(*April 26th, 1916.*)

The Scottish Women's Hospitals.

By Miss Kathleen Burke.*

AT a meeting under the joint auspices of the Daughters of the Empire, the Women's Canadian Club, and the Canadian Club, a meeting was held in the Foresters' Hall, College St., addressed by Miss Kathleen Burke, Honorary Organizing Secretary of the Scottish Women's Hospitals for Foreign Service, on the work of these hospitals in Belgium, France and Serbia.

His Honor, Sir John S. Hendrie, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, was chairman and introduced Miss Burke. At the conclusion of Miss Burke's address, a vote of thanks was moved by Mrs. James George, on behalf of the Women's Canadian Club, and seconded by Major F. H. Deacon, on behalf of the Canadian Club, supported also by Sir Edmund Walker, Hon. Treasurer of the fund for the work of the Scottish Women's Hospitals.

Miss Burke spoke so rapidly that it was impossible to obtain a report of her speech, but she very kindly consented to furnish, for the Canadian Club's "Proceedings," a dictated address along the same lines, which follows:

Although these hospitals are always known as the Scottish Women's Hospitals for Foreign Service, this should be explained. A committee of Scotch women first organized them, and as Scotland has the knack of holding on tightly to anything it may acquire, the Hospitals will go down to history as the Scottish Women's Hospitals. As a matter of fact the workers were drawn from all over Britain—we even had some fine girls from overseas with us. One doctor who is a member of our staff at Salonika, is Dr. Honoria Kerr of Toronto.

The National Union of Women's Suffrage, with that splendid spirit of patriotism which animates every man, woman and child of Britain, drew on its funds and founded the first Hospital Units. It was no longer a case of politics, it was simply a case of serving humanity and serving it to the best possible

*Miss Kathleen Burke, after several months' service with hospital units at the Front, came to Canada as the Honorary Organizing Secretary of the Scottish Women's Hospitals for Foreign Service. She is regarded as one of the ablest women speakers that has ever been heard in Canada.

advantage. Now we have anti-suffragists and suffragists sitting side by side on our committees realizing that this is a time for organized effort on the part of women for the benefit of humanity and the alleviation of suffering.

The first Hospital Unit was offered to Britain, but Britain at that time had all the help that she required, and it was our own Government that suggested to us that we should go to the help of the nations needing assistance. We had heard much of the plight of Serbia. France said but little, but those of us who loved her realized that her very silence told us all that we required to know.

We first worked in Belgium and stayed with the Belgian Army at Calais during the outbreak of typhus, and the head of this unit, Dr. Alice Hutchison, worked later in Serbia.

Each unit consists of from seven to eight doctors, about forty nurses, twenty to thirty orderlies, bacteriologists, X-Ray experts, sanitary inspectors, cooks, etc., etc., and when I speak of a Unit of the Scottish Women's Hospitals, I want you to draw one mental picture and that is, from the head surgeon down to the last little rosy cheeked orderly, each unit is staffed entirely by women. The units were formed in this way not with any advanced feminist idea, but in order to utilize to the utmost all the skill, science and devotion of the women of Britain. (Applause.)

The first of our Serbian Units arrived at its Headquarters at Kraguejvatz in January 1915, but before I commence to speak of our work amongst the Serbians, I would like to endeavour to win from you a little sympathy for that stricken people. Serbia is a little land, but, Oh! at the present time she is so desolate. Serbia is now under the heel of a Christian invader as five hundred years ago she was overrun by the Islamic and Asiatic hordes. During the dark and starless winter nights of her slavery she dreamed of only two summers, the summer of her past glory and of her future freedom to come. She regained that freedom at a price that only those who have studied Serbian history can realize, and when recently she was asked to accept the humiliating terms of a powerful and arrogant foe, she took up the gauntlet and flung it in the face of her enemy. Nobody realized better than Serbia how slender were her resources, nobody better realized than Serbia the price that she would have to pay in blood and in tears for her daring, but she never hesitated. Old King Peter of Serbia, placing himself at the head of his troops, called them to him and said to them, "Men of Serbia, I am an old man, and because of my age I release you from your oaths to me.

