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FAREWELL TO THE ROCKEFELLER COMMISSION

(Translation of an article from La Vie Saine, March, 1923, by Professor Léon Bernard, Secretary of the National Tuberculosis Association of France.)

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On a certain day in July, 1917, when France was still suffering from the hateful yoke of the invader in a part of her territory, there landed among us some American scientists, conducted by Dr. Livingston Farrand, and sent by the Rockefeller Foundation as a result of a report by Dr. Hermann M. Biggs, in order to study the problem of tuberculosis in our country and to bring us the valuable co-operation of American experience and generosity. President Poincaré received them shortly afterwards at the Elysée, where Mr. Léon Bourgeois presented them to him. He welcomed them warmly in terms which, when we re-read them today, seem to show some fore-knowledge of the incomparable advantages which the work of our friends was to leave us.

On January 1, 1923, the "American Mission for Protection against Tuberculosis in France", whose influence has permeated every Frenchman's spirit under the shortened name of the "Rockefeller Commission", ceased its work, although not its collaboration. In fact, we know that it has transferred its departments, its personnel, and the funds necessary to continue its work, to the National Committee against Tuberculosis.

1917-1923! What disillusion the contrast of these two dates evokes in our minds! Even though the victorious fight, which we waged against the German foe, in conjunction with the American soldiers and our other allies, may have left us bitter disappointments, on the other hand the fight against the tuberculosis peril, which President Poincaré and Dr. Farrand compared and classed with the other fight in the interview I mentioned, and to which America brought us the same persevering and disinterested aid, was to lead us to

tangible and durable success. And we owe this success, as well as the final triumph of our cause, for the most part to American intervention.

This is not the time to recall all that our friends have done in France in this domain, the munificence of their propaganda campaign and their accomplishments, the intensity of the movement which they have impressed on public opinion wherever they went, the number of activities which they have helped us to appreciate, the value of the technical and financial aid which they have brought to the special training of doctors and nurses. Under the equally enlightened and energetic impetus of Livingston Farrand, of Linsly Williams, and of Selskar Gunn, who succeeded each other as head, the Mission spread abroad in France its liberality, its suggestions, and its demonstrations, in perfect accord with the public authorities and the private institutions of our country. It cannot be said often enough that it is not only for the productive activity of the Rockefeller Commission that we should be grateful, but also for the spirit which constantly inspired it.

Modestly and intelligently, its directors have always realized that the success of their efforts was subordinate to the necessity of adapting them to our needs, our customs, and our institutions; and that the collaboration with French public and private organizations, a collaboration behind which they often hid the preponderance of their part of the work and expense, was the indispensable condition to the efficiency of their demonstrations.

Why recall the details of their work, of their good deeds? There is no risk of being contradicted when one asserts that no other joint action coming from any of our allies of the Great War has left a more profound and at the same time, a more perfect impression on the minds of the French, nor has called forth on their part a more serene and lasting gratitude. We have not a department,

and doubtless few communes, where the name of ROCKEFELLER is not respected and venerated as a symbol of benevolent safeguarding of human life and helpful co-operation for sanitary welfare in France.

Our friends can leave. They know that their work will not be shipwrecked. They may be assured that their name will not be forgotten. Let them know that they have built a structure here which belongs to them, and that, when they return, they will always be welcomed, as a prodigal father, by grateful sons. If generosity is one of the traits of the American, fidelity is one of the virtues of France.

Professeur Léon Bernard