

**THE SOUL OF THE "C. R.
B.": A
FRENCH VIEW OF THE
HOOVER RELIEF WORK**

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The Soul of The "C. R. B": A French View of the Hoover Relief Work by Saint-René
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German thefts of factory equipment in northern France.

Boiler-room in a factory at Chiry-Ourscamp, Oise.

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SOUL OF THE "C. R. B."**

**A FRENCH VIEW OF THE HOOVER
RELIEF WORK**

**BY
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**TRANSLATED BY
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ILLUSTRATED

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LETTER PREFACE

TO MR. HOOVER AND THE DIRECTORS AND
DELEGATES OF THE COMMISSION FOR RE-
LIEF IN BELGIUM AND NORTHERN FRANCE

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

This little book may perhaps surprise you. It is a true story, and accurate concerning your work, but in regard to your personalities I have allowed myself some freedom. Will you bear me malice if, in order to show the whole scope of your attainment, and to make it stand out clearly to our own people, I have simplified some of the details?

These details were your own selves, with your names, all of them. How much I should have cared to have known each of you, to have been able to distinguish between you, and not, therefore, to attribute to one what was perhaps, in fact, done by another—but what is most deeply impressed upon my mind was that you had but one heart, one brain, one leader. You offered yourselves in a body to starving Belgium and France, and no sooner

were you freed from that task than you threw yourselves into other work, under your own flag of the stars, without giving us a chance to meet you and to clasp your hands.

Do not be hard on this little book, because it is you who have written it; it is made up from your own official reports and your own narratives, added to the personal recollections which some of you have given me. Hunt will see that I have read closely his striking book "War Bread," and I have also studied the "Head-Quarters Nights" of Mr. Vernon Kellogg, and Mrs. Kellogg's "Women in Belgium." I have taken my facts from you, and sometimes also my ideas. *Si quid boni tuum.* I have given, if not every root and branch, at least the sad and wonderful flower of your work, and from the perfume of goodness and of pity which it breathes my French readers will know the stem on which it grew.

In speaking of you, workers of the beginning, I must do so in the same modest tone in which you speak of yourselves. It always touched us when you tried to avoid our thanks and when you told us how well the Belgians and the French in the invaded districts had seconded you, and how during their frightful

ordeal they had proved the truth of the proverb "Help thyself, and heaven will help thee." My dear friends, I seem to hear you repeating, by our stricken hearths, whose destruction was written long beforehand by Germany in the Book of Destiny, the saying of one of our old French masters of the art of surgery. When his patient was cured he said with the modesty of a true Christian: "I dressed his wound—God healed him."