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A TRIP TO MONTAUBAN

by

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On Tuesday, September 10th, Helga and I went to Montauban to see the program which Celine Rott is directing there. As important as the relief work she is doing, is the tolerance she has given Dutch, French, Spanish, Central European one for the other and where Spanish painters do Dutch scenes and the Dutch choose the warmer colors and gayer spirit of the Spaniards for their subjects.

The 900 mutilated Spaniards are not just being cared for, they have pride in work, making appliances for other mutilated, planting and weeding the flourishing vegetable garden the energetic young Dutch Director set out, whitewashing walls, preparing the tidiest pig pen in all the land.

I've written you about the canteen where the fresco on the wall embodies a people's hopes, a Quaker ship bound for America.

There is a day nursery for refugee children of all nationalities - 120 of them - which is gay and fresh as the young people who come there for two meals every day. It is so small there must be two sittings but has a spacious garden at the back and school rooms for those who cannot go to school.

Afterwards we saw the workshop where artificial limbs and appliances are made by the mutilated themselves.

Every place we went Helga asked "How did you get this fine building?" and Celine murmured modestly "From the Mairie, From the Prefecture."

She is a good missionary for worthy causes and sometimes if we seem to ask for a great deal of money, remember that we also use every local resource we can to make it go further.

The needs in this unoccupied zone are now indescribably hard. There are so many thousands who cannot go back because their homes are still battlegrounds, and because they are not wanted. New refugees from the eastern departments arrive daily - they are French, not German. Creuse, a poor department, still has 50,000 French refugees from the North.