

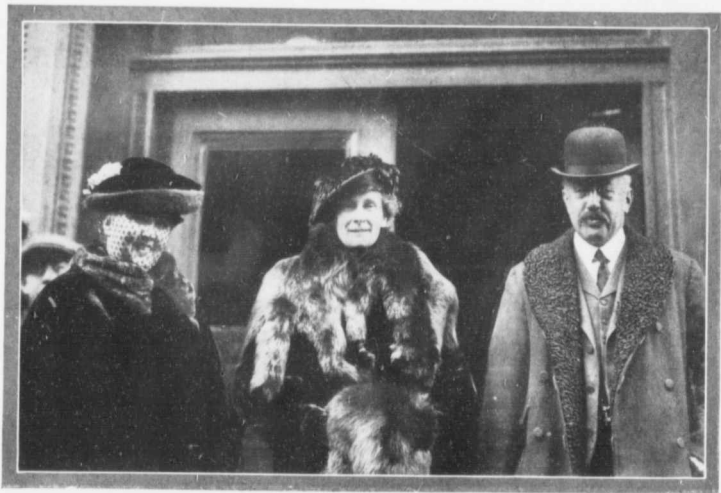
Story of the
Canadian National Institute
for the Blind



STORY OF
THE CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR THE BLIND

By
JEAN GRAHAM

523 1927



Their Excellencies, the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire and Mrs. Lionel Clarke (left) at the Head Office of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, 36 King St. E., Toronto.



A NATIONAL undertaking in Canada means a task four thousand miles broad, with nine provinces and several races to take into consideration. Nevertheless, there are bold hearts and ready hands, equal to national needs and emergencies—and never were the demands more great nor the response more generous, than in this after-the-war year, 1920.

It is more than two years since the Canadian National Institute for the Blind received its Dominion Charter and set forth on its simple but strenuous task to ameliorate the condition of the Blind. In order to understand the field of activities open to the organization, it may be well to review what had already been done in Canada for those deprived of sight. The work of Sir Frederick Fraser and the Halifax School for the Blind, is known throughout Canada, and during the last fifty years, hundreds of blind boys and girls have been trained in the institution over which Sir Frederick presides. Sir Frederick has also interested himself in work for the adult blind and is one of the honorary vice-presidents of the Institute, being also on the Board of Management of the Maritime Division.

In the Province of Quebec, there are two organizations for the blind: the Montreal Association, for which Mr. and Mrs. Philip Layton have been prominent workers, and which carries on its work largely among English-

speaking children and adults, and the Nazareth School, of which Mr. Joseph Beaubien, one of the honorary vice-presidents of the Institute, is an active administrator. The Province of Ontario has a Government School for the Blind at Brantford, which is concerned with the education and training of blind children exclusively. Mr. W. B. Race, B.A., is the Director of this widely-known institution and is, as a private citizen, a member of the Council of the Institute.

The Ottawa Association for the Blind, of which Mr. J. L. Payne was president, carried on industrial training and employment for adults for some years and must be commended for breaking the ground in this important field of work. In January, 1920, the Institute assumed the liabilities and took over the assets of this Association in the Capital, the first practical result of this transaction being that the broom-shop in Ottawa will in future be operated by the Institute as one of the chain of C.N.I.B. shops, constituting the Industrial Department for Men.

There is an organization for the Blind in existence in the West, the Western Association in Vancouver, under whose auspices a small school for blind children is being conducted. Mr. A. A. Archibald, B.A., the head of that association, is now superintendent for the Western Division, having taken a deep interest in its organization.

THE growth of the activities of the C.N.I.B. (for by these initials the Institute is known) since the incorporation in March, 1918, has been amazing—but a brief statement of the events preceding the formation of the National Institute may be of interest. Someone has said that every great project is talked about for many months, or even years, by the few, before it appeals

successfully to the hearts of the many. The beginning of the hopes and plans might be found among the early workers in what was called the Canadian Free Library for the Blind, which had an unostentatious beginning in a private residence in the little village of Markham, Ontario, in 1906. The distribution of literature from this centre increased so rapidly that in October, 1911, it was necessary to remove the Library to the Capital of Ontario, where, by the kindness of the Public Library Board, it was given lodgment in the basement of the Western Branch. The present residence, 142 College Street, Toronto, was secured in the closing months of 1916; and, with the formation of the Canadian Women's Association for the Welfare of the Blind, began a new era of development, when this organization bent all its energies to the equipment of the lately-acquired home for the now imposing collection of books in Braille. In December, 1918, this institution was amalgamated with the Institute as its Library and Publishing Department.

