haven, and to sleep on floors of sitting-rooms. How often they told us 'what a blessing your Home is to us,' and we were so thankful to be used in the great necessity. Surely our aim is always to abound in the work of the Lord."

CHAPTER XIX

SEEING THE INVISIBLE

EVERY page of our work might be written with answered prayer. Each stage may be counted with landmarks which register what our Lord has done. A sense of overpowering need has oppressed: need so intensified from its surroundings as to justify faith in the most audacious work. English life at its darkest bears no similitude to the insidious poison which lurks beneath the brightness of a foreign city to a lonely and homeless girl. Yes, lonely—the biting, bitter loneliness of life. How few have realized it?

"If only a dog had pulled my skirts, I would have come back," was the confession of a poor, stricken, lonely-hearted woman, bent on putting herself out of the world.

Womanly care—the hearth is not a stone but a woman—with homely surroundings at a price not beyond the means of self-supporting girls, combined with practical and loving influence would do much to dispel the too common representation of easy and ill-gotten wealth against honest labour.

"My foot slippeth" is a cry which should not be smothered but met.

Upon my secretly rebuking one who could not have been quite ignorant, her reply, "Ah, in my lonely life it was so sweet to listen to words of love and to trust him!" was a rebuke to myself. Why, when words cost so little, must they be so cold and too often suspicious?

My first Home was impelled by the gift of a franc followed by a second gift of £100, and my first public appeal for £10,000. To-day, ten times that amount is needed

(£100,000) to cover gaps which to the honour of our nationality in Paris should not be left bare.

It is not one grand central building which is lacking, but Homes in different parts of this great City of Paris.

What a joy it would be to see these Homes established! After the initial expenditure, such Homes should be very nearly self-supporting.

When speaking to two girls, saying that I hoped we might soon rebuild one of our Homes and have forty more beds; they replied "Forty? Oh! Mrs. Lewis, say Four Hundred! You would fill them directly. You don't know the need."

It is surely worth while to provide for one's own.

To impress upon each that she is wanted, that there is a niche for her in life which no one else can fill, is a great antidote for recklessness or despair.

"*Chaque médaille a son revers.*"

How often beautiful Paris mocks the lonely heart which is only brought into contact with the other side of its sumptuous sights and the *dernier cri* which attracts to its witchery.

That there are innumerable pitfalls should evoke more concern. The APATHY AT HOME IS PAINFUL. It is here that the real work of PREVENTION should be started and inspire an ORGANIZATION to bridge dangers. Situations should be verified and their character known ere an inexperienced girl pays a heavy fee for what is said to exist—but cannot be found!

A closer union should be formed betwixt British Consuls and Chaplains in Europe, and these should be associated with the various agencies at home, whose aid our young countrywomen naturally seek—an ignorant agent can be capable of as much mischief as one of evil design. Wherever possible a safe *pied-à-terre* should exist upon arrival, to avert unforeseen difficulties.

There is a great gulf between the girl who braves her future for an honourable career in her venture on to foreign soil, ignorant of the different laws and social con-

ditions by which she is surrounded, and the *fact* that so many face experiences from which they might be spared—or disappear! cannot be denied.

SURELY A WAY OUT CAN BE FOUND?

One came to me saying, "We have been talking of what made you form these Homes for us and think you must have had a vision of Our Lord when He asked you to do this for Him. Pray, tell me, did you ever have a vision of Our Lord?"

"Well, I believe in visions, but there is something better even than a vision!"

She exclaimed: "Better than a vision?"

"Yes, better even than a vision which comes and goes. Although a vision is grand, we want something more enduring, 'beyond even a vision!'"

The girl was intent. "Something beyond?" she asked.

"Yes. We believe not only in visions but in ALWAYS SEEING JESUS BY FAITH. He never leaves us."

"ALWAYS SEEING JESUS BY FAITH," she repeated, and I said the words again wanting to make them a reality.

She sank on her knees by me, resting her head on my lap . . . there was silence! Presently she looked up. From the expression on her face she had caught my meaning, as she exclaimed:

"ALWAYS SEEING JESUS BY FAITH?" Why, that must be glorious!"

"Yes," I replied. "But how little in our daily life do we catch of the Glory or realize the Power of a PRESENCE!"

She left me with an awakened look. At prayers that night there was a folded slip of paper on my table. The writing was unknown—but not the suppliant!

"WILL YOU PRAY THAT I, TOO, MAY SEE JESUS?"

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