



## THE RED TRIANGLE



### NOT IN THE SCHEDULE.

By MAPLELEAF.

Seated one Sunday night in the luxurious quarters in Bonn, Germany, commandeered for the Canadian Y.M.C.A. officers operating with the Corps troops, the telephone broke into our conversation. From what I heard at one end of the telephone I was interested enough to enquire the nature of the conversation.

On the other end was an officer in quarantine with twenty-five men. For two weeks they were to be confined to their isolated quarters—twenty-five strong young fellows, whose only offence was that they had been innocently exposed to contagion, and were under guard for the protection of their fellows. And the officer in charge turned first to the Y.M.C.A. for relief. That very night orders were sent out from the Y.M.C.A. quarters for small games, reading material, and athletic equipment to be sent to the isolated men.

It interested me. I enquired further. I had an idea that the duties and sphere of operations of the Canadian Y.M.C.A., since the armistice were pretty well defined. And the supplying of quarantined men with all that would extract the drabness from their enforced isolation had not entered into my list—which I discovered was woefully incomplete.

In reality the armistice widened the scope of the Y.M.C.A.'s service. It suddenly shifted the trend of operations from service to the wounded and fighting to the great task of entertaining the now freed soldier, and of providing comforts and luxuries unknown in the period of active fighting.

It was just at the end of the fighting that the Y.M.C.A. stumbled across a novel method of supplying a long-felt want. In the course of their retreat the Germans left behind a few exaggerated soup bowls in the shape of cauldrons, with their heaters attached. In a week 131 men of a siege battery were furnished with the first hot bath recorded in soup bowls.

During the last days of the war numerous refugees drifted into the Canadian camps, and were given biscuits and drinks by the Y.M.C.A., augmented by supplies provided by a Canadian battery. On the trek into Germany one unit moved seventeen times in twenty-six days. During that time six recreation rooms were set up by the Y.M.C.A., with reading and writing material, phonographs, and sometimes pianos, and on eleven nights canteens were in operation, sometimes from waggons. Where the Red Cross was insufficiently supplied the Y.M.C.A. gave milk, sugar, coffee, oranges, and dates to the Casualty Clearing Stations. Shortage of transport quickly depleted the regimental canteens; the Y.M.C.A. handed out some of the most necessary supplies to fill the want. The British Y.M.C.A., up to the time of my visit in January, had been unable to obtain supplies of any kind for their canteens in Germany; the Canadian Y.M.C.A. had, therefore, to that date loaned them twelve lorry loads—which meant that the entire British army of occupation was dependent for its supplies of a canteen nature on the Canadian Y.M.C.A.

In co-operation with the Provost-Marshal and the Red Cross the Canadian Y.M.C.A. distributed food to interned Belgians, French, and Italians found in Bonn, and the surrounding country. As a means of assisting the British wives of Germans in Bonn, and of providing a better service to the boys, these women and their daughters, as well as several Americans, were called in to help at the free canteens. Their delight at being of assistance, after years of ostracism of their foreign homes, expressed itself in the zeal with which they worked to the time of the departure of the Canadians. In recognition of their services they were placed on half rations by the army authorities.

The distinct units into which the forces had to be divided for billeting in Germany enabled the Y.M.C.A. to extend their programme to the loaning of phonographs to different groups for stated periods. Athletic officers with experience in organising Canadian sports were loaned to the British, but shortage of personnel limited response to the requests received. A soldier whose sister was held in German territory on the borders of the British zone of occupation was handed over by the A.P.M. to the Y.M.C.A. when he appealed for assistance in releasing her.

The explanation of the ability of the Canadian Y.M.C.A. to provide much of their earlier service in Germany was their foresight. When the forward movement was under plan the Y.M.C.A. sent three lorries 420 kilometres, travelling night and day, to get supplies. Two hundred and twenty-two cases of cigarettes, chocolates, biscuits, and material for free drinks were brought up ready for the movement. At each stopping place the amount sold was rationed, so that when Bonn was reached, and interruption of transport interfered with the regular rations, there were still fifty cases left.

The need for extra supplies induced the Y.M.C.A. officers to approach a Colonel with the suggestion that they should hand over to him eight cases of biscuits for distribution to his men. "No," he replied "They have been paid, and have the money. I don't know any place where they can spend it to such advantage as with you. I prefer that they pay for what they get."

In the midst of all this excitement and labour of movement, the Y.M.C.A. was forced to make its preparations for Christmas. Months before the event preliminary operations were necessary. There were turkeys, nuts, candles, milk, fruit, dishes, soft drinks, cigarettes, biscuits and decorations to be collected in the markets of the world. The supplies the Y.M.C.A. gathered for the convenience of the troops meant a capital outlay of \$200,000. They were sold at less than cost, and the decorations were given free.

A great Christmas mail order business was set up. A vast variety of samples of suitable presents for the boys to give to their friends and relatives was shown, ranging in price from forty cents to five dollars. The soldier merely selected his presents and paid for them, and the Y.M.C.A. packed, addressed, censored, registered, attached the sender's name, and mailed the parcels. For three years 14,000 to 16,000 presents have been sent that way. At one time the

strain on the postal department was so great that a special hut had to be erected for the purpose of handling the Y.M.C.A. presents.

When a cursory glimpse like this of unlisted Canadian Y.M.C.A. activities was given me, I knew that my intimacy with the Y.M.C.A. programme was so distant that it should be interesting to those whose experience has thrown them much less in touch with the organisation than I have been. Such unsung activities deserve more publicity—for they pave the way to the great aim of the Y.M.C.A.—unlimited service to the soldier overseas.

### OVERSEAS TEACHERS AT LAMBETH PALACE.

Almost opposite the Houses of Parliament stands the ancient Palace of Lambeth. It has been the residence of Archbishops without number—Roman Catholic and Anglican. The Palace was formerly so close to the Thames that when the tide was in the crypt was flooded, and the Archbishop, coming home by water, could float in his barge to the very door of his chapel.

The Palace is still the official home of the Premier Archbishop of England, but although it has not moved, it is no longer on the river. The construction of the embankment and broad roadway have separated it from the water by many rods.

Colonial teachers in kahki, numbering two hundred on a visit to this country, entered the courtyard through the imposing gateway constructed by Cardinal Morton. Inside we might have been a thousand miles away from the great, busy, invisible city surrounding us.

We were given a gracious welcome by Mrs. Davidson, divided into three parties, and went different ways to see the sights—the great halls lined with portraits of past Archbishops, the guardroom with lofty arched ceiling, carved wood-work and magnificent marble fireplace.

From the top of the tower we had our only view of the city. A visit to the gardens followed. They are still large in spite of the loss of an extensive portion given up as a park by the late Archbishop Temple.

After tea in the guardroom Mrs. Davidson announced that she had just received a message from the Primate, expressing his regret at being unable to meet the Colonial teachers. His Grace had failed in his endeavour to "hurry up" the meeting he was obliged to attend.

Music in the Chapel concluded a most entrancing day.

### THE CARE-FREE LIFE.

The citizen walked down the street,

His hands were in his pockets;

A stranger rapped him on the eyes

And pushed them from their sockets.

The stranger took his watch and chain,

And robbed him of his money;

Then started off with cheerful mien,

Convinced that he'd been funny.

"Wait, wait," the citizen cried in pain;

"Why all this conduct freaky?"

The cheerful stranger smiled and said,

"I am a Bolschiviki."

### A Strange World.

Harassed Decorator: "I'm very sorry, mum, I 'aven't been able to paper your two top bedrooms. They took away my last man a week ago for the army. Seems to me they think more of this 'ere war than they do of paper 'anging."