

At the Sign of the Maple

A DEPARTMENT MAINLY FOR WOMEN

Ottawa Women's Hostel

THE amelioration of the condition of the working girl has occupied the time and attention of philanthropists for some years now. The fight for a minimum wage, for decent lodging at lowest rate, and for a reasonable proportion of play after

working hours, is agitating all the women's clubs today. Anyone who has a practical idea for the treatment of women who are obliged to earn their daily bread may be sure of sympathy and a hearing. So when the Women's Hostel and Travellers' Aid Society was suggested, it received immediate support from thinking Ottawans.

The Travellers' Aid Society had its origin at a small meeting held Nov. 20th, 1909, at the Working Girls' Home, for the purpose of providing comfortable lodging for shop girls at lowest possible cost and at the same time



MISS R. WHITEAVES, In whose Charge is the Social Work of the Travellers' Aid of Ottawa.

surrounding them with a wholesome, homelike and Christian atmosphere. The experience of those attending the meeting showed that often a girl's worst crime was poverty, and when the struggle for respectability became too great, she succumbed to the temptations with which she was daily beset. Crowding into small and undesirable quarters for reasons of economy has proven that high morals are hard to attain or preserve; when four or five girls live in a small room some one of them suffers by contact. After working hours those girls want recreation, amusement. Where can they go? On the street. With their own wages they are seldom able to provide entertainment for themselves, so the alternative is to attract some man who will foot theatre or supper bills. They can not have "company" because there is no place to receive callers. A tragic case suggests itself to me in this connection.

Factory girls who live in lodgings are not the only ones who are debarred from having "company." In domestic service one of the commonest and most stringent rules the mistress of a house will make is, "Remember, I do not allow you to have company; I shall not have people sitting around the kitchen!" We are prone to say that girls are better off in domestic service, but are they? Personally, I am strongly in favour of allowing servants to see their friends in my home, and I have seldom found this privilege abused.

At the time of the establishment of the Working Girls' Home, no work of a charitable nature was carried on in the east end of Ottawa. The King's Daughters and Y. W. C. A. took care of a good many girls whose wages were small, but there was need for another place where they could secure comfortable lodging and board. The Girls' Home was opened, where lodging was given for \$2.25 a week, transients' meals and beds at 15c. each if the girl's wage did not exceed \$5 a week. Creed or nationality was immaterial; a girl's necessity was her only passport.

AS is the case in every philanthropic effort, success made for broader work, and the Travellers' Aid grew out of the Working Girls' Home. While only three years in existence, the reports show an almost unlooked-for progress. During the first year 272 girls were brought from the stations to the Home; this year only 126 were taken in charge. This does not mean a falling off in the work—quite the reverse. It shows that the officers of the society are so vigilant that there are fewer women loitering about the stations, which are the meeting-places of innocence and vice; that there is less activity in the white slave traffic, and that the Travellers' Aid is doing noble and efficient police preventive work. At the Union Station, both day and night, trains are met; at the Central Station

day trains only, although there is urgent necessity for having "the lady with the white badge," as one frightened country girl described the officer on duty, at night there, also. Financial stringency is the only curb, and it is earnestly hoped that with the appointment of two women to the Ottawa police force—Miss Campbell and Mrs. Cheney—this need will be met. Mrs. Cheney is now on night duty at the Union Station, and Miss Campbell meets all day trains at the Central, beside doing work for delinquent girls in the police court.

The Women's Hostel was a still further enlargement of the work. Its object is to bring out girls from the old country for domestic service, and Ottawa is not the only city in the Dominion benefitting by the work of the Hostel. Girls are sent to many different points. They are also received at the Hostel from different cities and institutions, such as the Miss Fitzgibbon hostel, Toronto; the Francis Guild, Montreal; Girls' Friendly Association, the Salvation Army, and others. Passing through the Hostel during the past year were 329 girls, beside whom 32 from different orphan distribution homes were given situations. A few more figures which should be interesting appear in the report; of nationalities helped there were English, Scotch, Irish, Austrians, Polacks, Jews and Canadians. There were 7,323 trains met; 14,913 meals served; 5,209 beds occupied; 430 free meals served; 206 free beds occupied; 42 night calls; and only 10 police court visits. Ten girls have married and settled in Canada since the founding of the Society, and the superintendent, Miss Emily Marshall, declares that she has no greater pleasure than in



A HEAD-BANDING DEMONSTRATION In Connection With the "First Aid" Classes at the Women's Hostel. The Society Superintendent, Miss Marshall, is Seen on the Farthest Left.

and the girls every Sunday evening, which does much to help the one in helping and the others in being helped! And every Tuesday evening classes in "First Aid to the Injured" and "Home Nursing" are held. Beside these, there are many entertainments arranged by the girls themselves, and many arranged by the officers during the year.

THE social side of the Hostel is under the management of Miss Rosa Whiteaves, who also drills the girls in the First Aid and Home Nursing. She said in a recent interview:

"Our club, the motto of which is OTHERS, has for its object a general raising of moral standard for the girls, which we try to effect in the most pleasing manner. They are imbued with a spirit of helping others. They do a remarkable amount of social visiting and nursing, often going to the hospitals and working in the wards on the only afternoon during the week which is allowed them in the homes where they are employed. When one considers that these girls are already in the service of others, and when one realizes that their aim is to serve others still more, a very fine moral may be drawn which might be of assistance to those who feel life owes them something."

There is a very interesting movement on foot at the present writing in the Club. Instead of getting up an entertainment solely for themselves, these thirty-odd girls have decided that they would like to benefit some one who needs help and amusement more than they. So the town is being searched for its poorest residents, who, Miss Whiteaves tells me, are the foreigners. These include almost every nationality, even a Russian escaped from Siberia. And the babel of tongues, the confusion of ideas, the difference in points of view, will, I know, be merged in a huge melting pot, and come forth Happiness, for what will have been done will have had behind it the great underlying principle gathered into a well-known text—Love thy neighbour as thyself.

MADGE MACBETH.

The News in Brief

MRS. P. D. CRERAR, who for many years has been regent of the Hamilton Municipal Chapter, I. O. D. E., retired from office at a recent meeting of the united chapters of the city. Mrs. J. S. Atkinson will assume the vacant office until the annual meeting, which falls next March.

The farthest north chapter of the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire, has newly been formed at Dawson City, Yukon. The regent is Mrs. George Black, wife of the Commissioner of the Yukon.

Mrs. R. L. Borden has been invited to officiate at the opening of the first Canadian Fashion Exhibition, to be held in the Arena, Toronto, shortly. The list of prominent patronesses includes some hundred names and represents both circles of art (Concluded on page 30.)



MORE FIRST AID

To the Unresisting Injured. This Time the Hurt is a Broken Leg and the Instruments Used Are a Broom and the Proper Bindings.



FIXING THE HAND AND ARM

According to Scientific Instruction. The President of the Girls' Club Appears on the Extreme Right.

visiting these girls in their own homes, where they are so safe, sheltered and happy.

The home life at the Hostel is conducive to happiness and high moral standard; a girl is kept there twenty-four hours after her arrival free of charge, so there are always some of them under the superintendent's care. In return for government, provincial and municipal grants this measure is required. Morning prayer is the first order of the day; there is an intimate talk between Miss Marshall