

The Kind of Men  
Who Should Go  
to France



By  
Rufus M. Jones

IT is just a year since the group of men who composed the original reconstruction unit for France assembled at Haverford and began their training. We all started out not knowing whither we were going, but with high faith that the way would be open for a great service.

It has proved to be greater than we dreamed. The work has steadily grown and expanded. All the workers have had difficulties to go through, and some of them have had their real baptism of fire. All of us at home and abroad who have shared in the work and service have learned many lessons.

We always knew that our undertaking was one that called for carefully selected men, but this fact has grown steadily clearer as the work with its difficulties and perplexities has progressed and developed. It calls, of course, for persons who can *do things*. There is no place in France for anybody else. But more than that, our undertaking demands certain other marked qualifications. It is meant to be the expression of Quaker faith and Quaker ideals, and those who go should in some true sense share this faith and these ideals. They should take up this great task with a deep and solemn conviction that they cannot do otherwise than give themselves unreservedly to this undertaking, as their devoted service in this human crisis.

Our English Friends who are united with us in the French Mission have from the beginning entered upon the work not to escape something else, but because this seemed to them the best and truest way to give a positive expression of their love and devotion. When any one joins the group with a

lower motive and with a less noble purpose, not only does the work suffer, but, what is far more serious, the tone and *morale* of the whole Mission are affected.

We have naturally drawn our American workers from younger ranks than the English have done, and consequently our volunteers have as a whole not reached the maturity of thought and insight and vision which marked the original band of workers, who entered the desolate valley of the Marne almost four years ago; nor have our men faced quite the same stern and difficult issues of choice as have their English companions. But we have had many noble volunteers of the true type, and there are more such who ought to go. If we are to do this work at all, we must do it with these ripe and seasoned English Friends, and we must strive to get the true vision and spirit of the Mission.

This is no affair for persons who are looking for some line of least resistance, and are eager to escape something else which they dread. We want men of the best moral fibre and the soundest faith. It is not enough that the applicant can run a tractor, or build a house or manage a saw-mill. He must, first of all, have a real man's soul inside. Conviction, faith, loyalty for ideals, the spirit of sacrifice and desire to help bear the world's suffering, are no less important than efficiency and skill.

Those who wish to apply should search their souls as with a candle to see whether they are spiritually fit for a mission of this type, and they should volunteer for this undertaking only when they have gained a solemn apprehension of what it *means* to go.