



# Children in the Ruins

Reproduced from a Poster by Paul Gsell and Poulbot.



By Eleanor Jewett.

It does not take much any longer to make a soldier of a boy in France, nor a heroic mother of a little girl. A red cockade in a hat and the hat at an angle, a wooden gun—if needs be, a broomstick—a jaunty step and a song on the lips, a hill to climb with promise of an entrenched enemy in the crannies of the broken wall—there is your army to the life. For a little girl give a baby to tend, a child's fears to quiet, a bright courage to keep flaming high, hope and plentiful patience—there is your heroic mother—a woman of France in all the things that count, when years are disregarded.

In this poster by Poulbot these circumstances of war have been gathered together. Behind looms the battered tower of a church sacrificed to the guns of Germany. Against it leans the shattered wheels of a heavy gun carriage. Other broken weapons litter the ground and a boche helmet gapes empty from the shell hole at the children's feet. Over the hill,

marching to the attack, comes the army of patriots. Rifle on shoulder, sword in hand—"Pour la patrie!"

The little mother, with fearless eye, sits and waits like the millions of mothers of today, for news. She holds close to her the littlest one, who clings, half afraid of the gallant warriors, yet, lest she miss their bravery, keeps her eyes fixed on their every move.

There are few men who can interpret childhood as skillfully as can Poulbot. The children he paints are children. They may be good children or bad, lazy or quick, mischievous or quiet, but they are real. The sentiment, the atmosphere, the color, the vigor, the life of his pictures make of them the best history of childhood in France during these years of war that has been vouchsafed us.

The artist, Francisque Poulbot, is 40 years old. He is a painter and an engraver, a member of the Comité de la Société des Dessinateurs Humoristes and of the Salon des Humoristes. He was mobilized in 1915 in the medical corps and was invalided home in the same year. He is well known for his work on various Paris papers and for his humorous compositions.