The late Mr. E. B. F. Robinson, B.A., of Markham, the first blind graduate of a Canadian University, who took his degree from Trinity College with the highest honors, Mr. F. W. Johnston, a member of the Executive Committee of the Institute, who is an inspiring example of the successful blind business man; Mr. S. C. Swift, M.A., Head of the Library Department, Dr. C. R. Dickson, who played a prominent part in the organization of the Institute and was its first president, Mr. C. W. Caruthers and other workers strove towards arousing the community to the need for a national work for the Blind—and their struggles were not in vain.

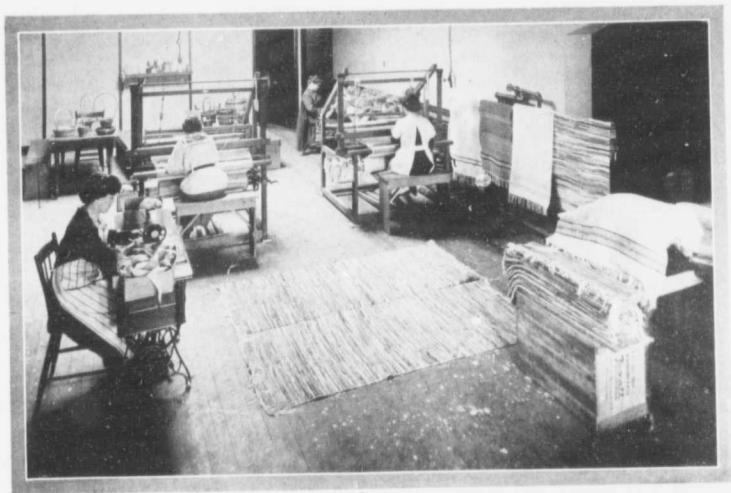
The present membership of the Library, which means those who are more or less regularly and frequently tak-

ing advantage of the circulation of books and music in embossed type from the institution is six hundred and nineteen. The average circulation a month of books and sheets of music is about seven hundred and forty-four. Through the generosity of the Dominion Government, the carrying of such books to and from the blind reader by post is absolutely free; and, as the service of the Library is also without fee, the blind reader, however remote he may be from the distributing centre, is assured of the arrival, the perusal and the return of the desired volumes without any expense save the trifling cost of the stamp which carries his request.

THE general public may quite naturally ask: "What effect had the war on the interest in work for the Blind?"

As we look back upon those years of horror and strife, we realize that our sympathy with the wounded or blinded soldiers had a reflective influence upon all citizens handicapped in the struggle for life. It is gratifying to know that the first activity on behalf of individual blind persons, inaugurated by the Institute nearly two years ago, was the furnishing of instruction in Braille and light vocational lines for a small group of blinded Canadian soldiers at the Library.

The return to Canada of A. G. Viets, P.P.C.L.I. and Captain E. A. Baker, M.C., Croix de Guerre, who had lost their sight in military service, and who had been trained at the well-known hostel of St. Dunstan's in London, gave a fresh impetus to the training of the blind, and when these young men became members of the Library Board, they naturally supported warmly and



*Blind Workers Weaving Rugs. Industrial
Department for Women, Toronto.*

effectively, the plans for mutual understanding and national organization cherished by the chief officers.

Pearson Hall, one of Toronto's imposing old homes, 186 Beverley Street, is the scene of the blinded soldiers' activities. In December, 1918, this handsome and comfortable residence was secured, and in January, 1919, was opened by Sir Arthur Pearson, himself, who was the happy guest of honor at a dinner given to him in the new residence by twenty-five blinded soldiers, most of whom were graduates of St. Dunstan's. This institution is of such deep national interest that it demands a visit from all who would understand the activities upon which our blinded soldiers are engaged. Hence we hope to return to the subject of Pearson Hall and the splendid results being achieved there.

