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FRENCH MEN OF SCIENCE IN BRITAIN

THREE weeks ago, we expressed the hope that some French scientific workers would succeed in reaching Great Britain. This hope has been realized and we are already in touch with some of them. At the time of the capitulation of their country, some were already in Great Britain ; some left southern France just in time ; others escaped, in more or less dramatic circumstances, from that part of their unhappy country now occupied by the enemy. At present, they are not a large body, but they hope, and we hope with them, that they may be joined by others who may follow in the future.

These French scientific workers have not come to Great Britain to seek refuge. They have come because they felt it was a duty to keep their place in the fight—in the fight that Great Britain is now facing alone ; they came because they still felt themselves tied to Great Britain by the solemn oath of France. They have been faithful both to their own ideals and to Great Britain. They have brought not only their readiness and their skill, but also information which will be of much service in Britain's war effort. General de Gaulle understood immediately the importance of this fact, and M. Labarthe has been appointed to take charge of the "Armaments and Scientific Research" Department of the French National Committee. So far as scientific research is concerned, the role of M. Labarthe's department will be to put the French men of science into touch with appropriate English laboratories, in order to ensure the best utilization of their skill in whatever branch of scientific or industrial research they are specially competent.

It is obvious that these French men of science cannot be allowed to enter laboratories where

certain war research is going on, and we are sure that they themselves appreciate this fact. We hope, nevertheless, that they will not be prevented from joining the British war effort just because they are not British. They should certainly not be treated as enemy aliens ; indeed, the Government's offer of a month ago of complete union with France might be renewed in their case, and they might be allowed to obtain British nationality, at least for the duration of the War.

Some of the French men of science have special knowledge in branches which have no direct connexion with the war effort. They should find in the universities of Great Britain a friendly welcome, and the opportunity of continuing their researches in that atmosphere of freedom which is so necessary for creative scientific work.

Those who worked in France on war research are anxious to resume their labours in Great Britain. But they are fully aware that there may be little opportunity for long-distance research ; they are ready to do any work in which they can be useful, even if it is in the nature of industrial routine ; and are prepared to take part in active defence measures in case of emergency.

The French scientific workers who have succeeded in reaching Great Britain are eager to help us in our war effort, and we must in our turn help them in every possible way. In the muddle and turmoil of the moral and military collapse of France, they have put aside all family and other ties, and have left their country in order to carry on the struggle for the ideals of democracy in which they believe. It would be but a small return for us to set them to work as soon as possible, so that they may be spared the anxious thoughts which must inevitably occupy their inactivity.