But there is one thing that is ever young, ever green, ever growing, your motherland of Serbia. To her you owe allegiance through all eternity, go forward and fight for her." And they went. They realized that it was far better for them to perish in honor than live in dishonor, and so, taking no heed of the cost, they plunged into the fray.

The present condition of Serbia is apparent to every seeing eye and to every feeling heart; but this is but one chapter in the tragedy of Serbian history. Yet, as the last chapter of the greatest tragedy of all the world was not death but resurrection, so we must look forward to the resurrection of Serbia in her former splendor, realizing that she has won it. We have heard much of Serbian aspirations and of "Greater Serbia" but she will never be greater than she is now in the hour of her supreme desolation. (Applause.)

Those who knew Serbia well realized that she could not hold out long with the resources at her disposal, and so we organized our units without delay and sent help to her. When our first unit arrived in Serbia there was only one other foreign unit working there—Lady Paget's, and when I tell you that we had the only working X-Ray in the whole country, you will understand to what a state of necessity Serbia had been reduced.

The wounded were sent in to us from sixty and sometimes seventy miles away. Of course that sounds nothing to us with our idea of distance and rapid transit, but what one must bear in mind is that those wounded came to us on bullock wagons over the rough and rocky roads and that those wagons never travel at a greater speed than a mile to a mile and a quarter an hour. Imagine the condition of the men by the time they reached us.

The Serbian Government at once placed us in charge of 500 men. We pointed out to the authorities that we could not nurse this number of men satisfactorily in the building at our disposal; so they gave us six inns in the town, and into these six inns we moved about 250 of the convalescent patients, men who required the attention of the doctors only once a day, they were fed from the main hospital and waited on by the Austrian prisoner orderlies. It was our girls who went down the town, whitewashed the inns, cleaned them of vermin and prepared them for the patients.

The Austrian prisoner orderlies rendered us a great deal of assistance in the hospitals. When the Serbians flung the Austrians over the frontier for the second time, they took between 60,000 and 70,000 Austrian prisoners. Two thirds

of these men were entirely pro-Serb in sympathy (being themselves of slav origin.) The Serbians placed no guards over them, left them to wander around the towns at their own free will, and when I tell you that the Serbian mothers would give their children to the Austrian prisoner orderly, you will realize that no one feared them. One would see them at night sitting around the camp fires, holding the hands of the wounded Serbians, calling them their brothers, and singing the songs of Serbia. I feel that when the record of the war is being prepared, when we are making up our balance sheet of good and evil, we must remember to the credit of these men that they did their best even at the time of the typhus epidemic.

It was after we had been in Serbia for six weeks that the real trouble came to our notice, i. e., the outbreak of typhus which swept like a flame across the whole land. The Serbians maintained an almost Spartan silence on the outbreak, they feared that Austria would hear of it and attack them, and had Austria attacked them at that time, they could not have put up the splendid resistance that they put up later. We managed to get a telegram through the Censor which read as follows:—"Dire necessity, send ten more fever nurses." Now, in our first Serbian Unit there were no fever nurses, so we hoped that Scotland would realize that when we asked for ten more of something that we had not got, that there was grave danger to face. Scotland grasped the situation, sent out at once seven more doctors and forty fever nurses and so the Second Unit of the Scottish Women was formed in Serbia and stationed at Mladanavatz. (Applause.)

