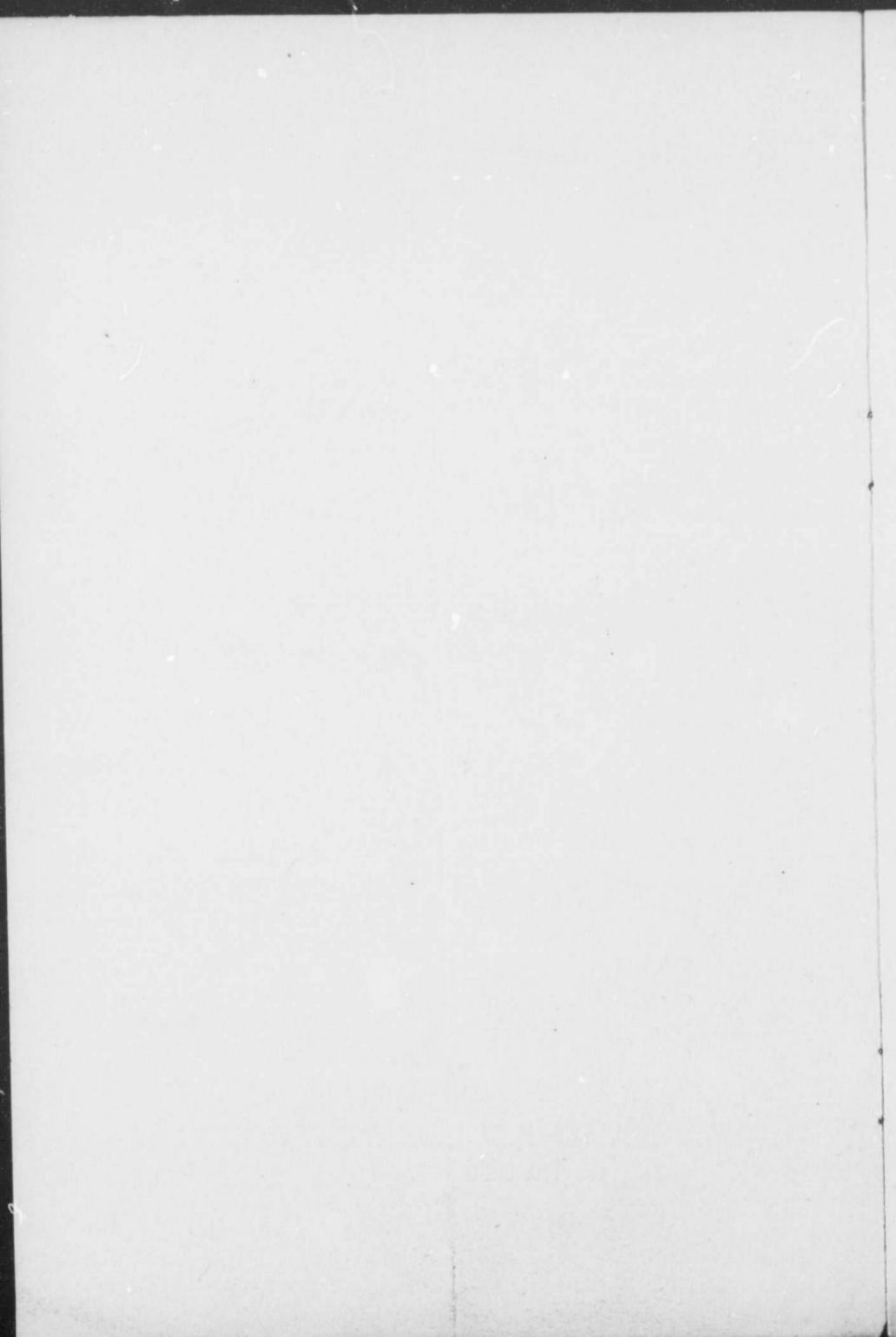


1918

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REPORT OF MEETING
OF
SOLDIERS' AID COMMISSION OF ONTARIO AND REPRESENTATIVES OF FRATERNAL SOCIETIES

HELD IN THE PRIVATE BILLS ROOM
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, TORONTO
19th DECEMBER, 1918



PRESENT.

