# JUST BEHIND THE FRONT IN FRANCE

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Just Behind the Front in France by Noble Foster Hoggson

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### **NOBLE FOSTER HOGGSON**

# JUST BEHIND THE FRONT IN FRANCE





A GARDEN SHELL-HOLE

THE placid surface of this artificial lake conceals the wound torn in an Alsatian garden by a shricking German shell which fell short of its intended mark. But this section of Alsace is French once more, and the quaint, walled-in gardens will blossom on French soil, and in time the scars of Prussian shells will be obliterated by the growth of luxuriant vines.

## JUST BEHIND THE FRONT

#### IN FRANCE

By

NOBLE FOSTER HOGGSON

Member of the

American Industrial Commission to France



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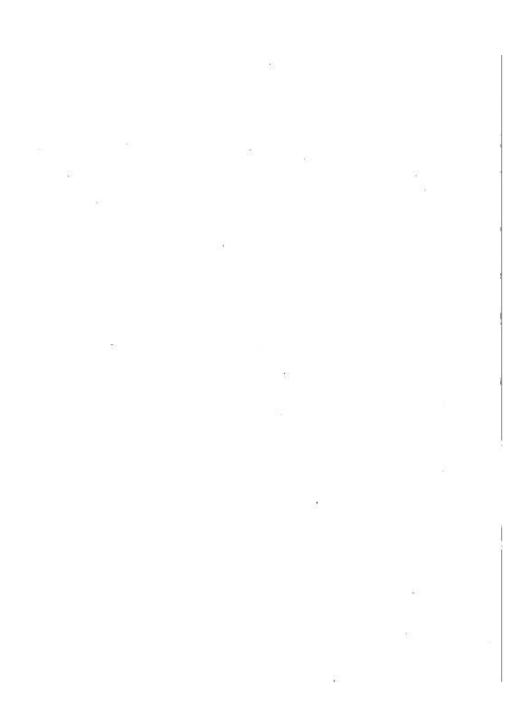
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Jet 27. 1934)

Ilsensy

Francis R. Stoddard

### TO LAURENCE BENÉT



#### PREFACE

AN you picture a traveler returning home after a long absence? At every home-nearing hour he recalls the home scenes as he last saw them, and thinks of the dear ones that he left. His mind tells him that he must be prepared for great changes, but his heart refuses to listen.

The France that I had left five years ago was full of youth, of joy, of contentment, a land of sun-kissed hills, of velvety meadows and of purple vineyards, a land filled with the songs and laughter of children and the smiles of gentle women.

On my return I found her sadly changed. She had suddenly aged. The joy and contentment were gone, and in their place were intense suffering and profound sorrow.

The fiery ordeal through which she had passed had left its ugly scars but it had also tempered her and made her finer and stronger. Where she had lost materially she had gained spiritually. She stands to-day erect and proud, confident and determined, her face illumined by the glory of a great faith that in the ultimate outcome of the tremendous struggle hers will be the victory.

#### JUST BEHIND THE FRONT IN FRANCE

It was my rare privilege to be a member of the American Industrial Commission which, in the fall of 1916, visited France to study the existing industrial conditions of that country, and to learn how the United States might best help to heal some of the deep, exhausting wounds of the war.

We were received as brothers, with open arms and open hearts. All doors were opened to us that we might enter and see how France was living up to her ideals. Everywhere was the evidence of a splendidly united and organized nation; a nation of calm, resourceful, efficient, untiring, resolute people. We were amazed by the fortitude of both the men and women throughout the country. The women in all vocations, by their loyalty and zeal, were making it possible, perhaps as much as were the men through their strength and their heroism, for France to take her invincible stand against an overwhelming and better prepared enemy.

It has been said that "the hour always makes the man." This war has made the women of France. Their development has been a wonderful revelation of the vast latent reserve power of the nation. While the war has not created this power, it has roused it and revealed to the world its silent potency.