The Third Unit, for Serbia continued to appeal for help and through the generosity of the British public we were able to extend our work, was stationed at Lazaravatz where we had a military Hospital of 300 beds, and the Fourth Unit went to Valejvo. Those who knew Austria in peace times would find it difficult to understand the total breakdown of the Austrian Red Cross Service, yet when the Austrians were driven out of Valejvo they left 2,500 dead and dying behind them without a single doctor to wait on them. Twelve Serbian doctors went into the town and six of the men laid down their lives. It was into this disease-stricken famine-stricken land that the Fourth Unit of the Scottish women went.

It was no longer a question of housing the women in buildings. In practically every building there were dead bodies, so we sent the Hospital out under canvas and our girls pitched their tents on the hill sides of Serbia. The fresh air was also of great benefit to the men, and when I tell you that in the

Serbian typhus hospitals in the town the percentage of mortality was as high as 85% (I pray you not think that I state this in any spirit of criticism, the Serbians did their best, but one cannot carry on work without the bare necessities) and that in our tent Hospital we were able to reduce the mortality to 12%, you will see what fresh air, efficient nursing and science meant in the care of the sick and wounded. (Applause.)

Because I speak with so much enthusiasm of our tent hospitals, I do not want you to imagine they were perfect paradises. Our doctors, waxing poetical, would sometimes write home describing how the "smoke of their camp-fires blended with the gray haze of the hills" and that "the tents were like great white birds winging their way under the trees." Very charming on paper. What we do know is that the girls were up all night hanging on to the tent poles to prevent them from collapsing over the patients, and that the most dignified of our doctors, with her hair streaming down her back, her eyes full of sand and her hands blistered, would spend hours grasping a rope to prevent the tents from blowing away, since Serbia is a land of sudden storms. However, there were days of peace, when one would see the men lying in their little beds, each with his little red blanket and at night by his bedside a small red lamp—those patients, all enduring men of Serbia, never complaining, only asking how soon they could go "Kod Kuche" which is the Serbian for "Home." I can assure you that they were not the only ones who thought of home. Often our women seeing far beyond the tents, far beyond the hills of Serbia, would go back in spirit to their native land, and it is very much to the credit of the Serbians that not one of those girls ever asked to return and that now after the great invasion, all those who have come out of Serbia are asking to go back to serve the Serbian people. There must be something very fine and very noble in a race of peasant men that can so command the respect of our British women. (Applause.)

However, there is just one thing in Serbia on which no reliance can be placed and that is Serbian statistics. Serbia is a country which has always been obliged to fight for its existence (it has had three wars in the last five years) and consequently the only people who count in Serbia are the fighting men. Hence when the Serbians prepare statistics they never by any chance include any man over sixty nor any women or children. We felt that something must be done for the women and children, so we attached dispensaries to

each of our units where the women and children could come for treatment. At first they were shy, only one or two drifted in, but finally we would sometimes have sixty or seventy a day coming to us. Would see the Austrian prisoner orderlies marching up and down with a baby on each arm, waiting until the mother had come out from consultation.

Because I speak so well of these prisoners, please do not think that they were always angels. Sometimes they gave us a great deal of trouble. One of our doctors had a Viennese professor as orderly. One day she called him and enquired what was wrong with her bath water that morning. "I don't know, Fraulein, but I'll find out," he replied. Presently he returned stating "Really I don't dare to tell you about that bath water, Fraulein." "Come, come," said the doctor, "it can't be as bad as all that, what did happen." "Well," he replied, "I went into the Camp Kitchen this morning and there were two cauldrons on the fire, one was your hot water and the other was the camp soup, and oh! Fraulein, you had the camp soup." This was only one little incident in camp life, and perhaps it helped the girls to bear the sadness and monotony.