- Hon. W. D. McPherson, K.C., M.P.P., Chairman, Soldiers' Aid Commission, Toronto.
- R. J. Christie, Esq., Soldiers' Aid Commission, Toronto.
- Wm. Banks, Sr., Esq., Soldiers' Aid Commission, Toronto.
- John B. Laidlaw, Esq., Soldiers' Aid Commission, Toronto.
- W. W. Nichol, Esq., Supt. Re-education Returned Soldiers, Soldiers' Aid Commission, Toronto.
- W. W. Shaver, Esq., Inspector Branches, Soldiers' Aid Commission, London, Ontario.
- A. G. Sandford, Esq., Inspector Branches, Soldiers' Aid Commission, Kingston, Ontario.
- W. G. Platt, Esq., Inspector Branches, Soldiers' Aid Commission, Toronto.
- J. Warwick, Esq., Secretary, Soldiers' Aid Commission, Toronto.
- Wm. Brooks, Esq., 229 College Street, Gr. Sec. I.O.O.F.
- Clarence Bell, Esq., Sec. I.O.F. War Club.
- M. Brown, Esq., Int. Order of Good Templars.
- J. W. Brodeur, Esq., Montreal, Can. Order of Foresters.
- Napoleon Champagne, Esq., Ottawa, Societe des Artisans Canadien Francais.
- L. G. Cross, Esq., Daughters and Maids of England.
- Alex. Coulter, Esq., Toronto, Knights of Pythias of Ontario.
- Otter Elliott, Esq., Insp. Theatres for Ontario.
- Col. Alexander Fraser, Sons of Scotland.
- J. M. Foster, Esq., Can. Home Circles.
- Robert Fleming, Esq., Can. Order of Oddfellows.
- W. B. Graham, Esq., 642 Euclid Avenue, Toronto, Can. Home Circles.
- H. P. Gilbert, Esq., 313 Osler Avenue, Toronto, Manchester Unity, I.O.O.F.
- J. I. Hartt, Esq., Major, M.P.P., G.M. L.O.L.
- W. H. Hunter, Esq., Supreme Chief Ranger, Ind. Order of Foresters.
- Major T. A. Kidd, Kingston, Gr. M. Orange Young Britons.
- Lyman Lee, Esq., Hamilton, Royal Arcanum.
- Wm. F. Montague, Esq., Gr. Recorder, Can. Order Chosen Friends.
- D. J. Proctor, Esq., S.P. Sons of England.
- Guy R. Roach, Esq., Knights of Columbus.
- J. A. Stewart, Esq., M.P., Perth, Can. Order of Foresters.
- J. Lockie Wilson, Esq., Ancient Order United Workmen.
- Captain Innes, Repatriation and Reconstruction Committee, Ottawa.

The Hon. Mr. McPherson, Chairman of the Soldiers' Aid Commission, in opening the meeting stated that it had been suggested to him a short time ago that, in the formation of local Branches of the Soldiers' Aid Commission in various parts of the Province, there was a very strong probability of enlisting the sympathy of the fraternal societies and organizations in work conducive to the welfare and interest of the returned soldier.

There was a very determined effort on the part of the military authorities to get men back to Canada as soon as possible. The number of men for Ontario was approximately 50 per cent. of the enlistments for overseas, and we could therefore look for a very large increase in our returned soldier population in the near future.

The Chairman stated that the Soldiers' Aid Commission had already 143 Branches, and it was the desire of the Commission to form a local Branch in all municipalities where more than five soldiers had already returned and the Commission wished to co-operate with all the agencies in the Province in the work of caring for the returned soldier.

The Commission was formed after a conference of Provincial Premiers, with the Prime Minister of Canada, for the purpose of taking care of and securing employment for discharged soldiers. *In the matter of vocational training* the Province had undertaken the supervision of the re-education of soldiers who had been so disabled that they could not return to their former occupations, and the various educational institutions in the Province had been placed at the disposal of the Commission.

The Chairman stated that the Invalided Soldiers' Commission, a Branch of the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment, of which the Chairman of each Provincial Soldiers' Aid Commission was an *ex-officio* member, was organized to take care of soldiers coming under the following heads:—

1. Tubercular.
2. Insane.
3. Those requiring a lengthy period of hospital treatment and who would afterwards require Vocational Training.

For those outside of these three classes the Department of Militia and Defence are responsible.

