

on the curtain. I thought I'd see how the tent had got on without me. If F.T. had been able to run the canteen successfully alone, I'd let her keep on and bend all my energies towards Christmas, if she hadn't, I'd have to divide my time and wouldn't try to put on my play.

I should like to have had another day in Tours just to play - I did see the Cathedral of course but had not time for more than that but time was galloping and jobs seemed piling up. The only train for St. Signan left at 8:30 A.M. so I tried to get through most of the red tape, incident to going back, the afternoon before, but found most of it had to be put through at the last moment.

At 4:45 next morning the funny little runt of a porter, who seemed to be the only man in the hotel, knocked at my door. My word! it's nicer to stay in bed! Of course I was a little late, but I had time to gulp down some coffee he'd seated for me while he was bringing down my parcels and piling them on his push cart. Three blue packages and a big suit case with the extension all ballooned out!

It was starlight as we pushed through the dark streets but the full moon came out from behind a cloud before we reached the station. When we got there, with only 30 minutes to spare, there was red tape, and more red tape, and again red tape. I checked the suit case one minute before train time and then hurried out to the long platform followed by the faithful sawed-off, only to find that the train was miles down the station - almost as bad as New York. We hurried along - the whistle blew - all compartments were either jammed or shut. I tried 1st, 2nd and 3rd class - nothing doing. More whistles. I picked up a young lieutenant and together we stormed the baggage car. "Find a compartment" was all we got. "But there isn't any and we've got to get on" "Find a compartment" and the door banged in our faces. We hurried back. One door was still open. I saw there was place for one, but not for one plus baggage such as mine. The occupants all screamed "No room, no room" like the Mad Tea Party. I turned to the lieutenant - "There's room for you, you'd better get in" He just growled "If they won't take you I won't go either" - and we ran on. The last whistle blew - the train started. Luckily it was a long train and slow in getting under way. A cox car with an open door came along. It looked good to me. We hurried all the boxes in and climbed in on top. I had carefully put a tip for my porter in one pocket, but of course in the hurry I couldn't find it. The lieutenant was lost in the blackness of the car but I shouted "Let me have five francs quick" and he got it to me in time to pass over to the little porter - who, by this time was running beside the car.

Well! After that we settled down. I sat on my coxees in the open doorway and watched the moon and stars pale and the dawn break while I munched some dry bread I'd pocketed. With jaybreak we could see our fellow boxers. All French, except the lieutenant and myself. Nearly all soldiers too. One "Blue Devil" and one entrancing red trousered, high booted individual. Of course we chatted a bit - I can't keep my tongue still even from bad French. They were frightfully amused at my being there (but not more than I was!) and of course they were friendly - all French soldiers are.

By 9:30 we reached St. Signan and when we disembarked there -mirable dicta - was my suit case! How it ever got on the train I haven't an idea. I guess it flew. And, another stroke of luck, there in the station yard was our own little St. Romain aray caissonette I just turned everything over to the driver, wept on my lieutenant's neck (I don't even know his name) and checked in.

This letter is a young book already. I'll have to write about Christmas tomorrow. I feel a little like Barrie, when he started a few chapters about Tommy's boyhood and finished a whole book before he got to the one he'd started to write. I've not even time now to read this over - To be continued in our next!

Love to you all - a great big heap.

Mildred.