Seven of our girls laid down their lives in Serbia. The first to die was Madge Neil Fraser, the international girl golf champion, and the second was Nurse Jordan. For Nurse Jordan I would claim a place in the hearts of the women of all the world, since heroism has no nationality. Dr. Elizabeth Ross, a woman missionary in Persia, came into Serbia and was placed in charge of a Serbian fever Hospital of 1,000 beds at Nish. She had only a young Austrian prisoner doctor to help her. She fell ill of typhus and appealed to us for help and Nurse Jordan volunteered to go to her assistance. To realize what that meant, you want to know what the typhus hospital was like. It was situated in an old tobacco factory, no room higher than twelve feet, just slits in the wall for air, on the floor straw on which the men flung themselves down in their filthy uniforms, whilst around the wall men sat on stone benches, in that state of torpor which is part of the typhus watching. They were just watching for one of their comrades to die in order that they might take his place on the straw. It was into that hospital that Nurse Jordan went of her own free will, realizing what she was facing, in an endeavour to save the life of her own countrywoman, and it was there that Nurse Jordan and Dr. Ross died.

At the time of the great invasion, two of our units remained in Serbia to care for the Serbians, facing the unknown enemy,

never flinching, only desiring to serve that little Serbian people until the bitter end. Two of the units came out of the country with the retreating army and the refugees. These units established dressing stations all along the route, and at one time they had as many as 1,500 men pass through their hands in three days. Some of our girls were even seen to be dressing the wounds of Serbians as they retreated across the passes.

I would wish to tell you just one incident of the great Retreat. The Serbian Government knew it was threatened that an attempt would be made to exterminate the Serbian people, and with this in mind the mothers of Serbia were asked to make a sacrifice. They were asked to give over their sons into the care of the military, and these poor little men of eight years of age, sometimes under, were marched in bands of 300, 400 and 500 over the passes out of Serbia. Whilst crossing the Ipek, 7,000 feet above the sea level, where every breath of air that one drew was like so many sharp particles of steel cutting into the lungs, two of our women became separated from their own unit and joined another British unit. They passed a band of 300 of these miserable little lads, all in rags, their little faces lined with tears, each grasping in his hand a grubby biscuit he did not dare to eat, since he feared it might be the last food he would see, and they passed on. As night was falling they went to the head of the British unit and said "We think we would like to stay here and join our own people." He replied, "That is not a good excuse, you do not know if you will ever join your own people, you must tell me why you really want to remain." "Well," they said, "we cannot bear to see all those children without any women with them, and we are going back to them." They returned to the boys and had the happiness of bringing them out of Serbia and down to the coast. We do not know the names of those two nurses, but when later we are making our records, I feel sure that all the world will be proud of those two mothers of three hundred boys.

We went to the help of the Serbian people because politically we felt that the Allies owed them a debt of gratitude. Serbia was the Belgium of the East; and she helped the Allies to gain all that they needed—time. Putting aside all question of gratitude we owed them a debt of humanity. It is so easy for us in the splendour of our years of peace, with the opportunities that we have had to study and perfect our knowledge of science, to stand and say that we are a great people and that they are a small and ignorant race. They have had

no chance to study, for hundreds of years they have fought, daily, nay hourly, for their bare existence as a nation. It was for us, who had had the necessary opportunity, to go to them and whole-heartedly offer them such knowledge, skill and science as we had acquired. They are an ignorant people. Sometimes their ignorance would be humorous, but more often it is serious. I remember one man had a very suspicious bulge under his pillow, we had to investigate it finally, and discovered he had a little roast sucking pig tucked away that his wife had brought him over a week ago and that he was keeping until he felt well enough to eat it. That is the funny side of their lack of knowledge, but there is the danger of the spread of disease through their very ignorance. For instance, every Serbian soldier is allowed by law a loaf of bread. We found that the Serbian women were coming in from the villages, buying the bread from the soldiers and taking it out to their children. In other words they were taking the bread from under the pillows of the typhus patients and giving it to their children to eat.

