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Y. M. C. A. Spent Last Year \$430,000 in Supplying Comforts to Boys—Will Require for This Year Three Quarters of a Million Dollars.

"If any person brings home the report, and some have, that the great mass of the Canadian soldiers in France have gone to the devil morally, then give them this answer which I bring you, it is a lie." With these ringing words Capt. Cameron yesterday afternoon dealt with a slanderous report which has been heard on more than one occasion in regard to the troops from Canada. "The great majority of the boys are clean morally and physically and there is a deep religious undercurrent in their lives never suspected at home."

The Imperial Theatre was packed to the doors yesterday afternoon to hear of the work of the Y. M. C. A. among the sons of Canada who have donned the khaki and are serving King and country in France, England and at home.

Major Birks, Capt. Bishop and Capt. Cameron placed before the home audience the plans for the coming year and the chairman, Major-General McLean, made an eloquent plea to the citizens of St. John to give them the \$15,000 they were asking for from this city and more if possible. Major Birks told of the work of the Y. M. C. A. in doing for the boys, Capt. Bishop presented the financial budget, and Capt. Cameron, in eloquent terms, visualized the life among the troops in France. The Y. M. C. A. orchestra supplied a programme of music while the people were gathering.

Major-General H. H. McLean presided and had on the platform with him Lieut.-Gov. Wood, Mayor Hayes and the speakers, Major Birks, Capt. Bishop and Capt. Cameron. The meeting was opened by the singing of the National Anthem after which the chairman introduced the first speaker, Major Birks.

In opening Major Birks said it was just about twelve months since he had faced a St. John audience from the same platform and while the reception accorded to him and his party at that time had been a splendid one and had been characterized by Rev. Mr. Adam who had accompanied him on that occasion as the best they had met in Canada, the people this time had beaten their own record. He proposed to tell them something of the growth of the work of the Y. M. C. A. in the past year. One year ago they had in England 7 centres and 17 secretaries. By the first of next month they would have 50 centres with 50 secretaries. In France a year ago they had 12 centres with 32 secretaries. Today they had 51 centres with a corresponding number of secretaries.

It was their aim to supply as far as possible the home touch which it was impossible to get in the army organization, admirable as it was. The ladies had been invaluable to the work in England and in most of the huts a lady would be found at the canteen counter, and numbers of boys would visit the huts just to hear them talking because it reminded them of home. The Y. M. C. A. in the army was doing the work of a minister to the physical needs of the men and felt that in so doing they were practicing practical Christianity. The Y. M. C. A. had won its place in the army and was doing very largely the work of the organization.

Capt. Bishop.

The chairman then introduced Capt. Bishop who dealt with the financial side of the work.

The last two years and a half had seen a great change in the response of the Canadian people to calls for money for patriotic purposes and since August, 1914, there had been contributed by the citizens of Canada for patriotic purposes of all kinds \$40,000,000, and one man well qualified to speak had made the statement that at the end of the war the Canadian people would only have begun to realize the joy of giving.

Last year the Y. M. C. A. had spent nearly \$400,000 and this year they had got totalled \$680,000, but in anticipation of unforeseen calls the national council had decided to ask the people of Dominion for \$750,000. They hoped to raise in the fourteen cities which would be visited in the present campaign at least \$500,000.

Hallifax had been asked for \$20,000, and in three days had raised \$15,000. They were asking the citizens of St. John for \$15,000 and hoped to have the amount within the week.

Capt. Cameron.

The chairman next introduced Capt. Cameron who said he had come along with the party to—Major Birks expressed it when telling him that he wanted him to join the party—make the noise.

"I spent three weeks in St. John eight years ago and am not altogether a stranger to most of you and there are just two places I would rather be today than on this platform. One is with the boys in the trenches and the other is the Bloor street Baptist church, Toronto."

The present was a time of testing for the nations of the earth and it was just such times as these that brought out the best in any man or nation. The British Empire had risen to the call and when a new Napoleon had arisen in Europe, a new Wellington was found in England to meet and overthrow him.

This was true of the nation and, to a certain extent, of the Y. M. C. A. This organization had found its soul in the war and in the future would do better work than it had in the past for it had come to a deeper understanding of the needs of men.

The Religious Work.

The Y. M. C. A. was the most potent factor in the religious life of the army and there was no part of the battle fields that it could not be found bringing cheer and recreation to the boys and giving to them the only touch of home possible under war conditions. During the past winter the Y. M. C. A. had supplied free to the boys in France over 2,000,000 cups of hot coffee, tea and cocoa and only one who had been there could realize what these hot drinks meant to the boys when coming out of the trenches tired, cold and hungry. One boy in writing home said: "We come out of the trenches all tired out and hardly able to stand and a couple of cups of boiling hot coffee seem to put new life into one and makes him feel able to carry on again."

The Y. M. C. A. was only spending one per cent. of the money received for administration expenses and this was due largely to the unselfish action of men like Major Birks, who gave his services and that of his staff free.

When Jesus was here on earth he had been condemned by the orthodox Jews as too human and catering too much to the physical side of men and today the same charge was being made against the Y. M. C. A. in connection with their work in the army, but he wanted to tell the people of St. John that some of the best religious work of this century had been done through the social activities of the Y. M. C. A. among the soldiers.

In closing he made an eloquent appeal for assistance in the work which the Y. M. C. A. was doing for the boys. General McLean said that the men and women of the city of St. John were noted for their willingness to respond to any worthy appeal and he was sure that instead of the \$15,000 asked for that this city would do as well as Halifax and give them \$20,000. A vote of thanks to the speakers was moved by Mayor Hayes and seconded by Mrs. E. Atherton Smith. The gathering was dismissed by singing the National Anthem.

FUNERALS.

The funeral of Mrs. Mary Brothers, who died in Boston recently, and whose body was brought here for burial, took place Saturday morning from Messrs. Fitzpatrick's undertaking rooms to the Cathedral, where high mass of requiem was celebrated by Rev. William Duke. Interment was made at Black River.

At the funeral of Frederick C. Dunham, Saturday afternoon, the choir of Ludlow street Baptist church rendered appropriate music. Members of the Oddfellows walked in a body and furnished the pallbearers. The floral tributes were many and beautiful, expressive of the general feeling of regret felt by the community in Mr. Dunham's death and his popularity with a large circle of friends. Rev. W. R. Robinson conducted the services in Ludlow street Baptist church, as stated by Rev. Walter P. Dunham. Interment was made in Fernhill.

The funeral of James P. Kinsella was held from his late residence, Paradise row, at 2:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon, and was very largely attended. Relatives acted as pallbearers, and there was a barouche



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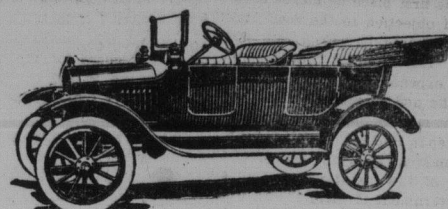


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