If it be asked what the Canadian National Institute for the Blind had accomplished in the first fourteen months of its existence, the report published in May, 1919, will furnish full reply in the list of inauguration of eleven various departments of work: Blinded Soldiers, Registration, Field Work, Industrial Department for Men, Home Teaching, Industrial Department for Women, Pearson Hall, Amalgamation of the Canadian National Library for the Blind, Prevention of Blindness, Women's Auxilliary (an outgrowth of the Canadian Women's Association for the Welfare of the Blind) and a Sales-room Department. This will be admitted, by even the unobservant citizen, to be a robust list of undertakings. Canada has been slow in realizing the importance of a national work in behalf of the adult blind; but, the progress in the last two years is an indication that the complete success of the National Institute is assured. The membership of this organization has now reached 680 of

whom 458 are blind and 222 are sighted. There has been since October, 1918, the publication of a monthly bulletin, giving the latest news of the Institute and its affairs in a bright and readable style which is both attractive and informing. The bulletin is distributed free of cost and is to be transformed into a quarterly. May it give increasingly happy reports!

IF you would find the secret of the success of any institution, inquire at the Head Office. Leadership counts in every undertaking, and those who manage the affairs of this Institute were fortunate to secure the services as Director, of Mr. C. W. Holmes, who lost his sight when ten years of age, continued a course of study and for eleven years was Head Master of the Eastern Townships College of Music, before going to the United States where he spent some years with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind. Mr. Holmes is a Canadian by birth, a native of Stanstead, Quebec, and was induced to return to the Dominion, when the project for national work was decided upon. Four Divisions have already been organized, with shops now in operation in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa and Halifax. The Divisions are the Western, (British Columbia and Alberta), Central Western (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Ontario, and Maritime. These branches are to carry on the detail and routine of Institute activities in the various districts, thus freeing the national organization for wider and more comprehensive work.

The first of these districts was organized in June, 1919, the Ontario Division, with Mr. Guy C. Robertson as superintendent, who has since resigned to take up other work. Mr. Maurice I. Tynan is now holding that



Their Excellencies, The Governor-General and The Duchess of Devonshire, are central figures in foremost row, with others, (left to right), Miss Saunders, Mrs. Lionel Clarke, Miss Aliz Cavendish, Miss Diana Clarke. Above are Col. Fraser, A.D.C., Mr. L. M. Wood, (President of C.N.I.B.), Captain Wallace, A.D.C., Mr. S. C. Swift (Librarian, C.N.I.B.), Mr. Lambert, Captain Ballour, A.D.C. This group was taken at the Library, on the occasion of the Vice-Regal visit.

office. The Institute retains for direct control by the National Organization: Pearson Hall, the Library, After Care and the Prevention of Blindness. During mid-summer, 1919, the Maritime Division was organized, with Mr. H. B. Campbell, trained under Sir Frederick Fraser, as superintendent, the headquarters being in Halifax. This Division will carry on activities in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. In establishing this undertaking, there has been the assistance and co-operation of the Maritime Association for the Blind and the Home Teaching Committee of the Halifax School for the Blind.

Halifax, through her knowledge of the good work done by the institution of which Sir Frederick Fraser is the head, is in a position to appreciate the importance of the efforts to develop industrial activity for the adult blind and much is hoped for the Maritime Division.

Early in the autumn of 1919, the Western Division was established with Mr. A. A. Archibald as superintendent, and headquarters in Vancouver. In October, the Central Western Division followed, with Mr. S. R. Hussey, (another graduate of Sir Frederick Fraser's institution) as superintendent, headquarters in Winnipeg. Industrial Departments for Men have been established in these centres also, and it is expected that other activities will soon follow. The field worker and the home teacher, indispensable in the work the Institute has planned, are busy in these western fields.