The Serbians possess a wonderful imagination. If directed into the proper channels, it should produce for the world poets, musicians and inventors. I remember hearing two dirty trench-stained Serbian soldiers sitting talking at a railway station. One said to the other "Do you know how this war started?" Well, the Sultan of Turkey took a sack of rice and sent it as a gift to our King Peter. Kind Peter looked at it and he went out in his garden and picked a little bag of red pepper. You see the Sultan by that gift said to our Peter "My army is as numerous as the grains of rice in this sack." And our Peter, with his gift replied, "My army may not be numerous, but it is mighty hot stuff." This just illustrates their fertile imagination, it is found in the highest and the lowest in the land, and if one adds to this their glorious patriotism, it makes of them a people worth saving.

When the guns boomed over Belgrade, we had to tie the frightfully wounded men in their beds to prevent them answering to the call of the cannon. Many of them escaped and fell fainting across the threshold of the hospital, and even now when Serbia is down and out, Pashic, the Great Prime Minister, speaking recently in Paris, said that "the bell had not yet tolled for the passing of Serbia."

We are still able to serve the Serbian people. We had a fifth unit prepared, and felt it very hard that it should be held up at Salonika at the time of the great invasion of Serbia. However, it was really all for the best since it was this unit

that the French and Serbian authorities took and placed on the Island of Corsica. The strongest of our girls travelled to and fro on the warships fetching the refugees, and when I left England we had already 6,000 refugees under our medical care on the Island of Corsica.

Serbia is only one branch of our work. There is yet another which is perhaps even a little nearer and a little dearer to us, since it has been rightly said that everyone has two countries, his own and France. We realized the burden that France was bearing silently and we went to her help even before she asked us. The French are known as a talkative people, but when France talks, it is just so much dust that she casts in the eyes of inquisitive inquirers, and faced with serious problems she maintains the dignity of silence.

It may seem strange to you that as a daughter of Britain, I speak so little of my Motherland. No one is expected to speak of the work of Britain, but deep in its heart the world knew that Britain would mother not only her own people but also her Allies. So if I say little of Britain, believe me, behind me stands the pride of race and the feeling that my own people hold and will maintain a high place in the respect of the whole human race.

France accepted at once one of our units, and we have some three hundred Frenchmen under our care at the Abbaye de Royaumont. Royaumont is some thirty miles behind the firing line, so close that when the wind is in the north and the cannons boom, all the nightingales wake in the woods of Compeigne and around Chantilly and sing.

At first France was a little chary of the women surgeons. She sent us only what the military authorities call "petits blessés." Fingers and toes to amputate. We protested, pointing out that the hospital had cost over £5,000 to equip, and that if it could not be put to better use, it might be moved elsewhere. Two great surgeons came from Paris, watched the women operate, and within half-an-hour we had permission from the military commander to go to the railway station and pick our wounded. It was the greatest compliment that could be paid us since it meant that we were allowed to chose the most serious cases.

The girl chauffeurs go twice and three times a day to the station, and we seldom have a vacant bed in the hospital.

Because I spoke so much of the hardships of the girls in Serbia, please do not think that it was easy for the girls in France. Royaumont is an old 12th Century Abbey. The wounded came to us before we had beds on which to place

them. The girls went out into the village and begged, borrowed or stole mattresses; it was the girls who went into the forest, cut down the trees and dragged in the logs, piling them up in the centre of the great stone-walled rooms and making a fire. It was the girls who under the direction of a one-legged electrician installed the electric light, and they even installed the water in the Abbaye.

The second of our units with France was stationed at Troyes. It was a mobile base hospital under canvas. The French authorities sent it out with the Expeditionary forces to Salonika. It went with the French forces into Serbia, remained at Gevgheli until the building in which it was then housed was in flames, and it is now with the French forces at Salonika.

From long association we have learned to love our French patients and love them dearly. We are all women in the hospitals, and the men might take advantage of this fact to show lack of discipline but we have never had to complain of any of our men. These soldiers of France may, some of them, have been just rough peasants, eating, drinking, sleeping, even having thoughts not akin to knighthood, but now through the ordeal of blood and fire each one of them has won his spurs and come out a chivalrous knight, and they bring their chivalry right into the hospitals with them.