The Invalided Soldiers' Commission to a certain extent look after the employment for those who have received Vocational Training, but with the large number of men returning from overseas the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment had decided to invite the co-operation of the Provincial Labour Bureaus and Soldiers' Aid Commissions, the preference, as far as possible, to be given to the returned soldier when applying to the Labour Bureau for employment.

The Chairman closed his remarks with an expression of his pleasure at the splendid response to his invitation, and felt sure that the Commission would have, in the greatest measure, the co-operation of the Fraternal Societies of the Province.

Dr. W. H. Hunter, Ind. Order of Foresters, stated that the full attendance at the meeting was, in his opinion, evidence that the fraternal organizations would like to take their full share of the work, with any other agency that had the care of the returned soldier in hand; further, that there was too much machinery in war work and, if we could consolidate, the fraternal organizations could place at the disposal of the local Branches of the Soldiers' Aid Commission a very efficient service.

Dr. Hunter stated that the Commission should take immediate steps to give the Commission the fullest publicity in every way possible.

Major J. I. Hartt, M.P.P., Grand Master I.O.L., stated that he was not acquainted with the work of the Soldiers' Aid Commission, having just recently returned from overseas, but, so far as his organization was concerned, he could promise the closest co-operation of his Order with the Soldiers' Aid Commission.

Mr. D. J. Proctor, S.P. Sons of England, stated that this Society would do everything in their power to assist the Commission.

Mr. Clarence Bell, Secretary I.O.F. War Club, stated that early in the war his organization started a War Club, and it was remarkable the interest shown from the start by the various Courts. His organization believed that the Society of which the men were members were well qualified to look after the men when they came home, and that the I.O.F. are sending out practical suggestions as to the best way of dealing with the soldier on his discharge, and would gladly co-operate with the Commission in the proposed work.

Mr. Guy R. Roach, Knights of Columbus, stated that his Order would be only too pleased to do anything possible in the furtherance of the work of caring for the returned soldiers.

Mr. J. A. Stewart, M.P., Perth, Canadian Order of Foresters, stated that the scheme outlined by the Chairman came at a very opportune time and that the suggestion made for more uniformity of action would prevent a very great deal of wasted effort. In his opinion there should be more united action by each of the organizations, and, so far as he was concerned, we could be assured of the co-operation of the Fraternal Societies.

Mr. W. B. Graham, Canadian Home Circles, stated that the meeting reminded those present that the day of brotherhood had arrived again and that to-day is the day for speech-making in the way of telling the members of the different organizations that brotherhood can be shown by helping to get positions for returned men.

The Editor of *The Canadian Home Circle* would be only too pleased to call the attention of the members to the fact that they should assist in securing employment for the returned soldier; also that they should attend the local reception which is held when men are returning from overseas to their home town.

Colonel Alexander Fraser, Sons of Scotland, stated that, from the beginning of the war, this Society undertook the responsibility, which they have been striving to discharge ever since, of keeping in touch with the soldier by letter and securing positions for the men when they return.

The public may not know of the service rendered by Fraternal Societies during the war, particularly in the manner in which they rose to do their part in the war. Col. Fraser felt that the local representatives of the Fraternal Societies and Organizations should form an organization to work with the local Branches of the Soldiers' Aid Commission, the local Branch of the Commission to be responsible.

Mr. William Brooks, Gen. Secretary, I.O.O.F., stated that he was delighted to have the opportunity of again meeting with the representatives of Fraternal Societies, in a united effort, on behalf of our soldiers.

The I.O.O.F. have some 400 lodges in the Province of Ontario and a representative of each could be brought into direct touch with the local Branches of the Commission, with a view to concerted effort by all.

The member of each Society should be on the Board of the local Branches of the Soldiers' Aid Commission.

The Fraternal Societies would be, if such a suggestion met with approval, rendering to all soldiers, through the Soldiers' Aid Commission, a great service, and Mr. Brooks unreservedly placed his Organization at the disposal of the Commission, in the way of assisting in their work.

Napoleon Champagne, Esq., Ottawa, Societe des Artisans Canadien Francais, stated that his Society would do anything at all in their power, and they could be counted upon to do whatever they were asked for the benefit of the returned soldier.

Mr. Lyman Lee, Royal Arcanum, stated that his Society would do all in their power to co-operate with local Branches of the Commission, and felt that a representative of all the Fraternal Societies should be incorporated with the Branches of the Soldiers' Aid Commission.