THE shops of the Ontario Division are those most easily reached for inspection at present, and will repay a visit. The Industrial Department for Men at

455 King Street West, Toronto, is a busy broom shop with a production of 140 dozen brooms a week. The average citizen has had the excusable idea that it is a gloomy and depressing experience to survey a shop filled with blind workers. On the contrary, it is a most healthy and stimulating sight, for it produces in the sighted observer a feeling of humiliation that he or she is doing so little and sometimes with so much grumbling. The workers are unfeignedly busy and sincerely cheerful, and the men attain a considerable degree of skill in a short time. The blind supervisor, Mr. Henry Wills, who is a New Brunswicker by birth, and was for years an instructor in Massachusetts, has a familiarity with work and workers which diffuses a comfortable atmosphere throughout the shop, and the visitor soon finds himself absorbing information about brooms at a surprising rate.

This shop opened in October, 1918, and already has thirty-two workers, with twenty-three on the waiting list. There was a time when it was considered difficult, and even dangerous, for any totally blind man to work upon a power winder,—but in this shop you find twelve power winders with blind operators working them successfully. There are two power stitchers, and one of the most interesting sights is that of a blind worker managing a Baltimore stitcher of 750 revolutions a minute. Confidence and alertness are suggested by the movements of the workers in this shop and only three sighted workers are employed. In a room in the front, there is a lesson in Braille going on, and a boy's fingers are slowly but steadily learning to read the lines which will mean a widening horizon.

You have, perhaps, regarded the broom as an extremely simple implement of industry, and are quite surprised



*Living-room (with glimpse of dining-room).
Women's Residence, "Clarkwood," Toronto.*

that the broom corn is subjected to eight processes before arriving at the stage of being stitched. Of the men who started operations in this shop in October, 1918, only two had worked at the trade before. Now the place is a-hum with industry, and the men are receiving as apprentices, nine dollars a week, and some of them are now reaching twenty dollars. Idleness is the bane of any citizen, but it is especially harmful for those who are deprived of sight, since it gives opportunity for the forming of the habit of self-pity, one of the most destructive that can afflict any of us. The establishment of this Industrial Department for Men means flinging open the gates of opportunity to those handicapped by blindness, who wish to know the dignity of self-support. However humble may be the beginning, it marks an era of self-reliance, which turns a liability into an asset and sheds a light in a dark place.

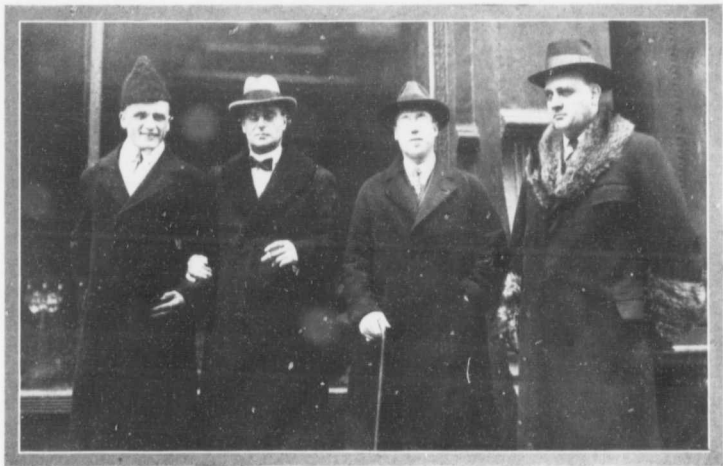
THE Industrial Department for Women at 40 Adelaide Street West, has shown remarkable development since it was opened on December 9th, 1918. When this scene of activity was in its early days, there were twenty-one blind women workers, carrying on the industries of reed-basket making, machine-sewing, machine-knitting and loom-weaving. Sales were readily made of both baskets and aprons and now a satisfactory pay-roll has become established. Mrs. Clayton Ridge is the capable supervisor at the I. D. W., and is assisted by Mrs. Fitzsimmons and Miss Thompson.

There was in the initial period a greater diversity of trades than in the men's department, as industrial employment in shops for blind women is yet in an experimental stage, and the products of these shops are

not as thoroughly commercialized as brooms. The work advanced with wonderful strides and the demand for aprons became so extensive that this manufacture was manifestly the most popular and "paying." If you enter those work-rooms now, you will find a row of busy workers, operating machines, several of which are on a shaft, while two are retained as practice machines until the operators become sufficiently expert to manage the others.