When new wounded are brought in and the lights are low in the hospital wards, cautiously watching if the nurse is looking (luckily nurses have a way of not seeing everything), one of the convalescents will creep from his bed to the side of the new arrival and ask the inevitable question "D'ou viens tu," "Where do you come from?" "I come from Toulouse," replies the man. "Ah," says the enquirer, "My wife's grandmother had a cousin who lived near Toulouse." That is quite sufficient basis for a friendship and one sees the convalescent sitting by the bedside of his new comrade, holding the man's hands whilst his wounds are being dressed, telling him he knows of the pain, that he too has suffered, and that soon all will be well.

Lions to fight, ever ready to answer to the call of the defence of their country, yet these men of France are tender and gentle. In one hospital there is a baby. One of the soldiers passing through a bombarded village saw the little body lying in the mud and although he believed the child to be dead, he stooped and picked it up. At the evacuating station the baby and the soldier were sent down to the hospital together. Our doctors operated on the baby, took a

piece of shrapnel from its back, and now it is well and strong, and Lord, Master and King of all that it surveys. When it wakes in the morning it calls "Papa" and twenty fathers answer to its call. All the pent-up love and affection of the men for their own little ones, from whom they have been absent for so long, they lavish on the tiny stranger. But all his affection and his whole heart belongs to the rough miner soldier who brought him in. As the shadows fall one sees the man walking up and down the ward with the child in his arms crooning the Marseillaise until the tired little eyes close. He has obtained permission from the authorities to adopt the child and he remarks humorously, "It is so convenient, Mademoiselle, to have a family without the trouble of being married." Yet what we must remember is that the rough soldier, himself blinded with blood and mud, tumbling along to safety, yet had time to stoop and pick that little flower of France and save it from being crushed beneath the cannon wheels, and we can only hope that the child will grow up to the eternal honor and glory of France.

These men are so great in their heroism and yet one hears so little of it. Those who have medals are almost ashamed since they know that nearly all of their comrades merit them. It is even difficult to be a hero to one's own family. One of our men had been in a trench during a grenade attack. One of the grenades struck the parapet and rebounded amongst the soldiers. With that rapidity of thought which is part of the French character, he sat on the grenade and extinguished it. For this he was decorated and he wrote home to tell his wife. I saw him sitting up in bed gloomily reading her reply. I enquired why he looked so glum and he said, "Well, Mademoiselle, I wrote to tell my wife of my honor and see what she says:

> My dear Jules,—We are not surprised you got a medal for sitting on a hand-grenade; we have never known you to do anything else but sit down at home.

May I take you with me for just a moment into the trenches.

As from the most fertile soil there sometimes springs a tree in which the birds make their home and pour forth their souls in song and beneath whose boughs humanity finds shelter and shade from the glare of the sun, so there is developing from War a glorious spirit of tolerance that later will benefit mankind.—The tolerance that is beating down and wearing away all social, racial and religious hatred or misunderstanding.

I remember kneeling once by the side of a dying French soldier who was being attended by a famous young Mohammedan surgeon. The man's mind was wandering and seeing a woman by him he talked to me as his betrothed. "This War cannot last always, petite, and when it is over we'll buy a pig and a cow and we'll go to the Cure, won't we, beloved." Then in a lucid moment he realized he was dying and he commenced to pray, "Our Father," but the poor tired brain could remember nothing more. He turned to me to continue but I could not longer trust myself to speak, and it was the Mohammedan who took up the prayer and continued it, whilst the soldier followed with his lips until he passed away into the valley of shadow. I think this story is only equalled in its broad tolerance by that of the Rabbi Bloch of Lyons who was shot at the Battle of the Aisne whilst holding a crucifix to the lips of a dying Christian soldier.

