

WE JOIN THE WAR EFFORT

During World War II, tens of thousands of our servicemen from all parts of the nation, visited New York City. More often than not, the hotels and other facilities were overcrowded and there was no room for the overflow of young men. We were shocked, one evening, to read in the New York World-Telegram, that on some nights, hundreds of our young boys, soldiers, sailors and marines, slept in the subways, the railroad depots, telephone booths and, during the warmer months, even on the sidewalks!

Our Director General discussed it with the editor of that newspaper and was told to "Go and see and be convinced." Dr. Little did so and reported that he was "shocked" by what he found. He found servicemen sleeping in the parks, on buses, in doorways and in the subways.

He called the editor and asked what could be done about it. Seemingly, there was no solution. Dr. Little countered with an offer to accommodate seventy men a night in our building, all it could hold, but we had no beds nor had we the funds to buy them even if they could be bought during the war.

The editor, a fine American, said very little but the next day, the New York World-Telegram ran a story about it entitled, **"Organization Needs Beds to Take Care of Seventy Soldier Boys Every Night."**

Then, another of those inexplicable "miracles" took place. From all parts of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and other places, we were flooded with telegrams, telephone calls, letters and visitors, all good people offering beds, mattresses, blankets and cots of every description. It took two volunteers to answer all the phone calls. Then, the impossibility of it struck home. Where could we get the trucks and cars necessary to collect all these needed things? We seemed beaten before we could get the project started.

We asked the Lord for guidance and He did not fail us.

As if in answer to our prayers, the very next day, our Director General was invited to address the National Opera Club of America, convening at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. To adequately describe what happened, let us resort to quotations from Dr. Little's written report of the incident.

"Looking over this comfortable and well-fed audience, I decided to forget the speech I had prepared and to give them instead, some hard and, possibly, unpleasant facts. I will not repeat what I said but let it suffice for me to say that a few minutes after my talk, I had secured enough funds to buy twenty army cots and mattresses.

"Before leaving for the meeting, I had called Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Ward to determine the cost and availability of cots and mattresses. And here, the Lord's help was apparent for the first concern had only cots, seventy of them! Remember, we had concluded that the building could accommodate that number. When I called the latter company, I was told that they had no cots, only mattresses, seventy of them!

"Seven in Scripture speaks of perfection. This was my proof that a miracle was about to happen. Without hesitation, although we did not have the funds, I then ordered both the seventy cots and the seventy mattresses."

In less than ten days, the funds Dr. Little had secured at the National Opera Convention plus other funds which seemed to come from all manner of unexpected places, were enough for us to complete the purchase of the cots and mattresses.

There are those who scoff at miracles but here, in a matter of hours, we had informed the necessary people that we had sleeping accommodations and soon afterward, our "dormitory" was a reality with servicemen coming and going every day.

Only a city block away from our building, the Navy erected a large depot housing over three thousand men of the Coast Guard. Although recreational facilities