The rooms are as spacious and cheerful as you could find in any of Toronto's scenes of industry, and the bright-hued rugs and piles of immaculate aprons give an impression of congenial activity which must be felt by all and enjoyed by sighted and unsighted workers alike. There is one firm now ordering hundreds of aprons and there is a restaurant demanding uniforms—and, altogether, the prospects for the output are bright indeed.

The rugs are woven from the rags left over, from the aprons and are as satisfactory bits of manufacture in this class as you would see. I know a summer cottage up near Lake Simcoe, which is fairly crying out for a few such rugs—and you will agree with me if you will only go and see them. Again the visitor is impressed, as in a call at the Industrial Department for Men, by the atmosphere of quiet cheer, of contented workers who have occupation and companionship—two of the conditions for human well-being. It is interesting to note that in the Bulletin No. 10, July 1st, 1919, (Canada's fifty-second birthday), the announcement is made that by a vote of the Executive Committee the vocational allowance in the Industrial Department for Women has been raised one dollar a week to make it correspond with that granted in the Men's Department. On the 8th of March, 1920,



Left to right, Captain Baker, (Vice President),
Sir Arthur Pearson, (Hon. President), Cor-
poral Vicks, (Member Executive), Mr. C. W.
Holmes, (Director C.N.I.E.).

ten women workers went on the pay roll, seven as piece-workers, three on flat work. This is an industrial advance which ought to give joy to the feminist heart.

The Salesroom Department, which, also, is housed at 40 Adelaide Street West, is a distinct departure in marketing the wares manufactured by the Blind. This belongs to the Department of After-Care work, which has three functions: the placement of suitable applicants for positions side by side with sighted persons; follow-up work for those carrying on home industries or independent ventures of any sort; the sale of products, either from the C.N.I.B. shops or from home workers. The Salesroom Department represents the last-named in operation and was a revelation to the Tuesday morning purchaser during the month of March, when weekly sales were held. In the early months, a committee consisting of Mrs. Graeme Adam, representing the Women's Auxiliary of the Institute, Miss Davis, the Field Worker, Mrs. Ridge, the Supervisor at the I.D.W., and the Director, Mr. C. W. Holmes, was formed, to take charge of and work out the details for this department. The sales-room carries certain staple lines of material needed by the blind in home work, such as reed, cane, wool, cotton yarn, cotton cloth, etc. These materials are purchased at the best wholesale prices and sold in small retail quantities at exactly the same rate, thereby giving the home-workers the advantage of the Institute's purchasing power, without the investment of their capital. On the other hand, the production of these workers, so long as it is up to saleable standard, is being bought for cash (sent within thirty days), the price paid being the highest figure which the Committee estimates can be obtained at retail. This secures a market for the home-worker, who re-

ceives his money almost at once, without the anxiety of waiting for a customer to be secured.

During the Tuesday mornings in March, many Torontonians attended the sales of work, which included such articles as wicker piano lamps and flower stands, baskets of all shapes and sizes, trays, knitted and crocheted articles, lace, bead necklaces and rugs. The dainty bed jackets were in great demand, crocheted mats went like the proverbial hot cakes and the trays were in high favor, with their pretty wicker frames and glass-covered chintz. The standardization of the articles is being carried on and will make the sales more effective. Already this department has aroused wide public interest and its stimulating influence on the production of work by the Blind throughout the country can hardly be overestimated. The dual interest of the selling of the material to the home-workers and of the sale of the manufactured article to the town purchaser is bound to grow in interest, as anyone who attended the March sales, presided over by Mrs. G. G. Adam, Mrs. Barwick and their bright girl assistants, can declare.

THIS is emphatically an age of the study of prevention. The old fatalism which regarded affliction as the Divine will and made no attempt to discover causes and then apply remedies is not regarded with favor or even toleration in the modern enlightened community. The work of prevention of blindness is naturally one of the most commendable undertakings of this Canadian National Institute for the Blind. When you are informed that fifty per cent. of blindness is preventable, you wonder that so many helpless little ones have been allowed to



*Library and Publishing Department, 142
College Street, Toronto.*

go through life blinded, when only a slight attention in the early hours of existence would have meant the use of the eyes. The infantile affliction known as *ophthalmia neonatorum*, is obviated by the use of nitrate of silver. Thanks to the medical officers and highly-trained nurses of to-day many a baby has been saved from blindness by the prompt use of technical prevention.

