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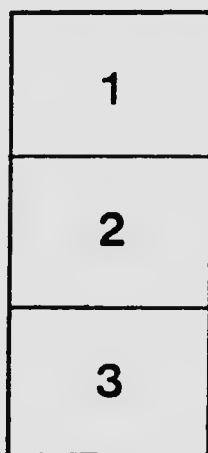
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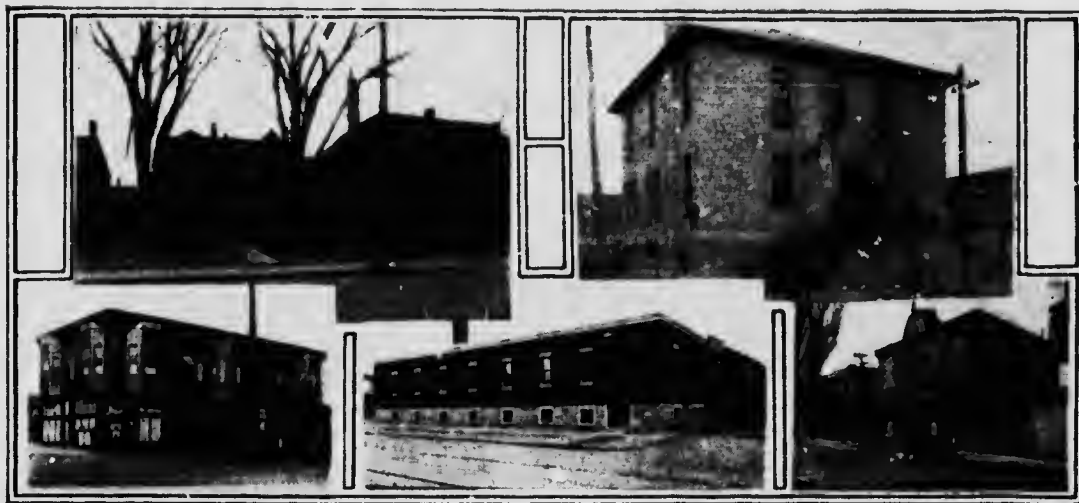
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*Top Row—St. Christopher House, Toronto. Robertson Memorial Institute, Winnipeg.  
Bottom Row—Vancouver Community House. Chalmers House, Montreal. St. Columba House, Montreal.*

# The Five Social Settlements

of the


## Presbyterian Church in Canada

### Chalmers House, Montreal



**I**N the East End of Montreal, not in a slum district, but in a neighbourhood of cheap tenements, where many of the newcomers from England, Scotland, Ireland, and the Continent, especially Lithuania, find their first Canadian homes in the midst of a community still predominantly French-Canadian, stands a one-storey brick dwelling, once a brewery, covering nearly a whole block. "Chalmers House," the name on the brass plate, has in the past six years come to represent something vital in the life of the neighbourhood, where Miss May L. MacDonnell is the head worker.

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At almost any hour of the day, and until ten o'clock at night, there is something going on inside. On a school morning, thirty boys and girls, from three to seven — too young for school, but old enough to come here to give their mothers time to do their housework—are singing, listening to their morning story, playing musical games, drinking their cocoa, or doing some simple hand work. Among them are Protestants, Roman Catholics, Jews, Lithuanians, Italians, French,—and all as happy as possible.

*Basket Ball, Robertson Memorial Institute.*

In the milk station in the basement, the resident nurse prepares feedings for some of the delicate babies of the neighbourhood, in neat rows of babies' bottles, where a baby clinic is also held on Mondays.

On Saturday morning, a cooking class is in progress, while in the gymnasium, and also in the basement, a pack of young "Wolf Cubs" (a species of junior Boy Scout) gather at their weekly ceremonials. In the afternoon, the "Happy Hearts" (girls of from five to seven), or the "Jolly Chums" (boys of eight and nine), conduct an orderly meeting, presided over by their own elected officers; or the "Royal Young Canadians" (boys of twelve and thirteen), listening intently to the telling of their weekly instalment of "Guy Mannering"; or the afternoon section of the "White Shield (Mothers') Club" going through one of their favourite folk dances.

On Sunday afternoon, you will find each of the girls and boys with a book, or, a little later, singing, learning Bible verses, and finally listening to the Sunday Story—a Bible story, an allegory, or possibly stories from the life of David Livingstone or other famous missionary.

During the evenings, the older girls and boys and the men have their turn. The "Young Citizens" or the "Patriots" are at their games or reading, or having a game of Bombardment or Basketball. In the Hall the "Camp Fire Club" or the "Patricia Club" enjoy some of their folk dances. On a Wednesday night there may be a lecture or a concert under the auspices of the "Pioneers' (Fathers') Club."

The predominant element in the neighbourhood, and that most in need of the things a Settlement strives to provide, viz.,—the French-Canadian, is as yet scarcely being touched, except through the ministrations of the milk station and clinic. The foreign children learn English quickly and can soon take part in all



the activities of the Settlement, but the majority of the French children speak no English and, since none of the resident workers are fluent in French, it is impossible to make any real impression on the French part of the community.