Those men of France lions in their bravery spend most of their time off duty thinking of their homes, reading and rereading the letters from their dear ones, and scribbling epistle after epistle. There are few of them lonely, since those who have not families to write to them receive either letters or parcels from "God-mothers" who have adopted them. I remember seeing one man writing page after page. I suggested to him smiling that he must have a particularly charming God-mother. "Mademoiselle," he replied, "I have no time for a God-mother, since I am myself a God-father." He then explained that far away in his village there was a young assistant in his shop, "and God knows the boy loves France, but both his lungs are touched and so they won't take him. So I write him and tell him that the Good God has given me strength for two, that I fight for him and for me and that WE are doing well for France." I went back in imagination to the village, I could see the glint in the boy's eye, realize how the blood pulsed quicker through his veins as he read not the singular "I" but the pural "WE" are doing well for France. For one glorious moment he was part of the hosts of France and in spirit serving his Motherland. It is that spirit of the French nation that their enemies will never understand.

I speak much to you of the men of France, but the women also have earned and command our respect. Those splendid peasant women who even in peace times worked and now carry a double burden on their shoulders. The middle class women, endeavoring to keep together the little business built up by the men with years of toil. The noble women of France,

who in past years could not be seen before noon since Miladi was at her toilette, and who can be seen now, their hands scratched and bleeding, kneeling on the floors of the hospitals scubbing, proud and happy to take their part in national service.

Because these women of France have sent their men forth to die, eyes dry, with stiff lips and heads erect, do not think that they do not mourn for them. When night casts her kindly mantle of darkness, when they are hidden from the world, it is then that the proud heads droop and are bent on their arms as the women cry out in the bitterness of their soul for the men who have gone from them. Yet they realize that behind them stands the greatest mother of all, mother France. France, who sees coming towards her from her frontiers line on line of ambulances, each laden with its gray- faced suffering burden of humanity, yet watches along the routes her sons going forth in thousands, laughter in their eyes, song on their lips, ready and willing to die for her. France drawing her blood-stained, mud-stained rags around her—yet what matters the outer raiment since behind it shines forth her glorious exultant soul and she lifts her head and rejoices that when she appealed, man, woman and child, the nation answered to her call.

And above her sons waves triumphant the flag of France, red, white and blue, our own national colours. The red flag of France is a deeper hue than in times of peace since it is dyed with the blood of her sons, blood with which a new history of France is being written, volume on volume, page after page of deeds of heroism. Some complete and signed, others where the pen has dropped from the faltering hand and posterity must needs finish. The white of the flag of France, not quite so white as in times of peace since thousands of her sons have taken it in their hands and pressed it to their lips before they went forward to die for it, yet without stain, since all the record of the War there is no blot on the escutcheon of France. And the blue of the flag of France, true blue, torn and tattered with the marks of the bullets and the shrapnel, yet unfurling proudly in the breeze, whilst the holes are patched by the blue of the sky, since surely heaven stands behind the flag of France.

Oh, I pray you to lend me for just a moment your eyes, your ears and your hearts. Your eyes that seeing far past me, you may behold the women of Serbia as we last heard of them. Their gay clothes sodden with wet, trudging across the mountain passes, cold and starving. Taking their little

ones and thrusting them into the arms of the wounded passing in the bullock waggons, Realizing that they could not hope to reach safety, yet hoping that the little ones might be saved for mother Serbia. And the women of France toiling and turning their unshed tears to smiles of encouragement to urge their men to even greater deeds of heroism.

Your ears that you may hear the cries of the children. What matters it that 4,000 miles separate you, let distance not lessen the sound of their voices or the insistence of their appeal.

Your hearts that for a brief period they may beat in perfect harmony with the stricken people of France and Serbia, and that you may desire to show them practical sympathy.

Not so long ago a child I plead with you for the children, now a woman I plead with you for the women. I ask for nothing for the men, but I pray you to give to the women what is to them the greatest gift in all the world—the gift of the lives of their men.