There has been much foolish and even cruel criticism of those who are trying to save the health of our little citizens. We are minding our own business when we use all means to save the sight of the newborn Canadians. From Boston comes the cheering report that there is an absence of cases of *ophthalmia neonatorum*, for the reason that the law has been strictly enforced requiring the use of a prophylactic in the eyes of children at birth. The old proverb which asserts that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, may be intensified to the utmost in this case, for there is no calculating the relative worth of prevention, when the sight of a little citizen is at stake. New England has shown a noble example in this campaign in the city named for old Boston in Lincolnshire and it is now a challenge to Ontario and all other provinces in the Canada of the Twentieth Century to equal the record. Already, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind is carrying on a vigorous and aggressive campaign—and it is the duty of the community, especially of the women, to see that it receives encouragement. May the Dominion soon be able to report, as did the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1919, that there are no cases of blindness caused by *ophthalmia neonatorum*! This is a campaign for the Rescue of the Innocents which should appeal to every decent-hearted Canadian, to save those "whose little hands unconscious

clutch the keys of darkness and of morn." The economic saving in this matter appeals to the common-sense of any citizen who will consider it, for the cost of preventing such blindness is slight in comparison with the cost of equipping a blind worker to earn a livelihood. But there is a human appeal in the case of the helpless infant which is louder than any ring of dollars and cents.

The Ontario Auxiliary Classes Act, passed in April, 1914, provides for the recognition of myopia classes or special classes for children whose sight prevents them from making satisfactory progress, even when provided with proper glasses and placed in front seats, or whose sight would be further impaired by using the ordinary text-books and other means of instruction. The impression existed in many quarters that such classes were urgently needed in our schools. With this in view, the Institute for the Blind took the initiative in calling a conference, which was held in Dr. Hastings' office on June 18th, 1919. Here it was decided that the Medical Officer of Health should appoint a committee to gather data indicative of the extent of the problem of defective vision in our schools, upon which could be based representations to the proper authorities, with a view to obtaining adequate action. The members of the committee included Dr. Helen MacMurchy, Mrs. Kerr, Miss Dyke, Miss Emory, Miss Foy, Dr. Whyte, Mr. Mills and Miss Ewing, whose problem was to ascertain the number of public and separate school children who, because of defective vision, were unable to profit reasonably by the ordinary class instruction or who were in danger of further impairing their vision by attempting to do so.

The survey concerned itself chiefly with children known to have been treated for defective vision, but who,



*Broom Shop, Showing Winders, Industrial
Department for Men, Toronto.*



*Hallway and Staircase in Residence for
Blinded Soldiers in Vocational Training,
Pearson Hall, Toronto.*

even with the aid of glasses or other treatment are still unable to see with more than one-third of normal ability. One hundred and sixty-five cases have been found, in which it is reasonably certain that no treatment can make the pupil suitable for the ordinary class. However, 247 other cases were found with vision only one-third normal or less, for whom the Public Health nurses have not yet been able to obtain treatment. Some of these, if treated, will not require special class arrangements; but others will require such accommodation, no matter what treatment may be obtained. The value of the sight-saving classes in one after another of our large centres is being realized by all civic and educational authorities and the Institute is naturally rejoiced at the growing interest in this conservation of eyesight.

The registration of the Blind involves the notation, tabulation and classification of all obtainable essential facts regarding the Blind, such as cause of blindness, degree of sight (if any), general mental, nervous and physical condition (other than eyes), training, occupation, experience or fitness for any special employment, both before and since loss of sight. All this information, as well as the ordinary and usual census facts, will make the register a most valuable guide for those controlling the vocational work. The total registration to date shows 2,764 of which there are 1,643 males and 1,121 females. Of this number, 965 are actively employed, this group, of course, not including those receiving library service only.

AT Pearson Hall, the Blinded Soldiers' residence, one finds an old-time home, with the high ceilings and spacious rooms beloved of our grandfathers. There Capt.