Mr. W. F. Montague, Grand Recorder, Canadian Order of Chosen Friends, stated that it was important to see that the returned soldier got the treatment he deserved and that the Fraternal Societies were prepared to render the Commission all the assistance in their power.

Throughout the Dominion of Canada there were ten thousand (10,000) Branches, and the question was "how to reach these Branches." He suggested that a circular be prepared, stating definitely the work of the Soldiers' Aid Commission; these should be sent out from the Head Office to all Branches of Fraternal Societies; and furthermore, it should be in the form of an official communication. He further stated that, if the Commission would give him information as to exactly what they required, he would see that the communication was sent to all Branches of the Fraternal Society he represented, without any charge being made to the Commission.

Mr. J. Lockie Wilson, A.O.U.W., stated that the Order he had the honor to represent would do everything in its power to further the work of the Soldiers' Aid Commission.

Major T. A. Kidd, Kingston, Grand Master, Orange Young Britons, stated that he had every confidence in the future of the returned soldier. With the co-operation of the Fraternal Organizations and the Soldiers' Aid Commission there would be no doubt about the returned soldier being

properly taken care of. The Organization which he represented could be counted upon to co-operate in the fullest extent possible.

Mr. Robert Fleming, Canadian Order of Oddfellows, stated that his Organization would be glad to help in any way they possibly could.

Mr. J. M. Foster, Canadian Home Circles, stated that every one desired to do something for the benefit of the returned soldier, and his Organization would be glad to do whatever they could, and co-operate with the Soldiers' Aid Commission in any way.

Mr. H. P. Gilbert, Manchester Unity, I.O.O.F., stated that his Organization would be only too pleased to co-operate with the Soldiers' Aid Commission in any way possible.

Mr. M. Brown, Ind. Order of Good Templars, stated that his Organization would gladly place their machinery at the disposal of the Soldiers' Aid Commission.

Mr. L. G. Cross, Daughters and Maids of England, stated that his Organization would be pleased to co-operate with the Soldiers' Aid Commission in any way possible.

Mr. Alex. Coulter, Knights of Pythias of Ontario, stated that the services of his Society were at the disposal of the Soldiers' Aid Commission, and they would do anything in their power to aid and assist in the good work of caring for the returned soldiers.

Captain Innes, of the Repatriation and Reconstruction Committee, organized by the Federal Government, spoke a few words and stated that his Organization had been formed with a view to co-ordinating every Organization in the Dominion of Canada interested in the returned soldier, and that representatives of the Fraternal Societies had been invited to Ottawa to attend a conference.

Captain Innes felt that sufficient publicity had not been given to what the different Governments were doing in the way of providing for and assisting discharged soldiers, but informed the meeting that a bulletin was being prepared explaining the situation very fully.

Mr. William Banks, Sr., Commissioner, Soldiers' Aid Commission, stated that he was sure the Fraternal Societies, of whom about one hundred and fifty thousand (150,000) members had enlisted, and who have paid out over two million dollars (\$2,000,000) in death claims, could be depended upon to put forth every effort to assist the Soldiers' Aid Commission in returning the soldier to civil life.

The Hon. W. D. McPherson informed the meeting that there were three Military Districts in Ontario:

No. 1—Headquarters, London;

No. 2—Headquarters, Toronto;

No. 3—Headquarters, Kingston;

and in each Military District the Commission had an Inspector of Branches.

The method of organizing local Branches in the past had been to explain to the Mayor or Reeve of the Municipality the work of the Soldiers' Aid Commission, when afterwards a public meeting would be called, at which the Inspector invariably gave an address.

The Hon. Mr. McPherson suggested that the Commission send to each representative at the meeting a list of towns where the Commission now has a Branch and a list of towns where a Branch should now be formed. The representatives would then communicate with their different Branches throughout the Province and solicit their co-operation so that the Commission would have the assistance of the local representative in forming new Branches, and in the case of the Branches already formed it is possible that, if the representative was not already a member of the executive, steps could be taken to have him appointed. Further, that the Secretary of the Commission prepare a brief report of the meeting, a copy of which would be sent as soon as possible to the gentlemen present.

It was moved by Dr. W. H. Hunter, Ind. Order of Foresters,

Seconded by Mr. W. Brooks, I.O.O.F., and

Carried unanimously,

That the suggestion outlined by the Hon. Mr. McPherson be adopted.