

THE ROMANCE OF THE RED TRIANGLE

What the Y.M.C.A. is Doing for Our Soldier Boys

By WILLIAM LEWIS EDMONDS.

When, during the years, decades and centuries following the close of the war, historians write their volumes regarding it with, doubtless, no differences of opinion as to its causes and its effects. But here will undoubtedly, be one feature in connection with the great war upon which there can scarcely be any difference of opinion regarding its potency and value.

And that particular feature is the part the Y.M.C.A. played in catering to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the valiant soldiers, no matter from what clime, country or hemisphere they came or why they were professed, who took up arms in defence of liberty, home, justice and democracy.

Just as in no previous war ancient or modern, has there been a war approaching in magnitude that has been waged, so it can with equal truth be said that never in all previous wars has there been a work in connection with the welfare of the soldiers engaged in the conflict approaching in magnitude that which is now being carried on by the Y.M.C.A. organization.

Wherever the soldier boy goes in response to the call of duty, "Y" men follow close upon his heels, and where

The difficulty with which the "Y" is beset today is not limitation of opportunity, but the necessity for more men and more money in order to respond to the (quiet) possible extent to the Macedonian cry from allied nations for the particular assistance which the men of the Red Triangle have proved themselves capable of rendering.

In this laudable and self-sacrificing labor on behalf of the fighting forces of the allied nations the Canadian Y.M.C.A. has taken a prominent part, its representatives not only being found in Great Britain, Flanders, France, Italy and Palestine, but in far-off Mesopotamia and India as well.

With the Canadian camps in Great Britain it has fifty branches and with the Canadian troops in France fifty-one branches, while all told there are one hundred and two special secretaries overseas, plus three hundred assistants appointed by the military authorities. Thirty-four of these special secretaries are located in France.

But the ramifications of the Canadian "Y" are by no means confined to the soldiers in training in England and fighting in France. Besides this its representatives are serving in every military camp and in every



A RED TRIANGLE STATION NEAR LENS
This much appreciated source of refreshment was located in a hot corner.

he settles for the time being, whether in city barracks, training ground, hospital, rest camp, or front line trenches, there they hang up the bright Red Triangle, the insignia of their order, and serve him to the limit of their ability and opportunity.

To all intents and purposes these centres of "Y" activity become to the soldier the nearest possible approach under the circumstances to the home and fireside which he has left in response to the call to arms. There he can find rest, recreation and refreshment for mind and body, an abundant and free supply of stationery for the home letters he wishes to write, and an ample supply of literature congenial to his various moods, while almost at his elbow as he leaves the trenches tired, weary, or a "walking wounded," he finds a dugout, with its flaming Red Triangle, where he can obtain a free and liberal supply of hot coffee, cocoa, tea, etc., to strengthen and fortify him for his journey to his camp in the rear.

"If it wasn't for the bloody blokes in the bleeding line," a Tommy is said to have remarked while sipping his coffee in a "Y" hut somewhere in France, "it'd be a hell of a time in the British army."

Course, and all as the expression may be to delicate ears it was possibly the most expressive language that "Tommy" could command in order to give vent to his appreciation of the efforts of the "Y" to cater to his welfare. On that account the manner of his expression may well be condoned. For, after all, it is the sentiment, and not the words in which he clothes it, that determines the man.

That war, and particularly the present one, is hell there can be no doubt. But while that is so it is equally certain that, through the instrumentality of the Y.M.C.A., more bits of heaven have been injected into the soul of the boys in arms than has been the case in any previous war in history.

That which the Y.M.C.A. has accomplished in little short of a miracle. Through the untiring zeal and self-sacrificing efforts of its representatives the mental, spiritual and physical life of the soldier has been developed and strengthened, and his morale for the stress and strain of battle fortified.

Today the Y.M.C.A. does not have to walk cap in hand at the door of the respective governments engaged in the Allied cause, courting permission to establish huts and dugouts from which its secretaries and staff may serve their fighting men. It is the other way about. The respective governments are now importing the "Y" with the result that wherever today the flag of an allied nation flies there is to be found somewhere the Red Triangle. And that means from Flanders to South Africa. It has a place even in disturbed Russia.

camp hospital in the Dominion, while special secretaries are on duty at the discharge depots in Quebec and Halifax.