W. B. Powell is the superintendent, with a staff of competent instructors. Massage, cobbling, basketry and netting are taught, and instruction is given in typewriting, Braille, English and French. Several of the men are taking instruction in massage under the tuition of Mr. D. J. MacDougall, himself a blinded Canadian soldier. Two of the men who completed this course are now holding salaried positions as masseurs. The war has greatly increased the prominence of this form of treatment which the East, as Mr. Kipling informs us, has known for many years. It is a department of work in which the Blind can attain a high degree of proficiency—and the expert masseur receives a substantial salary.

The men who are in residence at Pearson Hall and undergoing vocational instruction are charged twenty-five dollars a month, for board, which is held in trust to be returned to them in a lump sum as a setting-up fund upon satisfactory completion of their course. A similar fund was set aside on the same conditions for the benefit of those men who went to the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph for courses in poultry-raising, where Corporal C. Purkis, also a blinded Canadian soldier, was instructor. Corporal Purkis has now transferred his poultry farm to Preston, where instruction is given. There are temporary training quarters for the blinded soldiers at 158 Beverley Street; and there is, in process of erection, in rear of Pearson Hall, a new building, to be used for training purposes. This will be of fire proof construction, with three storeys and basement, and will have a gymnasium, as a crowning feature of the equipment.

Pearson Hall has a dignity and beauty in keeping with the thought and feeling behind the acquisition and equip-



The Imposing Entrance to Residence for Blinded Soldiers in Vocational Training, Pearson Hall, Toronto.

ment of this residence for Blinded Soldiers. The gratitude of the community and the expression of the goodwill of those who realize what the soldiers faced, that our civilization might remain, found a visible expression in Pearson Hall, and many a woman, with a lifelong loneliness in her heart, has found solace in caring for those who have lost sight during the Great War. Through the system of after-care being established, in which there is the cordial co-operation of the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-Establishment, it is hoped to facilitate the return of these men to civil life, to find their own place among Canada's workers. Such names as Viets, Baker, Turner, Perrett, Mayell, MacDougall and many others are enrolled among the conquerors of calamity who turn a handicap into a rung on the upward climb of life's ladder. If character means more than career, the man who has learned to treat disaster as a part of the day's experience has gained a wisdom of more value than many bargains.

Pearson Hall was completely equipped and furnished by the Women's Association, now the Women's Auxiliary of the Institute, of which Mrs. Lionel Clarke is president. The domestic arrangements at Pearson Hall are supervised by a House Committee composed of Mrs. Clarke, Mrs. Bruce Macdonald and Mrs. Riddell. The V.A.D.'s have been invaluable helpers at Pearson Hall and are a band of enthusiastic assistants, finding their reward in the appreciation of those who benefit by their services.

One of the most recent developments of the residential resources of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, is the Women's Residence, "Clarkewood," 78 College Street, Toronto, maintained under the auspices of the Women's Auxiliary, which is responsible for its

maintenance. There are seventeen residents at present, in this homelike abode. Mrs. Briers and Mrs. MacLean are in management of "Clarkewood," which is already so successful that wider plans are being discussed. The charge for board and lodging is \$5.50 a week,—which, in these days of soaring prices, will be admitted a small figure. The house committee for "Clarkewood" consists of Mrs. C. W. Beatty, convener; Mrs. Campbell Reaves, Mrs. James Scott, Miss Baldwin.

THE Field Work is extremely important and yet is difficult to define, as it covers so much and has varied aspects. It is the function of the Field Worker to seek out new cases, to investigate those referred to her, to report upon and frequently to make a definite recommendation concerning them. The executive action of other officers of the Institute is largely based upon her report and recommendations. Hence, she represents the Institute, both to the Blind and the public who do not have direct personal communication with Institute or with other officers at its established centres. Incidentally she may be called upon to act as Home Teacher, to do After-Care work, exercise herself in the interests of Prevention of Blindness or act as temporary Registrar. The Department of Field Work and the right worker engaged therein are a fundamental feature of effective organization in behalf of the Blind.