¶ In the midst of sordid home surroundings, with practically no education, fast acquiring the evil habits of city streets, many of them already too familiar with the juvenile court, what sort of citizens are they going to be? Chalmers House feels a great responsibility toward these, her needy children, and is striving to provide wholesome forms of recreation, and to develop better standards of living for body and mind.

¶ As the workers more fully understand the needs of such a neighbourhood, they are gaining a broader vision of its wonderful opportunities and a deeper consciousness of their responsibility as ambassadors of the Church of Christ.

### **Saint Columba House, Montreal**

¶ Saint Columba Community House, opened in 1918, at 50 St. Jacques Street, Point St. Charles, Montreal, is situated in the midst of a district (with a population of 12,000) presenting the greatest opportunity for service in our Canadian Metropolis. Of these at least, 5,000 are non-English-speaking foreigners, comprising 3,000 Ukrainians (Ruthenians), 1,000 Finlanders, 50 families of Polaks and the remainder Jews and Italians. The rest of the population is largely French Roman Catholic. There are also about 150 families of English-speaking Protestants, half of whom are not related to any church.

¶ From the very beginning the monthly reports have been encouraging. At the close of the first year, there were reported seven Clubs, two Recreational Periods, Sewing and Gymnasium Classes, Story-Hours, Library, etc., with an aggregate monthly attendance which has advanced during the year from 489 to 2,020.

¶ At the close of the Sabbath School every Sabbath afternoon, the workers have had the "Sunday Story Hour," which has been one of the most popular features of the weekly programme, and



*Girl Guides, Robertson Memorial Institute.*



has registered an average attendance of forty boys and girls. These Clubs and other activities minister to several nationalities, including Canadian, English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, French, Hebrew, and Ruthenian.

**Q** In March, 1918, the Rev. William Hood was appointed Ordained Missionary in charge of this entire district, cooperating with Miss M. Sloan, the head worker, and the other workers in the Social Service department, and ministering to the un-churched English-speaking families. Mr. Hood has devoted himself to pastoral visitation and has conducted Public Worship and a mid-week service in Saint Columba House. The Ruthenian Mission from which Saint Columba House grew is still carried on.

**Q** We have institutionally Missionary Service with its per- of Evangelism minister to the intellectual, social needs community.



*Waiting for the doors to open—Chalmers House.*

here a unique tion. Essen- sionary in co-ordinates and Social vities, and meeting spirit seeks to min- spiritual, in- physical and of the entire

### **St. Christopher House, Toronto**

**Q** St. Christopher, Toronto, is situated in a crowded district of the City, on Bellevue Place. The Presbyterian Church has here created a Christian home-centre for hundreds of children, whose busy, poverty-stricken homes cannot give them the rounded life they need and who have been forced to the demoralizing life of the street to satisfy the child's natural craving for interest and activity. It has done the same thing for their tired, discouraged parents, and for the young people who are just beginning to bend their undeveloped bodies to the daily toil of the factories.

**Q** The people in the district served by the Church Settlements are the most accessible of all to be evangelized in Canada. Work among them is the least expensive and the most fruitful work we do—in proportion to the numbers reached.

**Q** In all of our institutions the ministry is, first, to the body in clinic, nursing-visits, finding employment, improving sanitation, etc.; second, to the mind in teaching English, domestic science, etc., by which their chances of getting jobs and better wages are greatly improved; third, to their social needs in play-school, and social gatherings in a Christian home under clean, elevating and safe auspices.

**Q** During 1918, the activities of St. Christopher House touched directly 666 families and indirectly many more. The total number of individuals coming under its influence approximated 3,000, including 28 different nationalities. Of the total actual membership in the Settlement, 30 per cent. is Hebrew; 8 per cent. Roman Catholic; 62 per cent. Protestant; and of the Juvenile membership, 43 per cent. is Hebrew. The clubs, classes, and ministries, which are almost as varied as life itself, number 44.

**Q** Most of arepreju-Christian-rate against Christian-beautiful to prejudice Master and disappear-hearts opened gracious in-they are thus own methods, bine social direct evange-



those touched duced against ity, at any e v a n g e l i c a l ity. It is see their against the His religion ing, and their up to His fluence when met by His which com-ministry and lical teaching.

*Ready for Business—St. Christopher House.*

**Q** During the "flu" epidemic, 146 families were cared for, representing 363 patients suffering from influenza. In a goodly number of these, a medical student gave the chief and often the only medical care. The supplies of food, pneumonia jackets, bedding, etc., were ample. The supply of nurses was not always adequate, but in the district allotted to St. Christopher's not one application for help, night or day, was refused.

**Q** In all, 1,017 visits were made and many more brief calls. This work was done by the regular staff of six resident workers, aided by forty-three volunteers for nursing, and nine others doing office work, such as preparing and distributing parcels of supplies.

