

THE WORK OF THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION IN CANADA.

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THE ASSOCIATION AND THE CHURCH.

The war, which first focussed our eyes on the men of the nation, soon led to a new appreciation of the possibilities of women's work, as well as to the opening of full citizenship to them. As, however, new responsibilities are placed on their shoulders (and these responsibilities will not be lessened by peace) the community needs to rise to a clear sense of what it owes to them in the shape of care for their protection, their housing, their recreation, their standard of earning. But their material welfare is not the only concern. Soon the mass of our men at the front will return, and at once a vital problem for the Church emerges; what help will these men give to the work of the Kingdom of God, what kind of homes will they build up or rebuild? The answer to this question cannot turn on the men alone, for it will largely depend on the spiritual and moral influence of their womenkind, those awaiting their return here, as well as those coming to these shores as wives of returning men.

It is, therefore, of grave importance that the Church and the community alike should accept responsibility for all that will help to procure for the young womanhood of Canada such means of character building and such helpful social environment as will strengthen their moral force.

For many years the Young Women's Christian Association has existed as a means through which such bodies as the churches and the community may together fulfil part of their functions as regards women, using it as a real "handmaid of the Church" (as it always aims to be) to carry on certain co-operative work, which it would cost too highly for each separate denomination to plan and execute. It also functions on behalf of the citizens in any given community by giving them the opportunity of placing a central building equipped perhaps with club-rooms, gymnasium, swimming pool, at the disposal of the women of that place. In no sense can it be said to take the place of the Church. Each Church has its own call to minister to the spiritual life of its women members, to lead their worship, to organize their efforts for home and foreign missions. In all of these the Y.W.C.A. itself