Not only is the ensign of the Canadian "Y" scattered throughout the camps in England and France, but it is attached to dozens of dugouts in the forward trenches, where its secretaries, continuously under shell fire, serve hot coffee, tea, chocolate, etc., to the tired, and often chilled, Canadian soldiers.

When the boys from the Land of the Maple Leaf were driving the enemy from Vimy Ridge men of the Canadian "Y" were right upon their heels catering to their necessities as they fought. "Almost before the place was consolidated," wrote Brigadier-General Odium to Captain Wallace, the senior officer of the Canadian "Y" after the affair was over, "your representative had a distribution centre at the crest of Vimy Ridge and was serving biscuits and chocolate to the men."

On another occasion, when, during a German drive, the military authorities were unable to reach the men in the front trenches, the lives of many Canadian boys were saved by the rations which were served gratis from a near-by "Y" dugout.

The work being carried on by the "Y" men of Canada stationed at the camps in England and France is as varied as it is extensive. A part of the educational work provides an opportunity for university students to continue their course of study. Religious services of a broad and helpful character are held daily. At least once or twice a week entertainment are held in auditoriums capable of holding a thousand or more men, the entertainers being men and women of the highest reputation. The physical well-being is also well looked after, all manner of athletic sports being regularly provided. A thousand dollars a month is spent by the Canadian "Y" on concerts in England alone, while equipment furnished and supplies purchased in February for the free use of our soldiers in England and France entailed an expenditure of \$57,000.

The effect which the efforts of the Canadian Y.M.C.A. is having upon the moral, physical and intellectual welfare of the soldiers of Canada, both at home and abroad is most encouraging. To the parents who have sons among them the results should be gratifying. The writer has in his possession a letter from a man who is in charge of one of the "Y" huts at a "Wide Camp" in which he says that out of a trainload of eight hundred men who were sent to a nearby town to spend Christmas Day, only one returned. Under the influence of liquor when the return journey was finished at eleven o'clock that night. One could scarcely have obtained better results had it been a trainload of eight hundred state preachers instead of that number of rollicking young soldiers.

INTERESTING INFORMATION

- Here is some interesting information about the army:
- An army corps is 60,000 men.
- An infantry division is 19,000 men.
- An infantry brigade is 7,000 men.
- A regiment of infantry is 3,500 men.
- A battalion is 1,000 men.
- A company is 250 men.
- A platoon is sixty men.
- A corporal's squad is eleven men.
- A field artillery brigade comprises 1,300 men.
- A field artillery has 195 men.
- A firing squad has twenty men.
- A supply train has 283 men.
- A machine gun battalion has 292 men.
- An engineer's regiment has 1,098 men.
- An ambulance company has sixty-six men.
- A field hospital has fifty five men.
- A medicine attachment has thirteen men.
- A major general leads the field army and also each army corps.
- A brigadier general heads each infantry brigade.
- A colonel heads each regiment.
- A lieutenant colonel is next in rank below a colonel.
- A major heads a battalion.
- A captain heads a company.
- A lieutenant heads a platoon.
- A sergeant is next below a lieutenant.

BIG FIRE AT HANTSPOURT

Mill, Blacksmith Shop and Galvanizing Dept. of Ship-building Plant Destroyed.

Hantsport April 9—Within an hour today fire totally destroyed the mill, blacksmith shop and galvanizing department at Foley Bros Welch, Stewart and Fauquier's shipyards here. The origin of the fire is unknown, but there is a theory that it was caused by a spark from the smokestack. It is understood that an investigation is being held into the origin of the fire as the circumstances of the blaze is suspicious. The direction of the wind saved the two large vessels now being constructed from the flames, and the company's offices and the men's boarding houses were also saved. No estimate of the loss can be obtained. The buildings were equipped with modern machinery, which is high priced and difficult to replace.

DAYLIGHT SAVING IN EFFECT MONDAY

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