¶ We cannot but feel our hearts brimming over with gratitude for the wonderful new door that the Master thus opened to St. Christopher. Never did He give it a greater opportunity for helpfulness nor a closer touch with the heartbeats of our friends around us. Without doubt, the fellowship resulting will enable them and us together in future days to make felt His spirit of love in this, our district.

¶ The Fresh Air work of St. Christopher is carried on at St. Christopher Farm, a beautiful site on Lake Scugog, where the roomy farm-house and the tents have a capacity for seventy guests. Hundreds of adults and children are thus ministered to during a season, where they get such glimpses of God's out-of-doors as will never be forgotten.

### Robertson Memorial Institute, Winnipeg

¶ The Robertson Memorial Institute of the Presbyterian Church is situated in one of the most densely populated foreign districts in North Winnipeg.

¶ The Institute is an extension of a Mission started by the W.M.S. in 1907. It was soon discovered that for progressive work the Alfred Street Mission was too small and a new start was made by the erection and the formal opening on November 19th, 1911, of the Robertson Memorial Church and Institute on Burrows Avenue.

¶ Rev. A. McTaggart was the first minister of the congregation and Superintendent of the Institute followed by Rev. H. A. Berlis as minister, who was succeeded in 1917 by Rev. George Farquhar. The Board has recently appointed Rev. J. R. Muchmore, M.A., B.D., to coordinate and supervise all the foreign work conducted by our Church in Winnipeg.

¶ Miss R. M. Goldie, the present Superintendent of the Institute, is assisted by four trained workers. Throughout the year, from 9 a.m. till 10 p.m., the Institute is at work. Its aim is to develop Christian character; to make true Canadians out of all who may come within the scope of its influence, regardless of race or creed. Men, women, boys and girls throughout



*In St. Columba House.*

the district are invited to the Institute, and divided into natural groups for instruction and help,—in kindergarten work for the very young; clubs and societies for school children and teen age people; mothers' meetings for instruction in sewing, cooking, and Christian ideals; evening classes for men for the study of English, civics and ethics, and an evangelistic service on Thursday evening.

¶ An organized system of visitation has been adopted by members of the staff, and in this way prejudices are being broken down and a feeling of genuine confidence is being established between the workers and the people. Through its 28 clubs, classes, or other organizations, representing 45 different kinds of ministries, the Institute touches directly or indirectly 440 families and 2,640 individuals, including 19 nationalities.



*Vancouver Community House*

¶ The Institute works in close harmony with the "Social Welfare Commission" of the city. It is also an auxiliary to the "baby welfare" department. This service opens many doors to the workers. During the "flu" epidemic of 1918-19, the Institute and staff were placed at the service of the city; 4,362 families were ministered to and 65,430 meals served.

¶ The Fresh Air Camp at Gimli on Lake Winnipeg is one of the striking assets of the Institute work. Gimli is a real "Paradise," as the word implies, to tired mothers and children. Taken from small, crowded rooms in the midst of the dust, din and heat of the city, 556 people enjoyed its benefits in the summer of 1918. They represented many creeds and nationalities and the Institute staff, with the eager volunteer workers, were not slow to recognize the opportunity afforded for drawing so many different peoples into closer Christian fellowship.

### **The Vancouver Community House**

¶ The latest addition to the Settlements carried on by the Presbyterian Church in Canada is the Vancouver Community House, situated in the east end of the city in what will ultimately be a factory district. At present it faces False Creek and the unsightly city dump, the hunting grounds for many of the children in the locality. All

around are to be found empty and condemned buildings and long narrow two-roomed cabins which are not only a blot on the landscape but a menace to health and morals. The population in this district is, as may be imagined, more than mixed. In a large school, three blocks west of the Community House, no less than forty nationalities are represented.

¶ It is the hope that the new Community House, of which Mrs. Van Munster is head worker, will form a centre of interest and education to all who live near it. It is designed to compete with and provide counter attractions to anything that is not healthful to the child, family or community life, to cultivate the spirit of neighbourliness and friendliness, to serve our friends wherever and whenever possible and through the service to bring ourselves and them near to the source of all life.

¶ Although the Community House has only been in existence a comparatively short time, it already holds a large place in the hearts of many children and they are unconsciously catching the spirit and meaning of the work.

¶ At the last membership meeting, at which each secretary presented a report written by himself, a thirteen year old boy amongst other things wrote—"We have enjoyed it (the Club) very good so far, and always have lots of fun. It is better to go to the Club instead of going to the shows."

¶ And the nine year old "Jolly Chums" secretary, after telling all about the Club activities, finished with, "I will start to tell you all about our meeting. I like to come to Club. We have a nice time when we come to Club. I should like everybody to come to Club. If everybody came to Club, nobody would swear. I think, Mr. President, that's all I have to say."

¶ The older people are beginning to realize that the Church is interested in them and their children, not because they happen to be Presbyterians or Greeks or Socialists, but rather because we recognize that we are all children of God and believe in the brotherhood of men. And so the House stands for that broader life that is so surely coming to the Church, and for Christian fellowship and sympathy, understanding and helpfulness—not to one people, but to all the children of God.

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