Many of the Blind cannot for a variety of reasons, attend training or work shops. For all who, through age, infirmity or a lack of adaptability, prefer work at home, the Department of Home Teaching is the best solution of how to be useful and occupied. It is the function of the Home Teacher to call at the home of the pupil to



*Blind Workers Making Aprons, Industrial
Department for Women, Toronto.*

give instruction in reading and writing of Braille, writing with pencil or typewriter, in simple handicrafts, such as knitting, crocheting, hand and machine sewing, netting, basket making. There is above all, the value of the help which the blind Home Teacher can give, in the strength to surmount obstacles, in the sharpening of perception and the practical cheer which comes from the example of a handicap turned to a means of self-mastery. Hamilton, Toronto, Vancouver, Aylmer, St. John, Edmonton, Ottawa, Peterboro and Winnipeg, now have these teachers—and the worth of their work cannot be estimated in material production alone—increasingly valuable as that will be.

The interests of this work should appeal especially to the women of our country;—and already the response of women's organizations has been helpful and generous. It is pertinent here to mention the fine work done by Mrs. E. B. F. Robinson and the members of the Toronto Women Teachers' Association, who contributed to the situation, out of which the National Institute has been evolved. The organization, now known as the Women's Auxiliary was, in its first stages, as we have seen, the "Canadian Women's Association for the Welfare of the Blind," and, under the leadership of Mrs. W. A. H. Kerr, Mrs. Fred Leach and Mrs. Lionel Clarke, did excellent work in aiding in the renovation and furnishing of the Library. This organization, in its early days, undertook also to make a survey of the conditions of the Blind in Toronto and to seek to give steady employment to those desiring it. These efforts revealed the need for wider and more thorough organization and have now broadened into the National Institute's industrial departments.

The Women's Institutes are constantly showing their interest in the work of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, and even before its formation, the Peel County Women's Institutes gave a handsome piano to the Library, a gift which has infinite possibilities of bestowing enjoyment. In the autumn of 1916, the Women's Musical Club of Toronto collected a fund for purchasing a printing outfit for the production of Braille works of various kinds, also for buying books already in print. The reception room at the Library was furnished by the Chateauguay Chapter, I.O.D.E. The Toronto Women Teachers' Association has, on more than one occasion, made generous donations to the Library work.

The Canadian National Institute for the Blind is auspiciously sponsored, with His Excellency, the Governor-General of Canada as patron and Sir Arthur Pearson as honorary president. Mr. L. M. Wood of Toronto, the Organizer of the Institute is president. Captain E. A. Baker, B.Sc., M.C., whose brief but brilliant military career has been almost overshadowed by his courageous acceptance of blindness as part of the badge of service, is general secretary. The honorary vice-presidents and members of council and other honorary officers, as will be shown by the subjoined list, show the names of those known from Sydney to Victoria in the world of law, finance, medicine and letters. All these hold it an honor, if they may serve in the cause for which this Institute was founded—practical, patriotic and humane—"To Ameliorate the Condition of the Blind of Canada."



Pressing Finished Articles, Industrial Department for Women, Toronto.

CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND

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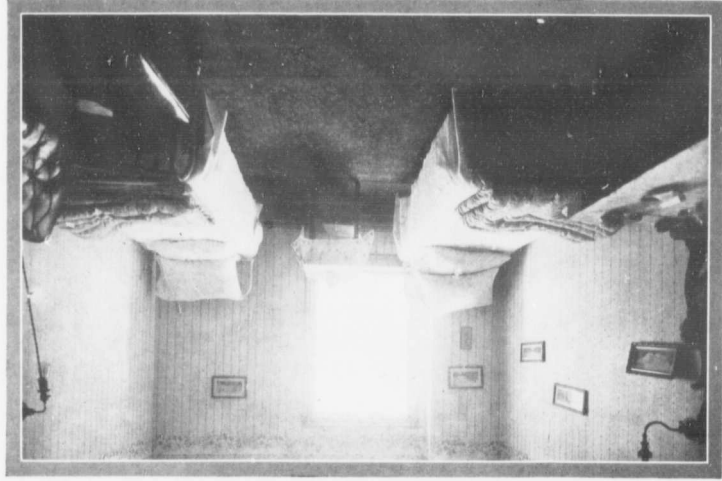
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